

Leading A Life in Yoga

In the Light of the Teachings of
Swami Vivekananda

GOKULMUTHU NARAYANASWAMY
PRACTICALPHILOSOPHY.IN

What is the Goal?

Sense-happiness is not the goal of humanity. Wisdom (Jnâna) is the goal of all life. We find that man enjoys his intellect more than an animal enjoys its senses; and we see that man enjoys his spiritual nature even more than his rational nature. So the highest wisdom must be this **spiritual knowledge**. With this knowledge will come bliss. All these things of this world are but the shadows, the manifestations in the third or fourth degree of the real Knowledge and Bliss. CW III 4



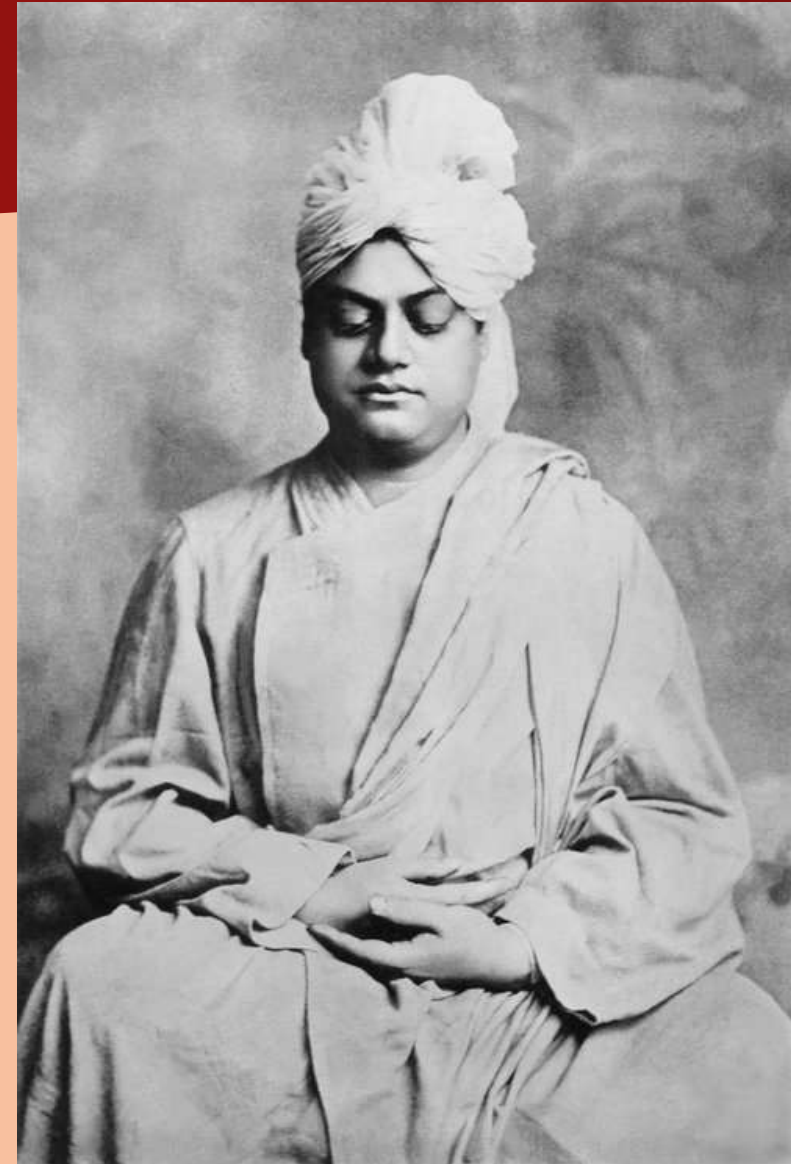
What is this Knowledge?

Man is not only a gross material body; not only that within this there is the finer body, the mind, but there is something yet greater — for the body changes and so does the mind — something beyond, the **Âtman** — I cannot translate the word to you for any translation will be wrong — that there is something beyond even this fine body, which is the Atman of man, which has neither beginning nor end, which knows not what death is. CW III 374



What is the Way?

The Yogi teaches that the mind itself has a higher state of existence, beyond reason, a superconscious state, and when the mind gets to that higher state, then this knowledge, beyond reasoning, comes to man. Metaphysical and transcendental knowledge comes to that man. ...This meditative state is the highest state of existence. So long as there is desire, no real happiness can come. It is only the contemplative, witness-like study of objects that brings to us real enjoyment and happiness. The animal has its happiness in the senses, the man in his intellect, and the god in **spiritual contemplation**.
CW I 183,186



What is the Preparation?

Our duty to others means **helping others** doing good to the world. Why should we do good to the world? Apparently to help the world, but really to help ourselves. We should always try to help the world, that should be the highest motive in us; but if we consider well, we find that the world does not require our help at all. This world was not made that you or I should come and help it. ... The only help is that we get moral exercise. ... Let us give up all this foolish talk of doing good to the world. It is not waiting for your or my help; yet we must work and constantly do good, because it is a blessing to ourselves. That is the only way we can become perfect. ... The world will go on with its happiness and misery through eternity. ... The world is a grand moral gymnasium wherein we have all to take exercise so as to become stronger and stronger spiritually.

