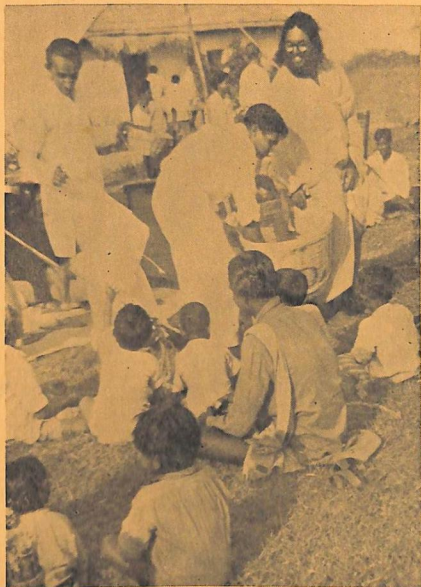


December 1957

Vol. III, No. 3

# VALUES



"GIVE US THIS DAY..." TEA-TIME FOR VILLAGERS AT THE  
NARAYANA GURUKULA WORLD CENTRE, BANGALORE.

Christmas Number

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VALUES is devoted to integrating human understanding unitively, impartially and globally in the interests of the general good.

NEXT MONTH  
WISDOM'S LANGUAGE

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# Editorial

MERE references to humanity are not enough to solve the world's problems. This was abundantly clear from the published reports of the meeting of the International Red Cross held recently in New Delhi. When it came to a protest against war the delegates sheltered under their terms of reference. That such terms were relativistic merely reduced their obvious goodwill to impotence. The relativistic mind could not solve an absolutist problem. At the same time the spokesmen for the protest were suspected of relativistic opportunism.

Obviously then, humanity needs its trusted Absolutist reference, its spiritual voice, its global-thinking Guru who is able to do with authority what becomes impossible for even the best intentioned relativistic spokesmen.

In his time Christ was such a Guru. So was the Buddha. So was Narayana Guru and, we say, so is his disciple, Nataraja Guru, whose freshly minted words are publicized in our pages. Between Gurus there is no rivalry. They are always the greatest and best and most unique among mankind. Their words are not addressed to any special congregation of believers. They deal with the Absolute as a science, and not as a creed or ideology.

Humanity's best endeavours, from T-V and earth-satellites to Red Cross and brotherhood movements are exploited by robbers, just because of the loss of the Absolutist science with its dialectical method, and the effective absence of the Absolutist Scientist or Guru.

Bearing this in mind, we continue to talk a lost idiom, trying to inject some leaven of universalist common sense into the heavy lump of current ideology. There are bound to be linguistic bruises.

Nobody needs to tell us how relativistic religion has degenerated into the wildest superstitions, or how Christmas is just a tradesman's opportunity for taking advantage of a spending spree of tinsel ballyhoo. We are saved much argument. Hence regardless of this absurd yet tragic situation, we do not hesitate to affirm the possibility of the reinstatement of genuine Guruhood and the correct observation of a Guru's birthday.

[END]

# Christ the Romantic

By OSCAR WILDE

*This beautiful interpretation of Jesus "as a work of art" was written in prison, and is part of Wilde's famous letter-essay, De Profundis.*

I SEE in Christ not merely the essentials of the supreme romantic type, but all the accidents, the wilfulness even, of the romantic temperament also. He was the first person who ever said to people that they should live "flower-like lives." He fixed the phrase. He took children as the type of what people should try to become. He held them up as examples to their elders, which I myself have always thought the chief use of children, if what is perfect should have a use. Dante describes the soul of man as coming from the hand of God "weeping and laughing like a little child," and Christ also saw that the soul of each one should be *a guisa di fanciulla che piangendo e ridendo pargoleggia*. He felt that life was changeful, fluid, active, and that to allow it to be stereotyped into any form was death. He saw that people should not be too serious over material, common interests; that to be unpractical was to be a great thing: that one should not bother too much over affairs. The birds didn't, why should man? He is charming when he says, "Take no thought for the morrow; is not the soul more than meat? is not the body more than raiment?" A Greek might have used the latter phrase. It is full of Greek feeling. But only Christ could have said both, and so summed up life perfectly for us.

**Poetical Justice :** His morality is all sympathy, just what morality should be. If the only thing he ever said had been, "Her sins are forgiven her because she loved much," it would have been worth while dying to have said it. His justice is all poetical justice, exactly what justice should be. The beggar goes to heaven because he has been unhappy. I cannot conceive a better reason for his being sent there. The people who work for an hour in the vineyard in the cool of the evening receive just as much reward as those who have toiled there all day long in the hot sun. Why shouldn't they? Probably no one deserved anything. Or perhaps they were a different kind of people. Christ had no patience with the dull lifeless mechanical systems that treat people as

if they were things, and so treat everybody alike: for him there were no laws: there were exceptions merely, as if anybody, or anything, for that matter, was like aught else in the world!

That which is the very keynote of romantic art was to him the proper basis of natural life. He saw no other basis. And when they brought him one taken in the very act of sin and showed him her sentence written in the law, and asked him what was to be done, he wrote with his finger on the ground as though he did not hear them, and finally when they pressed him again, looked up and said, "Let him of you who has never sinned be the first to throw the stone at her." It was worth while living to have said that.

Like all poetical natures he loved ignorant people. He knew that in the soul of one who is ignorant there is always room for a great idea. But he could not stand stupid people, especially those who are made stupid by education: people who are full of opinions not one of which they even understand, a peculiarly modern type, summed up by Christ when he describes it as the type of one who has the key of knowledge, cannot use it himself, and does not allow other people to use it, though it may be made to open the gate of God's Kingdom.

**Philistinism**: His chief war was against the Philistines. That is the war every child of light has to wage. Philistinism was the note of the age and community in which he lived. In their heavy inaccessibility to ideas, their dull respectability, their tedious orthodoxy, their worship of vulgar success, their entire preoccupation with the gross materialistic side of life, and their ridiculous estimate of themselves and their importance, the Jews of Jerusalem of Christ's day were the exact counterpart of the British Philistine of our own.

Christ mocked at the "whited sepulchre" of respectability, and fixed that phrase for ever. He treated worldly success as a thing absolutely to be despised. He saw nothing in it at all. He looked on wealth as an encumbrance to a man. He would not hear of life being

## Word-Trouble Again!

A CORRESPONDENT of Trichinopoly, India, asks if there are no words other than Absolute and Relative that we can use, as these are so hard to understand. This is not the only request on this subject. So we have decided to devote an entire issue of **VALUES** next month to this matter of terminology. Let it be done and maybe done with, once and for all! Meanwhile, it might help if you would send in your word-problems.

Thank you! EDITOR.



sacrificed to any system of thought or morals. He pointed out that forms and ceremonies were made for man, and not man for forms and ceremonies. He took sabbatarianism as a type of the things that should be set at naught. The cold philanthropies, the ostentatious public charities, the tedious formalisms so dear to the middle-class mind, he exposed with utter and relentless scorn. To us, what is termed orthodoxy is merely a facile unintelligent acquiescence; but to them, and in their hands, it was a terrible and paralysing tyranny. Christ swept it aside. He showed that the spirit alone was of value. He took a keen pleasure in pointing out to them that though they were always reading the law and the prophets, they had not really the smallest idea of what either of them meant. In opposition to their tithing of each separate day into the fixed routine of prescribed duties, as they tithe mint and rue, he preached the enormous importance of living completely for the moment.

Those whom he saved from their sins are saved simply for beautiful moments in their lives. Mary Magdalen, when she sees Christ, breaks the rich vase of alabaster that one of her seven lovers had given her, and spills the odorous spices over his tired dusty feet, and for that one moment's sake sits for ever with Ruth and Beatrice in the tresses of the snow-white rose of Paradise.

All that Christ says to us by the way of a little warning is that every moment should be beautiful, that the soul should always be ready for the coming of the bridegroom, always waiting for the voice of the lover, Philistinism being simply that side of man's nature that is not illumined by the imagination. He sees all the lovely influences of life as modes of light: the imagination itself is the world of light. The world is made by it, and yet the world cannot understand it: that is because the imagination is simply a manifestation of love, and it is love and the capacity for it that distinguishes one human being from another.

