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## Surrender is Supreme in Spirituality

Chicago, Illinois, USA — August 28, 2020 (Livestream)

<https://youtu.be/apLWO-c4hSs>

[Due to a technical error, the first one minute of the video is unavailable.]

...It appears to me that people who want to go on the spiritual path often wonder, “Why is it such a difficult path?” If the whole intention is to find your true self within yourself, it should be the easiest thing possible. Why don’t we go in and find what is there? What is stopping us?

When we look at this question carefully, we find that what is stopping us is that we have lost the ability to withdraw our attention within ourselves, simply because we have been practicing the exact opposite, which is focusing attention on things outside.

When we focus attention on anything, we move away from ourselves to the thing upon which we are focusing our attention. It could be an object, can be a person, can be a situation, can be a thought. When we are putting our attention on something other than ourselves, it means we are moving away from ourselves.

Withdrawal of attention brings us back to our own self. And that is why, because we have got so habituated to focusing attention outside, we have lost the way to withdraw our attention to ourselves. That is why it’s become so difficult to just go within. Many people try to go within by meditating, by closing their eyes, imagining they are inside. But they are so used to imagining things outside of themselves that even when they try to imagine themselves, they make a picture of themselves sitting in front of them in the darkness created by closing the eyes. That is why it is not possible to draw attention to your own self in any easy way. Even the meditation we perform is taking our attention outside. How to withdraw attention to yourself? Very difficult.

Is there a easy way, a way that has proved successful? [Excuse me.] Is there something more simple for a simple thing like going within or finding our true self or what we call finding our True Home?

I was seeing that there are so many saints and mystics have come. They have declared that the truth is inside us. Jesus calls the kingdom of God as “Kingdom of God within us” — find it within ourselves.” All these mystics of different religions, who founded those religions also say, “The truth lies inside us.” If that is so, isn’t there in their scriptures something that should simplify this question: How do we go within? How do we get salvation? How do we get freedom from the bonds we have created by attachments over here?

When I was going through several scriptures during my study of comparative religion at Harvard University, I remember I came across a very short, two-line verse from the Sikh scripture, *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*. And, so far as I can remember the words — I’ll try to recall and repeat — they were very simple. They said, in Punjabi, in Gurmukhi script: “*Nanak Satgur bhentiyey, puran hovey jugti, hasandya, khelandy, pehnandya, khavandya viche hove mukti.*” In translation it means, Guru Nanak says that if you are willing to surrender to a Perfect Living Master, a *Satguru*, you can then live your life as you are living — eating, drinking, dancing, laughing and obtain salvation.” Nothing could be simpler than that, that the only thing required is surrender to a Perfect Living Master, not surrender to any master. Guru Nanak doesn’t say that if you are surrendering to a guru — he says Satguru.

What’s the definition of a Satguru? Let’s go back to Guru Nanak himself. At another place in *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*, he says, “*Ghar mein ghar dikhlaye de, so Satgur purakh sujan.*” “One who can show you your True Home within this home, consider him as a true guru, Satguru.” So, both definitions put together means that what he’s suggesting is that if you find somebody who is a Satguru, who can show our True Home to ourselves, surrender to him and you will get salvation.

He does not talk of meditation. He does not talk of all the dietary restrictions that we have to follow when we follow these Masters. He does not talk of anything except surrender. Now he’s not the only one saying surrender. Surrender has been recommended by most of the mystics. “Surrender to the Master, surrender to the Murshid Kamil, surrender to the Perfect Living Master, and you will get everything.”

Why do we need meditation then?

I have gone over this question many times in my own head. Why do we need meditation if all you need is surrender? The answer came simple. The mind does not want to surrender to

anybody. And why should it surrender? The question is, why are you asking to be surrendering to somebody else when the truth you're trying to find is within yourself, not in that person. Why are you asking a surrender to another person? Normally, when we look at this proposition to surrender to somebody, if you notice, that is how cults are created. And those are dangerous cults that you cease to think for yourself and give your decision making to another person. Very dangerous. And we know how in cults people have...many of them committed suicide. Many have been killed by these very people who run those cults.

