

RUNNING FROM DEATH, LONGING FOR LOVE

Most of us stay in perpetual motion all our lives. Afraid of death, we fill up our time – and minds – with the comfort of busyness, with responsibilities and pleasures. We fear death because it lies on the other side of the barrier between known and unknown. Although it is the one inevitable event that we are all moving towards, we avoid thinking about it and run desperately the other way. We plunge into all kinds of enjoyments. We pursue money, power, and status. We submerge ourselves in our family responsibilities and attachments. But still we have the nagging realization that something awaits us at the end of it all, and that is death.

Is there any way to know what is on the other side? Has anyone ever been there and come back to tell all? It would seem not; it would seem that we're all in the same situation. Yet somewhere amid the din and distractions of life is the voice of the mystics, those enlightened souls who have appeared in all religions and at all times in history and all places in the world. These mystics teach us that if we can still our minds and take our attention within, we can transcend the limitations of the body and mind and experience God. Their process of meditation takes us beyond the barrier of death, and that is why it is sometimes called 'dying while living'.

It is our divine nature or core, our soul, that is the only permanent thing about us; everything else is temporary. At our death, the soul leaves the body and the body dissolves and decays. Earth returns to earth, water to water, air to air. So what are we really? The mystics say that our essence our soul, is nothing but love, but we are not aware or in tune with our true nature because we are so caught up in the activities of our lives. We identify with everything we do and we stay ignorant of who we really are.

The mystics teach a method of meditation that enables us to realize our intrinsic divine nature. They tell us that life itself can become a journey of self-discovery through which we can lose our fear of death. Now we are slaves to this fear. With practice we can be free.

By seeking the guidance of a true mystic, we can take our attention to higher planes of consciousness within ourselves and experience God's love manifested as spiritual sound and light. This sound and light is projected from the highest realm of the Godhead, the source of love, the source of all. The spiritual journey cannot be taken without the instruction of a master who has himself experienced God-realization and whose purpose is to take souls back to their origin. The path home cannot be followed only by reading scriptures or performing the traditional rituals of religion. Every student of spirituality requires a master to guide him on the journey within – and to walk with him side by side through the challenges of life.

The masters teach that if we really want freedom we will have to make sacrifices. Freedom requires discipline. We will have to follow a lifestyle that will lessen our bonds to this world, rather than increase them. But the sacrifice is worthwhile, because it brings with it total liberation. A spiritual way of life includes more than just meditation – we have to make ethical and moral choices at every moment of our lives, through a vegetarian diet, steering clear of alcoholic drinks and drugs, and so much else.

We run from death, while we long to love and be loved. We give lip service to the concept that God is love, but we want to experience that love and live in its reality. When we become truly conscious through spiritual practice, we will be attuned to the will of the Creator and experience his great love.