**The Dangerous Idea:** But it is when he deals with a sinner that Christ is most romantic, in the sense of most real. The world has always loved the saint as being the nearest possible approach to the perfection of God. Christ, through some divine instinct in him, seems to have always loved the sinner as being the nearest possible approach to the perfection of man. His primary desire was not to reform people, any more than his primary desire was to relieve suffering. To turn an interesting thief into a tedious honest man was not his aim. He would have thought little of the Prisoners' Aid Society and other modern movements of the kind. The conversion of a publican into a Pharisee would not have seemed to him a great achievement. But in a manner not yet understood of the world he regarded sin and suffering as being in themselves beautiful holy things and modes of perfection.

It seems a very dangerous idea. It is—all great ideas are dangerous. That it was Christ's creed admits of no doubt. That it is the true creed I don't doubt myself.

Indeed, the charm about Christ, when all is said is that he is just like a work of art. He does not really teach one anything, but by being brought into his presence one becomes something. And everybody is predestined to his presence. Once at least in his life each man walks with Christ to Emmaus.

[END]

# The Lord's Prayer for Man

By NATARAJA GURU

ALL prayer has a double reference—to life hereunder and to the reality that is beyond. It is an attempt to equate oneself with the mystery, truth or wonder of the Unknown or the Absolute. In the most famous of universal or common prayers meant for humanity as a whole, this subtle alternating reference to the here-and-now values and the values belonging to the distant reaches of the mind find full interplay.

"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," is a very good example of the dialectically conceived structure of the best type of prayer extant in the world today. The two sides involved are always dialectical counterparts whether they are philosophically, psychologically, cosmologically or eschatologically conceived. Prayer is thus capable of being looked upon as an Absolutist attitude or point of view in which the person—or better, the group of persons—who prays equates himself unitively or dialectically with the Absolute or God who is prayed to. "Thy kingdom come." The kingdom of God is meant to be within each and oneself and his Father in heaven are to be understood as the same in principle. Prayer is a form of meditation upon the Absolute or the Most High for Man as well as God at once. God has to get a correct notion about the devotee by the prayer, and *vice versa*. When both the parties

get merged or dissolved in the high value of the Absolute, differencelessly, then prayer may be said to have best succeeded. All prayer thus comes to have a high educative value.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be the name.*

*Thy kingdom come,*

*They will be done,*

*On earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread ;*

*And forgive us our trespasses (debts)*

*As we also have forgiven those who  
trespass against us (our debtors) ;*

*And lead us not into temptation,*

*But deliver us from evil.*

JESUS CHRIST (Matthew vi, 9)

## The Best Prayer Asks for Nothing :

"Give us this day our daily bread" is a very significant phrase inserted into the Lord's prayer that Jesus himself gave full assent to. Bread touches a human necessity of a here-and-now order. This reference to food, so pointedly put, effectively falsifies the charge often made in modern times that religion only refers to

far-away or life-after-death values at the expense of the ontological or immediately real values. Necessity with a capital letter is given its full share of recognition in the Lord's prayer, and if it is put in the form of a request for food, that is only to be taken as incidental to a prayerful rhetoric. It should not be construed by the critic to mean that God is not himself aware of the needs of man. The request should rather refer to the devotee himself on whose side a certain initiative should be present in placing his case squarely before God without that form of absent-minded piety that can only raise its fatigued eyes to heaven, forgetful of the reality below, where Absolutist values can reside with equal validity.

**Prayer Establishes a Unitive Relation :** Prayer establishes a unitive relation between the one who prays and the one who hears the prayer. There is a *rapprochement* and a *rapprochement* between the two counterparts involved, and it is when this condition is fulfilled properly that prayer may be said to be most effective. The prayer and its answer are simultaneously implied one in the other.

**The Limits and Content of Prayer :** The instincts of self-preservation and fear of the unknown may be said to mark the starting-point and the outer terminal limit respectively of the attitude of prayer in the common man. Justly he feels insecure in this spacious universe of possibilities good or bad, into which his life is cast. Whether primitive or civilized, the fear is but legitimate and self-preservation is only the counterpart of the same fear. Primitive man may have had to fear snakes or tigers before, while now the fear has shifted its ground into the domain of road accidents or man-made weapons of destruction which have become more and more fearful with the march of "progress."

To fear is nothing illegitimate or superstitious as long as human life is insecure, which happens to be more true in modern times than in times of antiquity or primitiveness. Prayerfulness for man is therefore always in order, always natural and legitimate. It is an attitude of the spirit in which it swings in its desire for security and peace between the poles of the self-preservation instinct *within* and the fear of the unknown *without*. In its amplitude it covers life values ranging from food here and now to freedom or happiness in the contingent aspect of life that is beyond.

Food is the first rung of the ladder of values reaching from the necessary to the contingent. The whole gamut of values in life may, without superstition or error, be referred to, as in antique scripture, as a golden ladder reaching from earth to heaven, the latter representing those higher contingent values which are as important as food or other necessities. A scientifically correct prayer should make reference to all unitive values which normally enter the life of man in a certain graded order. While it fingers the successive strings in the harp of life-values or interests true prayer stimulates in the Self an ineffable sense of peace or happy contentment. The wonder of the Absolute sustains the interest all through with its reliance on something that passes understanding.

All prayer thus comes to produce in the person who prays a sense of the *numinous* which, when analysed philosophically may be said to be of the very stuff and substance of the Absolute or its equivalent in common parlance, the Most High God. God and Happiness thus become equated.



**Prayer Implies a Bi-Polar Relation :** Prayer is a bridge between heaven and earth values while it is also a bi-polar relation between two aspects of the Absolute. Glorification, thankfulness, gratitude, abundant sense of enduring security, generosity that spreads evenly over all parts of the globe, all-inclusiveness of sympathy or kindliness, irrespective of subject or object—these are features common to all the best prayers.

Often we find that subject and object are interchangeable. God's attributes could apply as well to man. A correct human touch would only add and not detract from the status of Godhood. An angry or punishing God is needed for certain types of people, while God's kindness is meant to induce the same attitude in certain persons who pray. In Islam the prayer is conceived without indirectness or a third factor coming in, in a strict bi-polar sense. The idol or the interceding priest do not complicate or compromise the prayer or spoil its direct appeal. The Most High God who is the Generous and the Merciful One is able to induce the same attitude in the true believer by the very bi-polarity and directness of the call to Allah by the pure Islamic supplicant. The rhetoric of prayer has also to recognize this directness. The heaping of indirect epithets is inferior in style to those where God and Goodness are identified.

**Conditions of Correct Prayer Fulfilled in Varied Forms :** Prayer can have various forms without violating the possible forms of correct prayer. It is supposed by some modern theologians that only a monotheistically conceived prayer is correct. This view, however, does not make allowance for the verity, which is dialectical, of the Absolute being the meeting-place of all possible contradictions. God is *One* and *Many* at the same time. He is both *big* as well as *small*, *near* as well as *far*, *within* us and *without*. Pluralism and unity meet in a conceptual unitive nominalism in the correct dialectics as it applies to the Absolute, which the Most High is supposed to represent in every prayer. The sources or the wombs of God are *everywhere* and *nowhere* at the same time as the Upanishads would declare. Even the Bhagavad Gita refers to this when it states :

“Others too, sacrificing through the sacrifice of Wisdom, worship Me as the One and what is many, different and everywhere facing.”

The philosophical justification of this will take us to the pre-Socratic thinkers of ancient times such as Parmenides and Zeno referred to by Plato in his Republic where even the One and the Many are reconciled and understood unitively. Whether a prayer is conceived monotheistically or even when gods belong to a pantheon, hierarchically arranged, there cannot be any valid objection to a good prayer which fulfils the strict scientific requirements of prayer. This only requires that it should be contemplatively and dialectically conceived and that it should give primacy to the notion of the Absolute under whose aegis all other value-notions of the deity could be comprehended inclusively. As the gold coin could include all small change, the Absolute would cover all possible deities. The vast variety of human prayer which has ever consoled or helped man, viewed in this light, could all be considered valid or good.

If, however, the dialectics of prayer is consciously followed in any prayer, that would be the best kind.

**Unitive Prayer is a Darshana :** Indian Vedantic philosophy has what is called the *Darshana Sastra* which is a scientific method in which a central concept of Absolutist status is treated methodically and exactly as a vision of Truth. A diamond can have many facets. Truth or the central Absolute Value implied in all life may be approached from many angles, points of view, or through its many facets. Each such facet of Truth when studied within its own frame of reference or as it lives and moves within its four walls, constitutes a *darshana* or a vision. Thus we have the *Yoga Darshana* in which dialectical personal contemplative discipline is studied, and there is also the *Darshana* in which action (*Karma*) is the central concept chosen for correct contemplative dialectical treatment. Whichever may be the central value factor selected for a particular *Darshana* or vision of Truth, the method and the implied theory of knowledge would be the same. Prayer itself is thus capable of being treated as a Vision of Truth in which the prayerful attitude of the Self when equated to the non-Self, attains a status of the Wonder of the Absolute, with fear and self-preservation as its two poles. A global sense of a peace that passeth understanding characterizes the emotion or passion of prayer.