How can we avoid a situation where we create a surrender to a Perfect Living Master without creating a surrender to a cult? Surrender to something that we are surrendering to another man to make our decision? It's not a very good idea. That is why the mind, the thinking mind, the rational mind, the logical mind will never surrender to anybody, and it's very appropriate. The thinking mind says, "If I can think for myself, I don't need somebody else to think for me." Especially these days when we know all of us are equal. Democracies run on that basis. Governments run on that basis. We are all equal. Then if we are all equal, why should one person surrender to another? Doesn't make sense.

That is why we go to the second option, "Surrender not possible? Let's do something which will enable us to surrender." And that is deep meditation. Effort, a lot of effort. So, we are willing to make a lot of effort that goes with the grain of our mind. Our mind is already trained: "You can achieve nothing except with your effort. Nothing can be obtained in this world without your effort." And you can't sit home and say, "Without effort you can get anything." Therefore, it appeals to the mind: "If I am going to work for my salvation within myself, that makes sense to me. Therefore, I am willing to meditate and find the truth. I am not willing to surrender."

So that very simple option we dismiss, and we go into the longer, more difficult path of trying to meditate. Of course, meditation does validate the truth that everything is within ourselves. We know that we are only the physical body outside. Meditation in the simplest form helps us to know the body is a temporary cover upon ourselves, that we have an inside self which lasts longer than this body, which was there even before the body is born. That meditation...and that is not very difficult at all. All you have to do is close your eyes, imagine who you are, not make a picture of yourself. Imagine who you are. Can you blink your imaginative eyes inside with your outer eyes — physical eyes — closed? If you can do that, you have discovered your inner self. As simple as that.

If you find that your imaginative self, which is looking at the darkness in front because your eyes are closed...if that self can be made active and you'll spend time working with that, you can do lots of things with that imaginative self of yours which you cannot do with a physical body. You can fly in the sky. You will notice that there is no weight in the imagined self inside.

And you will notice the imagined self has a body like the physical body we have. You will also notice it can get up, sit down and do everything that this physical body can do and a lot more, like flying in the sky.

Let us assume that we spend lot of time on that imaginative self and do those things. Can we really keep it up like that? No, the mind again interferes. Our thinking mind, logical mind, rational mind says, "What are you doing? Just imagining things? They are not real." Because we have also heard...had another very big assumption built into us that the only reality is the empirical reality outside that we can see with our five senses. We are using the same five senses in an imaginative self, but that's only imagination. We can't rely upon imagination to find the truth. We give up and we are back outside again. Therefore, the mind again creates it...a more difficult task for us, even to meditate.

Meditation on the imaginative self has to be done with some leap of faith. The leap of faith is, "If I stay long enough in that state of my imaginative self, will I remember things which I cannot remember when I am sitting in the physical body?" If you can reach that state which requires long meditation, which requires sitting behind your eyes for longer hours and maybe for long periods of time, when you do that you suddenly find that the inner self which you thought was pure imagination, begins to remember things with the same mind that you were using when you were in the physical body. It uses the same mind to remember things that happened before the physical body was born. It's amazing how that functions.

And then the mind finds that you are now discovering the reality of your inner self, which you thought was imagination, the mind again interferes and says, "No, you're just building up these memories. They don't really exist."

But when you open your eyes and see that what you remembered inside with the imaginative self is also true outside, some validation starts coming. But what are... The point I'm making is how long this process can take, and that's only the first step. To find our True Home, we have to go through several steps like that. Like meditating eventually with the inner self you discover what the mind is like, what creates the mind. You discover that life itself, the vital force that is making our mind work, our sensory systems work, our body works, that vital force or life is separate even from the mind. The vital force can exist in a timeless state; the mind cannot. And sense perceptions divide our perception into five different sense perceptions where the mind can perceive directly.

There are differences in each of these levels. It has been appropriately called that when we are in a physical body, we are actually carrying more than one body: the astral self which carries the sensory systems, the causal self which is containing the mind, and our soul which carries

the vital force or the life. So therefore, to discover the soul requires that we withdraw our attention by the imagining of a higher state, and staying with it long enough, by concentrating our attention on it, that we can be able to see all these levels of inside.