CW I 75-80



What is the Attitude?

You cannot help anyone, you can only serve: serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege. If the Lord grants that you can help any one of His children, blessed you are; do not think too much of yourselves. Blessed you are that that privilege was given to you when others had it not. Do it only as a worship. CW III 246

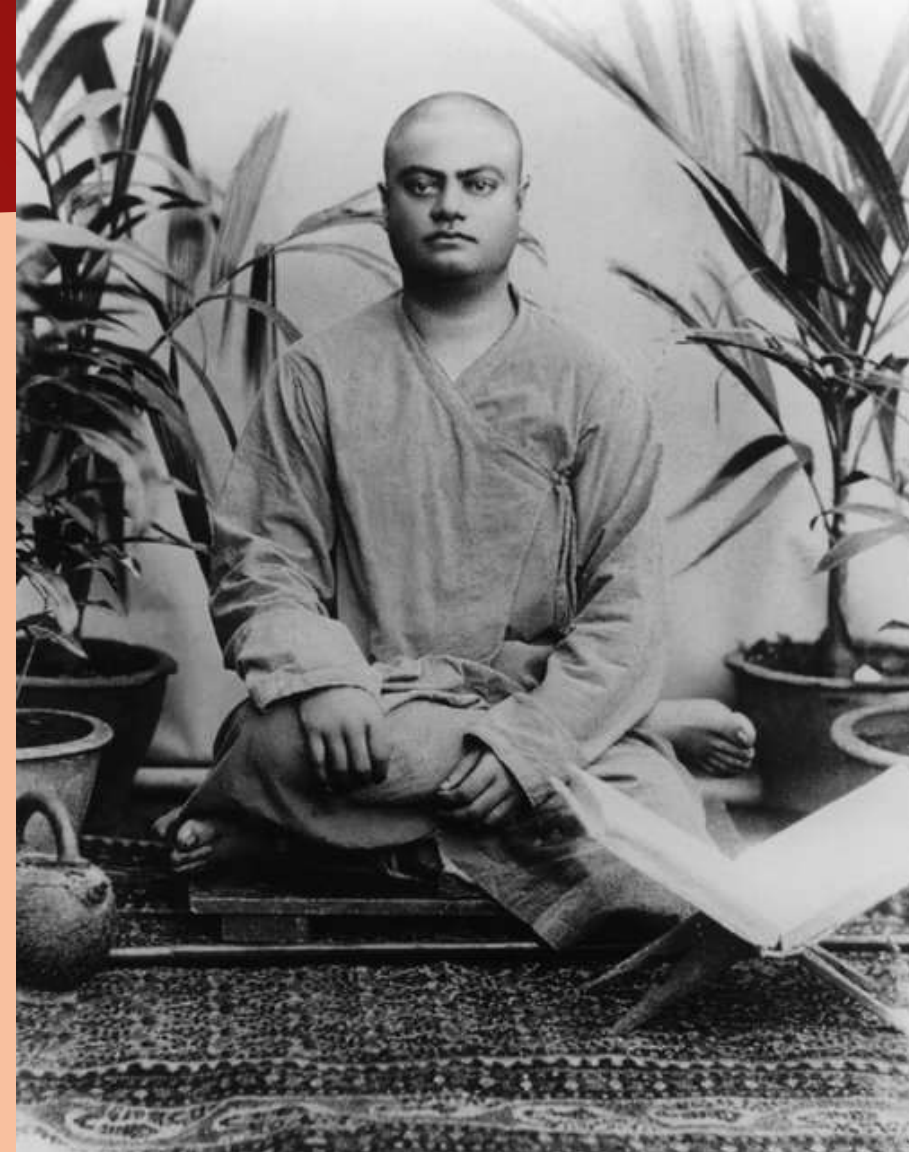
After so much austerity, I have understood this as the real truth — God is present in every Jiva; there is no other God besides that. 'Who serves Jiva, serves God indeed'. CW VII 247



Practice

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy – by one, or more, or all of these – and be free. This is the whole of religion. CW I 257

My hope and faith rest in men like you. Understand my words in their true spirit, and apply yourselves to work in their light. ... I have given you advice enough; now put at least something in practice. Let the world see that your reading of the scriptures and listening to me has been a success. CW VII 175



Summary

- ▶ **aatmano mokshaartham jagat hitaaya ca**
 - ▶ Goal of life is spiritual knowledge of oneself.
 - ▶ Meditation is the way to spiritual knowledge.
 - ▶ Helping people in the world is the preparation.
- ▶ **shiva jnaane jiva seva**
 - ▶ People are the living manifestations of God.
 - ▶ Serving people is the way to serve God.
- ▶ **Make your whole life as Practical Vedanta a.k.a Yoga**



Thank You

Further reading at practicalphilosophy.in

[Swami Vivekananda's Call to the Youth of India](#)

[Gist of Vedanta in Two Words](#)

[FAQ on Swami Vivekananda](#)

Photos courtesy: Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, Boston

Quotations courtesy: www.ramakrishnavivekananda.info