**Dualistic and Non-Dualistic Prayers :** The point of view of prayer must necessarily admit of a differential as between the one who prays and the one prayed to. Prayer must use the dual differential principle as at least its starting spring-board. The supplication that might sound abject or undignified in certain prayers is to be justified only on the score that it is what could supply the elasticity of the board from which devotees could dive properly into the mystery of the Unknown.

After thus taking off from firm ground, true prayer can make the spirit soar or sink or even do both in the most symmetrically conceived prayers. Sinking ontologically into existence is as important as soaring hypostatically into the higher worlds of the intelligibles. Whether prayer is a peroration, a sublime song or hymn rising or sinking into the scale of values that come within the range of contemplative life, whether a state of exaltation, submission or surrender is implicit therein, the core of correct prayer spells the formula of non-dual unity as expressed by the great sayings of the Vedanta such as "That Art Thou." God and Man become interchangeable in this sense, and then prayer fulfils its noblest purpose as far as the aspiration of the soul of the intelligent man is concerned. If we are to use the Buddhistic terminology which is wrongly understood to be atheistic and prayerless: The dewdrop slips into the shining sea.

**The Solipsist Principle Implicit in All Prayer :** Food has to correspond to hunger; so too prayer has to correspond to ability or need involved. A superior prayer grafted on to an inferior mind spoils the case for both the prayer and the man. The law of "to each according to his need and from each according to his ability" applies here also. A prayer could be conceived as a high philosophical vision, but if it does not touch the heart of the devotee it fails to be valuable to that extent. Gold could have a high value, but a hungry man would give away his gold to get his bread. Sublime prayers need not thus be superior to simple ones

as long as the component parts, as in a good meal, are found in both.

This law of solipsist compensation makes all correct prayers have the same constant value. A child eats less food but gets a unit of satisfaction, and surfeit of food is a meaningless absurdity. True prayer has thus to be composed by a master mind in such a way as to square with the needs and aspirations of the devotee or the common man as a representative member of the human race. The Most High God and the God of the Here and the Now have to be praised or supplicated through epithets that help us to appraise the Absolute affectively and intellectually at once. Cosmology, psychology, philosophy and eschatology have to be cleverly woven into the fabric of a true prayer.

**The Law of Reciprocity in Prayer :** In the Lord's Prayer of Christianity there is a very intriguing phrase which we ought to notice before understanding fully the dialectical implications of prayer. "Forgive us our trespasses (debts) as we also have forgiven those who trespass against us (our debtors)," like the other biblical saying: "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," are corollaries of this law of reciprocity, involved in our correct relationship to the Absolute. Unilaterism would not work here. Prayer, like the quality of mercy of Shakespeare is a double blessing. "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." A killer cannot pray for his life to be saved by God, as Guru Narayana puts the verity, (*Jivakarunya Panchakam*). "We do pray for mercy; and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy" is another Shakespearean dictum with the same law implied therein.

Correctly conceived prayers in which the Absolute Principle is given full primacy in whatever variety of rhetoric written, or with whatever human value is implicit in them, have the same status as prayers. Prayer knows no distinction of publican or pharisee, master of slave, priest or sinner, as long as normative and unitive human values enter therein, always under the aegis of the Absolute. [END]

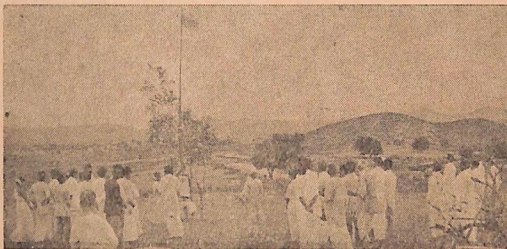
## The Narayana Guru World Conference at Bangalore

( contd. from page 81 )

cides with the religious ideas contained in the Holy Books of the ancient Jews and will cure many difficulties arising from apartheid and caste which are a bane on humanity in places where these are held as principles guiding human action. All good wishes.

**Ernest Kirk, Editor LIFE, Coimbatore:** If I have any "message" at all it would be by way of a suggestion to the devotees to more strenuously endeavour to recognize and realize that all outer and sometimes apparently different and conflicting manifestations of the One Infinite Life Power, called by different names, are integral and essential parts of One Whole and that it would therefore be illusory to regard any apparently isolated expression of that Oneness, whether in the form of a person or a religious system, whether in the East or in the West, as either "superior" or "inferior." [END]

# The Narayana Guru World



HOISTING THE ABSOLUTIST FLAG

SUNDAY, October, 27, 1957, marked a memorable date in the annals of that Absolutist movement, the Narayana Gurukula, for on that day over fifty lovers of Narayana Guru fully representative of the four linguistic groups of South India, made the pilgrimage to the Narayana Gurukula World Centre thirteen miles south of Bangalore City, and dedicated themselves to the revalued global teachings of Guruhood under the inspiring direction of Nataraja Guru.

Good weather prevailed—a beautifully fresh and rainless day in the middle of the north-east monsoon, the sun's heat tempered by a bank of clouds. On the wide green acres of the Gurukula estate, with its lovely view of rolling hills and distant mountains, wild nature contributed to emphasizing the freedom, repose and neutral happiness at the core of the Guru's teaching.

Visitors came from many places, by bus, motor-cycle and by car, and about one dozen young men cycled out from the city in a procession, wearing yellow badges and bearing placards conveying the casteless message of Narayana Guru. Most had brought their own lunch and there was a constant supply of lemonade and tea for the thirsty.

Nataraja Guru, accompanied by Yati Nitya Chaitanya and Swami Kevalananda, came up at 11 a.m. from the sister Gurukula Retreat of Somanhalli some five miles distant. He was received by John Spiers, the Head of the World Centre and convenor of the Conference, and conducted to the dais, where he was garlanded on behalf of the assembly by Mr. K. K. Narayanan.

**Global and Absolutist Flag:** The yellow flag with its green

## Conference at Bangalore

World Man on a plain globe, representing World Government and World Citizenship, was already flying above the simple country cottage which has been the office-home of the Gurukula World Centre for the last five years; and the unadorned yellow silk banner of the Narayana Gurukula itself was raised at a simple ceremony, by Mrs. Padma Kumar, thus consecrating the Conference fully to both aspects of the Absolute, the down-to-earth atmosphere of One World and the pure spiritual aspect of Guruhood's Wisdom which reaches into the beyond.

After a simple welcome by John Spiers, all adjourned for open air lunch, and to share also their common loyalty to the spiritual leadership of Narayana Guru and his successor in Guruhood, Nataraja Guru. This mutual exchange by linguistic groups meeting thus for the first time on neutral soil under a common ideal, was itself justification for the holding of the Conference.

**Guru Darshana:** Promptly at 1-30 p.m. Mrs. Madhavan, after the garlanding of the portrait of Narayana Guru by all gathered together and sat at the feet of the Guru, in time honoured style. One wondered how many times on the antique soil of South India such an event had taken place. This opportunity for what is known as *Guru darshana*, the adoption of the Guru by all his spiritual sons and daughters, as disciples and Gurus-to-be, was the very precious heart of the Conference, giving it the living touch.

All the wisdom teachers or Gurus of India, inclusive of the ortho-



"VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU . . ." GURU AND DISCIPLES



dox such as those within the Vedic and Agamic traditions, and the heterodox such as the Buddhists and Jainas, have maintained this tradition. It was also the chief part of the life of the ancient Prophets of Judaism, of the life of Christ and Mohammed, although in these traditions, since the development of hard and fast religious organizations, the tradition has perhaps gone out of use. It was there clearly enough in the source books, though only in India the precious tradition of recognition of a living master of wisdom, still remains a living reality. This then, is another aspect of the Conference which needs mention, and the tradition of Guru darshana was certainly here in full strength. Twenty-four new disciples joined the Yellow Fellowship.

After the recital by Nitya of two of the compositions of Narayana Guru, his famous *Universal Prayer* (see page 88) and his *Verses on Caste* various messages to the Conference were read by John Spiers. Some excerpts from these will be found at the end of this Report.