All right, that looks good. But what is the role of a Satguru in all this? If we can do all this, what is the role of the Satguru? Well, up to the point I've just described — that means discovering your imaginative self, even discovering your causal self — you do not need the role of a Satguru. People can do it on their own.

The role of Satguru starts if you want to go to your True Home, which is neither in the mind nor in sense perceptions, nor in the physical body. None of these three bodies of ours can give us our True Home. Our True Home lies beyond the mind. If something lies beyond the mind, it is beyond effort because all effort is made by the mind. And that is why the role of the Satguru starts when we want to go beyond the mind.

We can go to several gurus, several masters who can tell us how to go to stage one, to the astral self, the sensory self, even stage two, the causal self, the mind state, the universal mind from where all minds are created, sensory system from where all sensory experiences are created. Those gurus can do it, but we need a Satguru, a Perfect Living Master, a true master to take us beyond the mind.

Now what is the role of a Perfect Living Master on the spiritual path? The role of a spiritual master is totally different from the role of a master who teaches you meditation. Role of a spiritual master is to give you the experience of pure and true love. Why is that so important? Because true love does not come from the mind. It does not come from the sense perceptions. It does not come from our body but comes directly from our vital force. Our love comes from truth itself, from our true home itself, from beyond the mind.

There are some functions which the mind can perform. Mind can read, understand what sense perceptions are saying. Mind can make sense of things. Mind can use logic. Mind can rationalize. Mind can think all the time. (It thinks all the time.) So many functions mind performs, but all these functions, if you notice, are performed in time and space.

Mind cannot function if there is no time or space. Yet there are functions which are performed directly by our spirit, by our soul, by our life force, which cannot be performed by the mind, and those include the ability to know something suddenly, which we call intuition; the ability to appreciate the beauty suddenly, which is called appreciation; and the ability to have true love, which is also an ability that does not need either time or duration. These three functions of the soul are independent and completely different from the functions of the mind. That is why the

role of a Satguru, Perfect Living Master, starts from beyond the mind by giving us an experience of love which pulls us.

We feel we are being pulled by a human being outside whom we called a Satguru or a Perfect Living Master. It looks like that. It's not true. The pull we are feeling is within our own self. It's not going out anywhere. And what does a Perfect Living Master tell us? When we feel love for that human being, what does he say? He does not say, "Come and follow me." He says go within yourself and find me there, find the Satguru there."

Now that's a good exercise that if we can go in the imaginative state, the astral self, and see if the guru that we saw outside is still there. You find he is there — and more there than even outside. The one outside is not accessible all the time, but the one inside is accessible 24/7, all the time. Therefore, the Satguru, a human being outside, is pointing out that the True Guru is not outside but inside yourself, who is available to you 24/7.

When do we have a contact with the inner guru? The outer form of the guru tells us, "If you get initiated...that means accepted by a Perfect Living Master, by a Satguru, to be his friend, to travel together to your True Home inside yourself, he will be with you all the time." So, initiation by a Perfect Living Master does not mean learning how to meditate. Books can teach us that. Lot of gurus can teach us how to meditate. The initiation by a Perfect Living Master is an eternal friendship developed with the master, and the real master inside will be a friend with you forever, and if he is a Satguru or Perfect Living Master, will be with you right till your journey to your True Home is complete within yourself.

Still the question arises that we are still depending upon a human being outside for getting this help. How can we verify that he is not a human being telling us what to do, that it is the real inner form that's informing us about all the truth about ourselves? That again...more meditation, more pacifying of the mind, more satisfying of the mind. So, take it to the brim. Take the mind to the brim of its own capabilities through meditation, and then you find the mind can stop at where we go beyond time and space. Mind stops where the self is still aware of itself, and the mind cannot go there.

But there you find that the Perfect Living Master you see outside is still inside. What happens if you are pulled by the love of a Perfect Living Master beyond the mind? The Perfect Living Master is pulling you not from outside, but from inside.