**Proposals :** Several proposals were then submitted to Nataraja Guru for consideration.

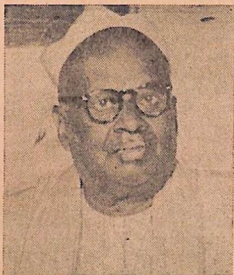
Mr. K. K. Narayanan proposed the setting up of an auditorium and reading room for the Gurukula Movement somewhere centrally situated in Bangalore provided with all modern facilities for the promotion of the teachings of the Guru.

Nataraja Guru suggested that this could best be achieved by first renting a room and arousing enough public interest, so as to first prove the need of such an institution and that if this were done, in all probability the later collection of adequate funds would be easy.

Mr. A. M. Dharmalingam proposed that since the Gurukula Movement had now taken on a world background, and become a World Movement, it was necessary to maintain freedom from any sectarian or relativistic symbolism or practice belonging to any exclusive religion, and particularly to remain free from all the associations of a caste nature whether based on colour or birth etc. There should also be freedom from intemperance, meat-eating, animal sacrifices, superstitious beliefs in hell and heaven, personal gods in human form, idolatry, wasteful bhakti cults, meaningless ritual and the subservience of womanhood.

**Revaluation of the old :** In the course of his discussion of this proposal, Nataraja Guru dealt with the subject of the revaluation of the old or separative forms of religion in the light of a universalist or Absolutist attitude. There could be no countenancing of anything that separated man from man. If people liked to give themselves national or caste names one could take them *as names only* without accepting the old

*The Narayana Gurukula is an institutional body comprising the disciples of its Head, Nataraja Guru, the foremost disciple of Narayana Guru, in order to sustain the wisdom of Guruhood. Under the motto "Of One God, One faith and One Kind is Man" it is open to all. For particulars, write in to VALUES.*



NATARAJA GURU

implications attached to them. It was up to the Gurukula to give all these old ways of life a revised interpretation in unitive terms so that life would not be broken up and another dogma replace an old one. We should stand above all dogmas and the Absolutist position was above all religions and all gods. Caste was given a new and better meaning by Narayana Guru and his same method could be applied to all usages, symbolisms and rituals coming down from the past.

The position of the Absolutist and Gurukula properties had also to be protected. He himself had taken the outward form of a *sannyasin* with

yellow dress because such forms gave a recognized legal status to the Absolutist in the context of Indian or Hindu life. It was up to the Absolutist to take what was universal and worthwhile from what actually existed as coming from the past and to ignore or reject unwanted or relativist features. As long as there was only this legal recognition under traditional Indian law, this was a necessary precaution which need not compromise the Absolutism implicit in the all-out neutrally unitive position of the Advaitin.

**Aeroplane Analogy :** Like the two wheels of an aeroplane, the orthodox and the heterodox, or the religious practitioner and the rationalist, were both transcended as soon as the plane soared into the sky. In the same way the absolutist was free from entanglement or attachment to either side, living in a new and unitive element. This was a very difficult matter to explain, and itself accounted for the immense difficulty found by many readers in understanding much of the writing in *VALUES* where this new kind of thought was presented. The weaning process had to be done in such a way that the take-off into the free absolutist atmosphere would be done with the least amount of pain or trouble to all concerned. He fully understood and agreed with the spirit of the proposal but only suggested an absolutist rather than a relativist approach to the subject.

**Support for "Values" :** Mr. H. Krishnamurthy proposed the securing of Government aid for the Gurukula Movement.

Nataraja Guru said this might mean being under the obligation to a government servant and would remove the essential spirit of outright service and free giving which was the very basis of Gurukula life.

Mr. R. A. Kotyan proposed that the greatest effort should be made for the promotion of *VALUES* so as to enable the magazine to be fully self-sufficient and to endeavour to get it counterparted into the various

languages. This required no comment !

**Resolutions :** Among the resolutions passed by the Conference, the following can be noted :

As the Guru Narayana's philosophy was not given any recognition so far at a university level, the Gurukula should found an Institute of Higher studies in Bangalore with this end in view.

As a body representing a cross-section of the chief linguistic groups of South India, the home of India's far-famed spirituality, meeting on world soil dedicated to the Absolute, as individuals each dedicated to that Absolutist World Teacher, Narayana Guru and to his spiritual successor, Nataraja Guru, those attending the Conference collectively and individually took this opportunity of affirming the almost lost principle of Guruhood and of the Wisdom of the Absolute which Guruhood implies, as the heart of that same spirituality, and as essential for the welfare of humanity, and resolved to do all in their power to further this bi-polar principle and this unitive Science of the Absolute, to the utmost of their understanding, under the guidance of Nataraja Guru and the Narayana Gurukula Movement.

**Loyalty to World Government :** It was further resolved as particularly needful for the saving of mankind from further disaster, to recognize the fact of World Government and to affirm primal loyalty always to humanity as *de facto* World Citizens, without infringing relative and secondary loyalties of natural or regional origin.

It was also resolved that, while affirming the Absolute Principle as supreme, with its highest expression in the principle of Guruhood, to embrace all its special manifestations as these appeared in the many religions and faiths dear to humanity, wherever they stood for the happiness of each and all.

It was also resolved that since only unitive understanding and world-wide recognition of the non-dual Absolute Principle would assure true happiness, peace and prosperity for humanity, to root out from their minds all symbolism productive of rivalry, and to spread this new thought far and wide to the utmost of their power by all peaceful and rightful means, and to give no room whatsoever to anything like caste, communalism or nationalism which disturbed the essential unity of humanity.

Lastly, it was resolved to have quarterly gatherings of the present group of disciples at the same place, and to have at least monthly meetings in town.

The Conference closed at 4 p.m. after which there was a tea party, in which many of the surrounding villagers participated.

## MESSAGES TO THE NARAYANA GURU WORLD CONFERENCE

**Harry S. Jakobsen, Long Valley, N. J., U. S. A. :** This occasion seems to suggest the beginning of a new world attitude. Surely under the auspices of a genuine Jnani Dakshina-murti this is something of an unusual event historically and one silently prays that words that make man better will come forth.

It may perhaps seem to the Tamils and the people of the South that they do not count in world affairs where atom bombs and mechanization is dominant, and perhaps it is so in the activity of mass destruction. On the other hand, the Tamil land is yielding reconciling Wisdom to a harassed world today as in the long-forgotten past.

It is not always easy to demonstrate the actual effect that this South Indian Wisdom has had on a slaughter-mad humanity, because in any event, Wisdom has never been nor can it be observable to the newspaper world of humanity, nor provable by mathematical sciences. This very fact is of course capitalized on to the highest degree possible, by science, religion and education, so that they can retain their ever-expanding production of problems and evade the rational solutions given by genuine Wisdom. It is indeed a war of supremacy between the sciences of creating human problems, and the Science of Solutions to human problems, that Atmavidya is engaged in. And we are happy indeed to report to the homeland of Wisdom, that a counter-attack on human injustice has begun in the very breeding-ground of human confusion—in the most dominant center of misleading education in New York City : Columbia University.

A young man, a former student of Columbia, who originally suspected that Columbia's claims were merely the empty boasting of the advertiser proclaiming his academic wares, has questioned their right to receive money under such false claims.

This has been tried before by various bold and intelligent men. In the past they have been assassinated and tortured to death by the church and by other authoritarians, and but rarely have they succeeded in upsetting the smug and cruel officers of methodical confusion. Roy Jacobsen, the young bold man in question, has stopped their conspiracy to have him put out of the way by legal means.

Now the point is that this is due to the education of the Jnanin of Mysore, Dr. Natarajan, who consented to educate me and I in turn have educated Mr. Jacobsen to right reasoning.



THE WORLD FLAG FLIES OVER THE GURUKULA

Thus it is that in one rare instance, the "silent" influence of Wisdom, coming directly from the land where the contemplative sage is honored, is effective again in restoring common sense to the educational system.

I am happy indeed to say to you, the villagers and also rulers of the ancient South, that this is indeed the greatest contribution that any section of humanity can contribute to a suffering world. It comes from your own approval and support of the Science of Wisdom, a science which with certainty has had its most fertile ground in South India among the indigenous Tamils and Dravidians. It comes from your support and glorification of the Guru, be it Sankara, Tiruvalluvar, the sages of the Upanishads, or a modern Narayana Guru or the still-living Guru Natarajan.

It is no exaggeration that it will be the fully developed educational methods of Wisdom, as formulated by your own sages, that will yet restore happiness to humanity. Bless you and your great men of Wisdom.

**Mrs. Beryl Ashworth, Kent, England:** I do trust that the Guru's message of Unity will spread to every corner of the earth. Meetings such as this will do much to further that ideal and help man to be more tolerant towards man—and to be more merciful to the animals, as the Guru was an animal lover too.

**V. Sivanandan, Bahrain, Persian Gulf:** [In a long communication, this friend suggests that the S.N.D.P. Yogam and the Billawar Associations and other groups loyal to the Guru, should rally under the aegis of the Narayana Gurukula and give due and proper recognition to Nataraja Guru, diverting at least ten per cent of their funds for the publication of the works of Narayana Guru in the various world languages as well as giving all-out support for VALUES and to enable this magazine to be published also in the various languages of India; to appeal to the Government of India to declare Narayana Guru's birthday as an all-Indian holiday, and to remove utterly all caste designations from the various forms still in use by public and private bodies in India.]

**P. C. Ragavan, Colombo, Ceylon:** Sri Narayana's teachings have begun to be taken note of in many parts of the world through the writings and addresses of his foremost disciple Dr. Natarajan and of late through VALUES. It is therefore proper for you to hold a seminar for by the way the world is tending, this comes not a day too early.

Man's successful quest into problems of motion and flight opens up vistas for his material advancement. Not so spectacular have been his studies into the realms of the mind, and these remain pitifully small indeed. On your workers therefore rests the task of taking up the strains of your Bangalore discussions and giving the message of the Guru an audience still larger than what it has received till now.

**K. Dharmadas, Gurukula S-E Asia Office, Singapore:** Very glad to hear of the planned celebration in that lovely part of the world where the World Centre of the Gurukula Movement shines, where Garry Davis established the capital for the World Government and where our beloved Nataraja Guru, the next-of-kin spiritually of Narayana Guru,



was born. The history of the next generation will show the importance of Bangalore and its contribution to the peace-loving world during this Atomic Century.

In sending this greeting to all who attend the Conference, I make an appeal to each that universal brotherhood is the essential thing, to reach which we should travel down that lovely road cleared and opened to every human being by that great leader Narayana Guru, with the Sankaracharya of this century, Nataraja Guru, to guide us. But what we should have is the will-power to listen patiently to what the Guru says and to get this through in our day-to-day life.

**M. D. Raghavan, Ethnologist Emeritus, Ceylon Government, Colombo:** My thoughts are with you today on the occasion of the Conference on Guru Narayana. It was among his functions in life to carry forward to its legitimate aspirations and practical application to humanity, the philosophy of Advaita, expounded by an earlier son of Kerala, Sankara. . . . All success to the Conference in its mission to spread the Word of the Guru, all the world over.

**Mr. and Mrs. Arjunan, Bombay:** We are present there in spirit. All success for the meeting.

**Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Kumaran, Madras:** We congratulate the organizers of the Narayana Guru World Conference to be held in Bangalore for deciding to hold this in the name of world peace and man's welfare, under Guru Narayana's motto. With his foremost disciple Guru Natarajan with us to lead us on in the way of the Guru, we venture to say that the present moment is the most opportune to initiate global policies for the unitive thinking and spiritual awakening of all mankind, when the man in the street has started thinking in terms of one world, and one mankind by seeing the man-made satellite spinning around the earth. We hope and pray that the Conference will pay due attention to the aspect in which women can help in furthering the spread of Narayana Guru's message to the world. We wish the function all success.

**O. K. Shanmukham, Trichinopoly:** All success for the World Conference.

**A. Nagaratnam, Erode:** All blessings are due to the World Conference.

**H. I. Leyland-Naylor, Bangalore:** May heaven's choicest blessings be showered upon all those devotees of Narayana Guru attending the World Conference.

**A. Elangkovan, Editor, Chinthanai Pathipakam, Madras:** I wish the function great success. Let Sri Narayana Guru bless us all and give a new orientation of life.

**Abrah B. Salem, Cochin:** Narayana Guru's teachings of One God, One Faith and One Humanity is of course identical with that of the Hebrews. Your great Guru said the important thing in all States and in society is that man should become good. That is a great truth. That should be remembered by all classes of mankind, man including woman. In law the masculine includes the feminine and the singular includes the plural and vice-versa. This adage of a modern Guru coin-

*(contd. on page 73)*

# The Guruhood of Christ

By JOHN SPIERS

By the time this issue of *VALUES* reaches our overseas readers, Christmas will be close at hand. This ancient festival, so full of welcome joy and light, parties and gaiety, is in striking contrast to the rather grim thoughts conjured up usually by the solemn gloom of church-going. As we mentioned briefly last month, the Christmas side of the present Christian religion is accepted even by the "pagans" or "heathens" as worthwhile to recognize. Indeed, many evangelists and respectable institutions like the American Bible Society, have become aware that the dismal side of their religion has a dampening effect on their chances of survival. Thus, instead of the austere approach, we find attempts at brightening church services by getting good singers and even something like a theatrical chorus or a dramatic group, to broadcast the Christian message abroad. Bibles too are no longer black-covered and forbidding books, but are produced with brightly colored pictures and attractive covers, using the latest devices of the printing world to "put the Gospel across."

If so much is possible within the churches themselves, and if all sorts of modern mediums like the movies and T-V can be used for the revision of the whole Christian movement, there is no reason at all why an even bolder and more serious step should be taken to revalue the entire structure of Christianity, so that the essential teaching of Jesus Christ could be understood and accepted without the historical accretions which have accumulated around it almost within a generation from his own time.

**Teacher with Disciples :** Without offence, we would say to begin with, that the average Christian missionary has far more to learn of the basic teaching of Christ from the Indian "heathen" than the same "heathen" have to learn from the missionary. The word translated as "heathen" just means Gentile or non-Jew.

We have given this article the title "The Guruhood of Christ." All Christians know that Christ was a Guru, a Teacher of Wisdom, having a number of disciples, both a carefully chosen inner group of a dozen who moved around constantly with him, and a wider group of seventy or more who were also accepted disciples, but whose discipline was less exacting. The words A.D. meaning *anno Domini*—"in the year of the Master"—in the sense that a dominie is the head of a philosophical school, are also in common use.

Such a notion of a Guru with disciples is familiar throughout the Eastern world. Every villager in India accepts the idea that Gurus have existed and still exist. Oddly enough, it is only among the moderns that the idea seems foreign or absent. There is probably a reason for this, for there is all the difference in the world between what is understood by religion today and what is implied in terms of the spiritual life by the concept of Guruhood.

**The Two Kinds of Religion:** There are two kinds of spirituality, two kinds of religion, two kinds of society, two kinds of ethics, and two ways of thinking involved in this discussion. The French philosopher Henri Bergson has summed them up very clearly and with ample illustration in his master-work, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*. This book which was the crowning achievement of his career, the result of twenty years of reflection, has not had the appreciation it deserves. Although published in English in 1935, it gets no place in such a popular book as Will Durant's *Story of Philosophy*, although 14 pages are given to Bergson's philosophy and most of his other books mentioned. This omission is remarkable and a pity. What we are concerned with is Bergson's clear demarcation of the two sorts of religion, the one which he calls open, the other, the closed type.

These two kinds of religion could also be called the Absolutist type and the Relative, the freedom-loving kind and the legalistic or hide-bound. The former pivots round a Guru, the latter around a creed or set belief. The Absolutist religion, standing completely above all organizations and institutions, is individualistic, in essence depending entirely upon the relationship between the disciple and the Teacher. The Relativist religion, banking upon a fixed doctrine, depends upon the quantitative size of a congregation, the existence of special places of worship, the adoption of set rules of behaviour, invariably adopts ritual, attention to some holy book or revelation, and in time has a massive ideology as well as a terminology and symbolism which sharply divides it from others of the same pattern.

**The World Teacher:** The Absolutist type of religion, on the other hand, is open enough to have the closest resemblances wherever it arises. Thus the much misunderstood mystics of the various religions, as Aldous Huxley and many other students of comparative religion and philosophy have pointed out so exhaustively, all talk a common language, and even use a common imagery, a *lingua mystica*, easily recognizable.

Surely this is a good thing! Surely we should be as reasonable in a matter like this as we are in understanding that there can be only one science of physics. When we cancel out all the differences between the doctrines of the rival religions in the world, what is left is very easy to accept and understand. Invariably the essential thing is the presence, not of the founder of a relativistic religion, but of a typically representative, universalist, Absolutist Teacher or Guru.