What happens if you reach your True Home with this kind of assistance from a Satguru? What do we get there? We find the Satguru was our own True Self. We were being pulled by our own

True Self which is our True Home. We were looking for a way to go to a place, and we ourselves pulled ourselves. We never knew who we were. We have no idea of our own higher Self. We have no idea of our True Self, and this was just a means, a method created so that our own Self should appear as a Perfect Living Master outside of ourselves. That's the greatest validation we can get that the truth is being found by your own Self within and not with the man outside whom we called a Satguru, a Perfect Living Master.

There is a catch in this. The catch is that before you can go to that top and validate all that I am saying to you, you have to do something which the mind doesn't like, and that is surrender to the Master. Again, we come back to Guru Nanak's statement, "If you surrender to the Master, your effort is over." And while living your life laughing, eating, drinking, and living your normal life, you will get salvation. So, the surrender part we are acquiring through very long process of meditation. But sometimes it can happen if we spend time with a Perfect Living Master outside, the love and devotion develops so fast...so much faster that we are able to get that feeling that this...we can completely trust that human being. It takes time for the mind to accept it, but at a certain point the love becomes so strong, our devotion as a reciprocity to that love is so strong that our complete faith comes up. So faith is built in that man over time, but once we have that faith, surrender follows and then Guru Nanak's words come out true.

So that is why it's good to know that if we are meeting the Master often enough, it affects us. It definitely increases our faith and greater experience of Master's love for us. That is why they say it is very important to attend meetings with the Master. *Satsang*.

Satsang is considered very important. What is satsang? What does it mean? *Sat* means truth; *Sang* means company. The company of the truth. Now, if we recognize that the Perfect Living Master is our highest self, the truth being expressed in a human body outside, we can have the company of that truth outside. Therefore, it's wise for us to see how often we can have the company of such a person. The company of a Perfect Living Master is most useful in our inner development, on progress on the spiritual path. That is why we recommend, "Meet the Master as often as you can."

I have mentioned earlier also, an American disciple of Great Master Baba Sawan Singh asked him, "Master, how often should we come to see you?" Great Master said, "Best is see me every day." But the disciple said, "Master, somebody living far away cannot see you every day. We are not lucky enough like the people who are sitting in the *Dera* that they see you every day. We have to travel to come and see you. We have to afford our travel to come and see you." Great Master said, "If you are living far away, then you can see me once a week."

When Great Master was answering that question. I remember my grandfather, Bhai Bishan Das Puri was also sitting there. He heard this statement that once a week is good. From that day onwards till the end of his life he visited Great Master every week without fail. But the disciple continued and said, "Master supposing somebody is living very far away and cannot come even weekly?" Then Great Master said, "In that case, once a month is as good as people who are living here seeing me daily. Such a person can come once a month. It is good enough."

Then that disciple said, "Master, what about us who are living overseas in United States. People are coming from other countries. They can't even come every month." Then Great Master said, "For such cases coming even once a year is as good as these people who are seeing me daily, the same benefit." Then the disciple said, "Supposing, Master, we cannot come even once a year?" Then Great Master Baba Sawan Singh smiled and he said, "Then there's a next life available for that." So such is the importance of seeing a Perfect Living Master.

I am very happy that so many of you have had chances to meet your Masters regularly, and have been able to do...have satsang with them so often. It's a very important part of the spiritual path, because when you go to a satsang you don't go merely to hear a teaching. Sometimes the Masters are giving the same teaching over and over again. I remember a cousin of mine asked one of the masters, "Master, how come you say the same thing every day and you don't change your subject?" And Master said, "Well, have you started meditating two and a half hours?" And the cousin said, "No." He said, "Then keep on hearing the same thing still. If there is no effect of what I am saying, repeating the same thing is still useful."

So, the satsang is not merely to hear the teachings. It is to experience the love that flows from a Master towards us. We can experience it in his voice. We can experience it in his words. We can experience it in his look. We can experience it in his face.