To that august company of universal wise men, Jesus Christ most certainly belongs, and it is only blind relativistic vanity on a par with the menace of nationalism and other caste conceits, which induces the exclusiveness or separateness of one World Guru from another. Indeed, Jesus Christ can only be accepted as a World Guru or World Teacher on

the assumption that humanity from time to time has produced a number of such individuals. In India, the World Teacher is known as the *Jagat Guru*.

**Background of Revaluation:** Every communication of a wisdom character, or dealing with the open way of spirituality or Absolutism, has its own background of time and place. The closed worlds of belief and social customs with their various inherited patterns of thought, but containing ancient modes of spirituality, are the only medium available to the Absolutist Guru to put across his message of an open or universalist character. We do not agree with nationalist closed loyalties, but we have to mention them before we can revalue nationalism to include the whole world. The author of the *Bhagavad Gita*, for example, does not agree with the Vedic notions of caste, or the Vedic ritual of worship of separate deities and special sacrifices, but he has to employ these terms in a new or Absolutist way. In short, he has to revalue the old closed ways and burst them open by giving them a new interpretation.

If an outright breakaway was made, human beings would be drifting in a more bewildered fashion than ever. If a tree is stunted, mildewed and covered with weeds and parasites, the tree doctor does not save the tree by cutting it away from its roots. He clears away only the excrescences and makes it healthy by giving it proper manure and thus instils fresh life into it, so that it can thrive as a proper tree should. In some such way, the Absolutist wise man clears the mind of humanity of the weeds and stultifying notions that keep it from being sound and human, and pours the water of plain common sense into the human roots so that the individual will be whole and happy.

We have given below an example of the very close accord of Jesus' teaching on the all-important subject of discipleship, by parallel quotations taken from the Bible and from the Upanishads. These are both instructions from venerable sources for the living of the Absolutist life.

**Relativist Nature of Creeds:** When Jesus talks of belief, it is not belief in a creed. What are known today as the Christian creeds came very much later in history and can be well dispensed with. What Jesus means is affiliation to the Guru and to faith in his Wisdom and to himself as its exponent. The interminable squabbles about creeds which lasted for about six centuries after Christ, were all based on the relativistic error of trying to close-in his open teaching. In that process, the concept of Guruhood was inevitably sacrificed for the sake of a social organization. Once achieved, the field was open for heresy-hunting and for the ruthless dictatorship of whatever church happened to win enough adherents. The rightness of a special church is just the same as the rightness of any dominant political body. Particular "civilizations" or ideologies are also "right" for the same reason of sheer force of numbers and possession of the means to maintain authority and power.

It has all been very deplorable, and it is high time that all sensible seekers for truth should realize this, and thus avoid its possible repetition, whatever their religion may be. At any rate as far as Europe and America are concerned, humanity there has certainly suffered agonies because of a lack of understanding on this point. While immensely

attracted to the beauty of the teaching of Christ as given in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the horrible atrocities and uglinesses perpetrated by the various dominant churches have left a deep wound on the soul of Western humanity. It is a disgrace abounding, and the only way to remove it and heal the religious wounds of the Western consciousness is, as we suggest, to revalue properly the whole teaching of Christ.

**No Sanction for Missionaries :** When instructing his disciples, Jesus told them "Do not stray into the pagan lands; and go into no Samaritan city. Go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." (*Matthew*, x, 5-6). Yet in the *Acts* (chapter xv), after the death of Jesus, and mainly through the special interpretations of Paul and Peter, a contrary way is taken! They hardly ever refer to the teaching of Jesus, but invariably to the Jewish scriptures, for their authority in going to the

## COMPARE THESE STATEMENTS

Here, side by side for easy comparison, we give the qualifications for discipleship given by Jesus and those given in the Indian Upanishad text.

### New Testament

I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me.

(*Matthew*, x, 35-37)

If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

(*Luke*, xiv, 26)

Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass for your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his hire. (*Matthew*, x, 9-10)

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. . . .

Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.

(*Matthew*, vi, 25-26)

### Paramahamso Upanishad

Having renounced his sons, friends, wife and relations, servants, cattle, home and fields, and having done away with the sacred tuft of hair on his head, the holy thread, the study of the Vedas, and all ritualist works, as well as the world, he should use the loin cloth, the staff, and just enough clothes, etc., for the bare maintenance of his body, not because he needs them, but for 'the good of all' who recognize what it means, that this is a *sannyasin*. . . And that is not final. . . he feels neither cold nor heat, neither happiness nor misery, neither honour nor contempt (like a child absorbed in play). . . The *sannyasin* has no home. He should not accept anything made of gold or the like. He should not accept wealth.



Gentiles or non-Jews. Soon the whole of the Greco-Roman region, covering Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor and Rome itself, is overspread by these zealous propagandists of a new religion, and we see them arguing with the faithful of other religions as Jesus *never* did. But we in our time are so used to thinking that Jesus approved of missionary propaganda, that we hardly ever bother to go to the source texts themselves. Thus the whole question of whether interference with the faiths of others was ever part of the teaching of Jesus is never raised. But we do raise it here.

**The Error of Peter and Paul:** Paul quotes Amos for the sanction of spreading the religion of Jesus as he conceived it. This choice itself is odd. First of all, Amos was not a real prophet at all. He was no Guru in the sense that he had any claim to be the "son" of any former prophet or Guru. We have this admission from Amos himself: "I was no prophet (i.e. wise man or Guru), neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit; and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." (*Amos*, VII, 14-15).

Paul too, had his vision of God talking to him. However individually inspired they may have been, it was individual insight alone, both in Paul's case as in the case of Amos. And in both instances, Amos and Paul were deeply concerned with the political destinies of the "their" people, the Jews. That Paul, himself a self-styled Christian should skip over Jesus' teachings and go back to a self-styled prophet who stood alone outside the Guru-disciple prophetic line itself, reveals both the wilfulness as well as the intellectual cleverness of Paul. It also shows how strong the tendency was to revert to the very static type of religion which Jesus himself was continually revising and revaluating, in terms of an open way of spiritual life.

Here we have the breakaway from the discipleship pattern established so clearly by Jesus. We can also see Peter and Paul in the same *Acts*, dominating the gathering of elders, and getting the agreement of these elderly disciples for their new line of conversion, preaching and missionary work. It is hardly too much to assume that from this point onwards, the Christian way of life ceases to be the free and open Wisdom teaching of a Guru, but becomes a systematized type of rival religion in the old world, shocking to the more mature understanding of people like the Greeks. Paul goes to Athens and they call him mad. They were quite right! He goes to Ephesus and sets the town in an uproar with his iconoclastic interference and intolerance. Jesus would not have used such methods. No wonder many students of Christianity who have studied their New Testament have asked themselves whether the name Christianity is not itself a wrong term, and whether it should rather be called Paulism or Peterism!

**Striking Contrasts:** We can give here just another instance of the difference between the teaching of a Guru and the relativistic attitude of the zealous religionist. We know how Jesus was always accused of being friendly with outcasts from the Jewish religion (translated in the biblical text as "sinners") and with all who were condemned by orthodox society. Yet he had even said that the publicans (i.e. tax-

collectors) and harlots would enter the kingdom of heaven before the priests and the Jews (*Matthew* XXI, 31). Jesus never drove anybody away, except the market-traders in the temple. He said "Judge not that you be not judged." (*Matthew*, VII, 1). Yet in Paul's famous letters to the church bodies he had established, which are given equal status in the New Testament with the four Gospels where Jesus' actual words are recorded, we find Paul continually passing judgment on his congregation. He tells them not to associate with immoral men and he even quotes old Jewish texts such as *Deuteronomy* to "Drive out the wicked person from among you." (*Corinthians*, v). Jesus attended weddings, but Paul hated marriage and thought sex was disgusting and disgraceful. He "wished that all were as I myself am." "It is well to remain single as I do. . . . It is better to marry than to be aflame with passion." (*Corinthians*, VIII, 1-9).

**A Political Murder:** Jesus certainly acknowledged the ancient Gurus of the past, and claimed to be one with Moses and the other great Gurus of the Hebrews. But he never wanted a new religion. Look again at that list of instructions to his disciples. He told his disciples "foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (*Matthew*, VIII, 20).

The Murder of Jesus himself was due to a political misunderstanding based on relativistic interpretations of his teaching. Pilate was much wiser than the Jewish priests who saw the danger to their closed and codified religion and who charged Jesus, not on that ground, but on the entirely false charge that he was trying to set up an earthly kingdom. Pilate knew they were wrong. Being a man of education, he had probably an inkling of what a proper Guru and philosopher meant. But just as the British in India in order to maintain their rule had to tolerate caste injustices within the framework of Hindu law, so Pilate had to give in to the Jewish Brahmins and thus accede to the execution of Jesus.

But the greatest injustice to Jesus is to take away his Guru status and to replace it with a puerile relativistic dogma of narrow content, setting him up as a rival religious leader, for obvious purposes of consolidating a dominant Western society. All tyrannies are bad, but the religious credal or ideological kind is the worst. It must be the task of all earnest lovers of Jesus Christ to restore his Guruhood and thus put an end once and for all, to the great disservice done to him by the relativists. When that is done, Jesus will be openly welcomed and acknowledged by the whole of humanity, and especially by the millions of peasants in India and other oriental lands who understand the value of Guruhood and true spirituality.

[END]

## HOWLERS

Faith is that thing which enables us to believe what we know to be untrue.

Martin Luther died a horrible death. He was excommunicated by a bull.

The dome of St. Pauls is supported by eight peers, all of which are unfortunately cracked.

# A Prayer for Humanity

By NARAYANA GURU

TRANSLATED WITH A COMMENTARY BY NATARAJA GURU

*The following Universal Prayer was composed by Narayana Guru (1854-1928) in 1914. It is here translated by his disciple, Nataraja Guru, in a clear and simple style which does not attempt to suggest the sweet music of the original Malayalam, but which does try to give the absolutist touch which justifies it as a contemplative prayer suitable for all mankind, irrespective of their religious affiliations.*

MAN does not live by bread alone. He needs to balance his life from another pole which touches unseen values which are at least as real as bread and more inevitable. This factor may be named "Freedom" after the manner of constitutions of governments which always take care to provide for such a contingent aspect of life under the happiness they wish to guarantee. There are other items of this contingent aspect of life which satisfy the keen hungers from which man is prone to suffer from time to time.

Prayer has a general toning effect on the spirit of man, especially at moments when he feels flat, insipid or out of joint. It gives him a reorientation and a confidence in his relation to the larger reality with which he is one. As right food can give health and strength, correct prayer with properly prayerful attitudes can induce a sanity of outlook which can spell the freedom and happiness of each man or mankind.

Tribal and parochial gods are good as far as they go, but a correctly conceived universal prayer as it would apply to the whole of humanity is at present an imperative desideratum. Insecurity and fear are at least conditions equally common to modern as to primitive life. The modern intelligent man has to fear his own evil side if primitive man feared the wrath of God. Prayer is meant to remedy the uncertainty of insecurity and fear whether from the side of man or the Unknown.

On being requested by some disciples for a common prayer suitable for young and old, rich and poor, learned and simple, Narayana Guru composed the following prayer, treating it as a *darshana* or vision of the Absolute, with a method and a theory of its own, without resorting to any concepts belonging to any closed religious growth extant in the world today. This composition of ten verses thus deserves, because of the scientific correctness in which it is conceived, and by its universal appeal, to be considered as a "Prayer for Humanity."

We first give it in full and then follow with notes on each of the verses.

O God, as ever from there, keep watch on us here,  
Never letting go your hand!  
You are the Great Captain  
And the mighty steamship on the ocean of change and becoming is your foot.

Counting all here, one by one,  
When all things touched are done with,  
Then the seeing eye ( alone ) remains.  
So let the inner self in you attain its rest.

Food, clothes, and all else we need  
You give to us unceasingly,  
Ever saving us, seeing us well-provided.  
Such a one, You, are for us our only Chief.

As ocean, wave, wind and depth  
Let us within see the scheme  
Of us, of nescience,  
Your glory and you.

You are creation, the Creator,  
And the magical variety of created things.  
Are You not, O God,  
Even the substance of creation too !

You are Maya,  
The Agent thereof and its Enjoyer too ;  
You are that Good One also who removes Maya too,  
To grant the Unitive State !

You are the Existent, the Subsistent and the Value-Factor Supreme.  
You are the Present and the Past,  
And the Future is none else but You.  
Even the spoken word, when we consider it, is but You alone.

Your state of Glory that fills  
Both inside and outside  
We for ever praise !  
Victory be, O God, to You !

Victory to You ! Great and Radiant One !  
Ever intent upon saving the needy !  
Victory to You, Perceptual Abode of Joy !  
Ocean of Mercy, Hail !

In the ocean of Your Glory  
Of great profundity,  
Let us all, together, become sunk  
To dwell therein everlastingly in Happiness !

*O God, as ever from there, keep watch on us here,  
Never letting go your hand!  
You are the Great Captain  
And the mighty steamship on the ocean of change and becoming  
is your foot.*

PRAYERS present God usually in an antique setting from which the Guru here, by the apt analogy of the steamship, which symbolizes our machine age, gives a revised setting long overdue. God is further compared to its Captain. Between the heavy ship and the intelligent helmsman sitting unseen and apart in his top cabin, there is a delicate dialectical relation to be noted. At a moment of stress or anxiety the passengers trust the captain and rely on him, whether they happen themselves to be intelligent or not. The ship is the foot of God inasmuch as, by taking refuge in it, the man or woman concerned is saved from the ups and downs of life's eternal process of change and becoming. Relativist life is full of anxiety and Absolutism, represented by the Most High God is what can save. Touching the foot is the surrender to the Absolute which is here implied.

The reference to "God" might be considered outmoded by some who give primacy to the material side of life only. Even when Bread and Freedom are treated correctly according to the dialectics of these value-factors, the term God, in so far as it has found place in the dictionaries of every language in the world, need not be discarded or treated as outmoded. When the content of the term God has been restated precisely in this prayer, it cannot be objected to, in view of its common human familiarity and homely simplicity. It is the most natural word on the lips of a fatigued labourer or poor peasant who might represent common humanity more truly than any other type or unit in society.

*Counting all here, one by one,  
When all things touched are done with,  
Then the seeing eye (alone) remains.  
So let the inner self in You attain its rest.*

THE unitive attitude implied in contemplation is here explained. We are surrounded by a multiplicity of interests which lead to rivalries and conflicts tending to keep the mind agitated. Ever new interests take the centre of our life. The first prerequisite is to steady and calm the mind by fixing it on a value in life that is not multiple, conflicting or relativistic. The unitive and universal Absolute Principle is what affords the steadying and calming ground for the consciousness to relate itself.

The person who is attracted by objective manifold interests finds in himself, as the Seer (of multiplicity) that steadying and unitive factor which would relate him at once with the Absolute Principle which God represents. Thus God is to be found in each one of us irrespective of



within or without. The Devotee and the God become thus interchangeable terms. One thus gets affiliated to a vertical scale of unitive values, the whole gamut of which could be covered contemplatively, ascending to God as the highest value above, and descending to general Happiness as an actual value here and now. These are the two limits in the scale within whose amplitude this prayer may be seen to oscillate, as indicated by the opening and closing concepts here, which are God and Happiness, respectively.

3

*Food, clothes, and all else we need  
You give to us unceasingly,  
Ever saving us, seeing us well-provided  
Such a one, You, are for us our only Chief.*

LIFE has an aspect which, like a river, flows on in time. Non-mechanistically or contemplatively viewed, we find that the very fact that each one of us has survived to pray, is proof of the bounty of God who has stood by us through thick and thin through all phases and crises. As a tree in flower may be richer than an emperor's crown, each person is to be grateful for that generous Principle which makes life full and well-provided with daily necessities. To keep the family pot boiling and the wolf from the door, God's generosity has to count, to be recognized with natural gratitude by the man, woman and child concerned. The day labourer does not come to recognize God through philosophy or through high metaphysics. The natural contact is through the link of hunger or necessity. The proletarian father of a family can hardly fail to recognize this Principle of continuity which runs through daily life and arrive, at least, at a common sense notion of what is meant by God, without the need of any theology or cosmology.

The grace that a peasant father might naturally say before the family supper after a long day's work would be naturally by way of a grateful thought about the numbers of poor workers who had to work in the fields in rain or sun before a ball of rice could come to one's hands as food. Narayana Guru once suggested this form of grace in preference to those high-flown prayers in which everyday realities tended to be by-passed.

The reference to the One Chief is to show that leadership even in a workaday sense has to be focussed in one and not in all and sundry. The tendency to bow down to many masters, even by the poor, is here discountenanced. Middlemen between the common man's devotion and God are here ruled out and a strict bi-polarity of relation, exclusive of third factors, is here recommended.