I carry the white beard of my Master all the time with me. It was an expression of his love. It's just a face, just a beard, but it means so much. What we get from a satsang, from a company of the Master is not merely the teaching. We get the experience of the love that flows, and that love makes our devotion great. And the love and devotion make us fit to go beyond the mind in meditation. So that is why it is very important that we go and hear satsangs. If we cannot go to satsang, then we can meet other people who are also satsangis following — and meet and talk about the Master. Satsang is where we talk about the truth, and for us a Perfect Living Master is a physical representation of the ultimate truth. And that is why it works so well even if we have satsangs amongst ourselves. Even two people getting together and talking of the Master is like satsang.



And satsang helps us in meditation. Sometimes the satsang is equal to meditation. Great Master used to say that don't take meditation to be a method by closing your eyes and pulling attention inside. Meditation is merely a step that takes you within yourself. And so many other things help you in doing that. For example, *seva*, service, service done without any desire for a reward. Service done as an offering. That helps the same way. Great Master used to even praise *seva* saying, "Seva is a cash transaction; meditation is a credit transaction — you get results later on. Seva, you get the benefit straightaway." Now therefore, any kind of *seva* we can do. As you know, *seva* can be done in many ways. We can do what we call *seva* with our wealth, *seva* with our money. Send a check; we are done. Send them some...put a cash in the cash donation box — we are done. That is *seva* with money or wealth, and it actually counts as the lowest level of *seva*.

A little higher up the *seva* is with your body, with yourself, helping the Master, cooking food for the Master, cooking food for his disciples, running a *langar* or a kitchen. That's all *seva* of a higher order. If you're...if you're able to physically help the Master carry his bag, just help him in any way, prepare food, it's a very big *seva* for the Master. So *seva* with the body ranks higher than that.

But the highest *seva* is *seva* with the mind. How can we do *seva* with the mind? By meditating with that mind and not for our own use but as an offering to the Master. When we meditate, we do it to get some things for ourselves. Supposing one day we say, "Today's meditation is an offering to you, Master. I'm not asking for anything in return. It's an offering to you." That is the highest *seva* with the mind.

So this mind *seva* can be transcended even further if the *seva* is done — of any kind, with wealth, with the body, or with the mind — with love and devotion. Don't forget, love and devotion is the highest level of an experience that we can have while we are sitting in a human body with a soul, with a mind, with senses and the body. Therefore, doing all the *seva* and doing meditation with love and devotion changes the quality of the *seva*, changes the quality of the meditation, and that is why all the steps we are...I am recommending or talking about have to be done with love and devotion to make it high quality meditation, high quality *seva*, high quality reaching out to your True Self. So love and devotion applies everywhere and is a very important part of the spiritual path.

Now, in addition to that you can also do other things. For example, you are not doing *seva* but you are missing your master. Does that also count?

Somebody sent me a letter recently. Great Master wrote to a disciple in the United States. It can be probably found in *Spiritual Gems*, the book which contains a compilation of these letters. Somebody sent me this, and Great Master says to the disciple, "I understand that you cannot afford to come, but the fact that you want to come and see me is equal to meditation. The fact you are missing me and the desire to be with me and you cannot come, even without coming it is equal to meditation. So don't worry about it, that you are not able to come to see me. Even without coming, you are getting the gain of it, just by missing me and by trying to come to me but you cannot afford to come." Even the effort to go towards a Master counts as meditation, it counts as seva, counts as something very similar. So that is why a whole life transformation is needed to think differently about a Perfect Living Master, and then you are on a true spiritual path.

All these things I have shared with you are based upon the teachings of Great Master Hazur Maharaj Baba Sawan Singh ji. And he has given me all this big benefit in my life, transformed me with the very simple thing that he has said. So, I still feel that if we have that love and devotion and can surrender to the Perfect Living Master, the Satguru, our effort is complete. And we can live our life as normally as possible. The Master will be with us in everything we do. That surrender makes the Master be with us 24/7, all the time. Decision making will be very simple. Master makes it for you. Life will be very simple. Master is with you. Loneliness will disappear. Master is with you.

That's the message I got to share with you today, and I'll also like to talk to you next...next month. Maybe it will still be on livestream like this one. So I take leave.

All of you, I give you Great Master's blessings and my love.