4

*As ocean, wave, wind and depth  
Let us within see the scheme  
Of us, of nescience,  
Your glory, and you.*

HAVING indicated that the kingdom of God is within, this verse establishes the scheme of correlation of factors, whether subjective or objective, by reference to four of them which reveal a scheme of correlation between man and God. This verse contains the same quintessence of such sayings as "That Thou Art" known to Vedanta. An equation is here established which covers all contemplative doctrine as simply and directly as it could be done. God should be noted here as corresponding to the invisible and immaterial entity or mere dimension which is like the depth of the ocean. The expansive ocean is the visible or apparent horizontalized aspect of reality, which latter is itself hidden as the depth. Depth is not an object. God likewise is not a thing. He represents the string linking together all values, as the Gita would say, or a scale of values implied in the golden ladder on which angels ascend or descend as implied in Jacob's dream. God thus represents that Absolute Value which is the basis of all values here or hereafter. The implications of this verse are better left to the further elaboration of the devotee who resorts to this prayer.

5

*You are creation, the Creator,  
And the magical variety of created things.  
Are You not, O God,  
Even the substance of creation too !*

THE unitive understanding of God or the Absolute must abolish all possible duality as between cause and effect, subject and object, stuff or product, or even ends or means. Here creation is viewed from the unitive angle. Unity and multiplicity could be comprised centrally and neutrally as the Absolute which is implied in every partial notion. The Absolute is the hub of reality from which all spokes representing variety under different categories, may be said to radiate and diverge into evident manifestation, whether perceptually or actually. In the next two verses which refer to appearance and reality as such, we dive as it were to a more central and subtler notion from the gross and peripheral one to which order creation may be said to belong. Bheda (difference) is the basis of duality which is to be abolished by contemplation as understood in Vedantic discipline. In this respect this discipline belongs to the same unitive approach as perennial philosophy.

6

*You are Maya (false appearance)  
The Agent thereof and Enjoyer too (of its play);  
You are that Good One also who removes Maya too,  
To grant the Unitive State.*

MAYA is the principle of error, nescience, appearance or illusion. In Vedantic lore this concept has come to stay and is to be understood as generically covering all possibility of error in the human consciousness, whether perceptual or actual, subjective or objective, affective or conative. Dualistic dilemmas, conflicts and confusions arise when Maya is

not understood itself in unitive terms as representing the Absolute itself. Maya and the Absolute are interchangeably used in correct Vedanta. It is like saying that magnetism belongs to electricity or is the same as the latter. The Absolute is to be contemplated in its purest form when the possibility of duality due to Maya is abolished by it both in its vertical and horizontal aspects at once. The supreme synthesis of all philosophical aspects of the Absolute is what this verse is meant to accomplish. Gross manifestation which was referred to as creation in the previous verse has the Maya principle implied in it. In the next verse we come to more conceptual aspects of the Absolute.

7

*You are the Existent, the Subsistent and the Value-Factor Supreme.  
You are the Present and the Past,  
And the Future is none else but You . . .  
Even the spoken word, when we consider it, is but You alone.*

FROM the actuality of creation which when recognized as God may seem to be pantheistic, through the phenomenalism implied in the conception of Maya, we come to take a closer view of the Absolute here. Ontology leads to the recognition of the Existent. The formal approach of reasoning leads us to recognize the same Absolute as the one who subsists even when full logical reasoning is directed to the reality of the Absolute. He subsists after due reasoning about Him, as more than mere appearance. As something dear, as representing the desirable hope or goal for all human aspirations, He represents the Supreme Value-Factor which the Absolute implies. Conceptualism prevails here when the Absolute is identified with the Word, as when it is stated in the New Testament that the Word was God. Even the articulated word represents the Absolute according to nominalism or conceptualism such as is known even to Western theology such as that of Abelard. In the Word we touch the core of Reality when we consider the matter in all its philosophical bearings.

8

*Your state of Glory that fills  
Both inside and outside  
We for ever praise!  
Victory be, O God, to you!*

ATTAINING the central point through conceptualism, this prayer touches here the core of consciousness psychologically, in its effort to fix the notion of the Absolute finally and correctly. Objective and subjective prejudices in respect of consciousness which knows no such divisions are both discarded here. The Absolute is the Light of lights or the Truth of truths, which is neither outside nor inside. The glory of the Unitive Absolute is here sung with a natural touch of ecstasy.

*Victory to you ; Great and Radiant One !  
 Ever intent upon saving the needy !  
 Victory to You, Perceptual Abode of Joy !  
 Ocean of Mercy, Hail !*

SEEMINGLY personal epithets applied to God in all great prayers of the people of the world, are brought together here without violating the unity of the composition as a whole. After understanding the Absolute in philosophical terms, one makes such knowledge one's own through correct prayer in which personification is employed, not in any puerile anthropomorphic terms of abject supplication, but in order that the philosophical vision may not remain merely an academic abstraction. A bi-polarity of relationship has to be established between one who prays and the one who is prayed to. The glorification of God's Mercy succeeds in establishing a unitive link between the two counterparts here involved, on which the success of the prayer largely depends. All prayer must have these words of supplication and glorification to fulfil correctly the requirements of a proper prayer. God on His side is ever concerned about His devotee and the devotee on his part has to be related as God's correct counterpart within himself. Both these, when neutralized into a central personal or impersonal attitude, would induce the sense of the *numinous* which is no other than the Absolute. The personal and the impersonal aspects of the Absolute are here unitively treated together.

## 10

*In the ocean of Your Glory  
 Of great profundity,  
 Let us all, together, become sunk  
 To dwell therein everlastingly in Happiness !*

PRAYER is generally supposed to ascend to God above. Here, however although it started with a reference to God that is beyond, the successive verses brought the notion gradually down to everyday values in life, till, passing through the central Value of the word or the consciousness in terms of the Self, the reference attained realities of the spiritual world as seen in the kingdom of God on *Earth* rather than the one above.

Hypostatic and hierophantic values interlace in this composition, so that the dialectical materialist as well as the dialectical deist are both respected together. Prime matter could enshrine the Glory of God as much as the luminaries above in the world of the intelligibles. Pearl divers descend deep for values hidden away in the material womb of the given ontological reality. God does not sit in His own ivory tower above but is to be found also where the common man lives with his earthy problems.

God's Glory spreads like the ocean but He Himself as the Happiness that is the goal of man and his hope, could be approached not merely by the ascent of dialectics but by its descent into the core of prime matter

itself. A universal prayer has to be free from any philosophical bias. Teleology and ontology have to be reconciled in its construction and the double reference to what is *here* and what is *there* in the beyond have to be correctly fused. The scale of values in life that it successively fingers in graded fasion has to cover the whole range of normal, natural and unitive human values. The best prayer is at once a prayer for oneself and for entire humanity treated as one whole. The amplitude of the prayer ranges as we have noticed from the universal homely notion of God on the one hand to the supreme value of Happiness which is the goal and target of every school of religion or spirituality.

This prayer thus spells human unity and solidarity in the name of the One God understood according to a Science of the Absolute.

[ E N D ]

## The New Commandments

THOU shalt be efficient, for I the Lord, the machine God, am efficient. Thou shalt produce. Thou shalt multiply gadgets and fill the earth with them. Thou shalt not waste thy time in the irrelevancies of culture, of art or of humaneness, for these things will tempt thee to depart from the assembly line and leave it idle and forlorn. Thou shalt sell. Above all thou shalt sell. Thou shalt sell what people need and thou shalt sell what people do not need. Thou shalt make no distinction. What people do not need thou shalt make them want by the sacred ministry of advertising. Thou shalt even make war, or at least make the threat of war, seeing that war increaseth the market for everything, even for guns and tanks and planes and bombs. For a thousand years of peace in my sight are as nothing compared to one good day at the office, and a whole era of brotherly love is foolishness compared to a double-entry book-keeping system that showeth a fine profit and much capital gains.

## Psalm of the Bureaucrat

( A modern parody of the 23rd Psalm of the Bible )

*The Government is my shepherd, I shall not work,  
It alloweth me to lie down on good jobs ;  
It leadeth me beside still factories.  
It destroyeth my initiative ;  
It leadeth me in the paths of the parasite for politic's sake.  
Yea, though I walk through the valley of laziness and deficit spending, I will fear  
no evil ;  
Its doles and vote-getters they will comfort me.  
It prepareth an economic Utopia for me by appropriating the earnings of my  
grandchildren.  
It filleth my head with sausage, my inefficiency runneth over.  
Verily the Government shall care for me all the days of my life and I shall dwell  
in a fool's paradise forever. A M E N.*



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