



AN ACT OF COMMITMENT

As I sat in meditation these words came to me, “the womb of Silence,” and with them it was as if there were a tremendous silence, large and round, and this was the womb out of which all creation came.¹ All creation was formed in this womb of Silence. There was not a man, but there was a universe: the earth, the rocks, the trees, streams, seas, skies, suns, moons, and planets—all this flowing forth as an unfoldment from this huge womb of penetrating, complete stillness—yet more than stillness: absolute silence, quietness.

It moves as if in a rhythm, and this rhythm not only forms it, but sustains creation with everything in its rightful place. Looking out into this universe, you can see that there is cold—snow and ice—in the north, and warmth in the south, flowers and trees of one nature in the north and of another in the south. This rhythm, the rhythm that is flowing from that Silence, maintains and sustains creation beau-

tifully, all in its order.

Eventually, man appears here and there on the face of the globe, also maintained by this rhythm that flows within his consciousness. It is a flow of rhythm that maintains the activity of the body, the organs and their functions. Everything seems to be responsive to this rhythm, and all this rhythm is flowing forth from that womb into form as grace, beauty, order, peace. The relationship between all these forms is harmonious. We could use the words "love" or "loving," but there is no love or loving: there is only a naturalness of peace, contentment, and this is the rhythm in expression, the rhythm of the universe.

INHARMONY RESULTS FROM BEING OUTSIDE THE RHYTHM

When anything goes wrong in our experience, it is because we are out of tune with this rhythm. We can observe the willow tree, how it moves with the breeze, almost flows with the breeze, and then imagine what would happen if it were to try to stand erect in that breeze or resist it. It would be broken. And so is man broken the moment he is moving outside the rhythm, outside the flow that brought him into manifestation and expression.

The rhythm from the source maintains all creation in harmony, in law and order, and whatever it is that permits us to move in a way of our own or with a will of our own, a

direction of our own, removes us from the flow of the rhythm, and then we are either in opposition to it or trying to stand erect in the face of it. Every sense of discord and inharmony that touches our experience is an evidence that we are out of alignment or out of attunement with the rhythm of the universe, and discord and inharmony are going to persist in our experience until we are once more spiritually, rhythmically attuned.

HOW TO RETURN TO THE RHYTHM

There may not be a possibility at this moment of explaining why or how we get out of attunement, but the acknowledgment must be made that as a human race we are not being governed by the rhythm of the Spirit, the rhythm of the Silence. It may very well be that it is because we insist on taking thought: we insist on a way of our own, a will of our own, a family strictly of our own, instead of recognizing the oneness of all life. It could well be that we will come partly back into the rhythm by acknowledging that there is only one family and that we are of the household of God, thereby uniting ourselves with the peoples of all races, of all religions, and of all nationalities. Acknowledging the common fatherhood of God would in one way restore harmony.

Another way shows us the wisdom of tithing. But this practice must not be misunderstood. This ancient teaching of tithing did not mean that if we tithed we could expect

some blessing. We cannot enter into any merchandising or bargaining arrangement with God so that we give ten per cent and He gives back ninety. But by tithing in the sense of acknowledging our relationship, not merely to our own flesh and blood, but acknowledging our relationship to all mankind, we place ourselves in the rhythm of that relationship. In providing for others in addition to our own, we are not merely intellectually acknowledging a relationship, but are living in the rhythm of it. We are in the rhythm of our relationship to mankind when, first of all, we acknowledge that relationship, and then act on it by making some measure of provision for others outside our own flesh-and-blood household, our own religious household, or our own national household.

THE UNIVERSAL RELATIONSHIP OF MANKIND MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED BY AN ACT

Is it clear that to reestablish ourselves in this original rhythm it becomes necessary to do it by an act? Intellectual knowledge is not sufficient: it must be followed by an act. This is a commitment; this is an act of commitment. If we declare that we are all of the household of God and then continue to live only for our own family, for those of our own religion or our own nation, we are virtually contradicting ourselves and setting up a friction, and our condition is then worse than that of the person who is ignorant of this univer-

sal relationship.

Once we acknowledge this universal relationship by an act of commitment, we must enter into the rhythm and begin to act in some way that will commit us to the welfare of those others outside the relationship of our home, community, nation, or church. If we merely acknowledge our Christhood, instead of living out from that Christhood by an act, we at once set up a conflict within our own being that is far worse than if we had never heard of Christhood, because having heard of It, we must now live It.

There must be an act of commitment in which we live as the Christ, and in order to understand that we may take such examples as Gautama the Buddha and Jesus the Christ, and witness the nature of the life they lived. It is not that we are going to equal their life. That, of course, can never be. Each of us is an individual, and we unfold individually. But at least we can see what is meant by accepting one's Christhood, and then make a beginning by doing something, even if it is a very little "unto . . . the least of these my brethren,"² so that this little that we do may continue to increase in scope, depth, breadth, and vision.

THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE CHRISTHOOD OF OUR FELLOW MAN MUST BE EXPRESSED IN ACTION

To acknowledge the Christhood of our fellow man is to bring forth another act of commitment. Not only must I act

out from the acknowledgment of my Christhood insofar as the light is given me, but in the moment that I recognize the Christ of you, I am then called upon to act toward you as if you were the Christ. As I bow my head in the presence of the Master, so do I bow my head in the presence of everyone I meet.

Very often students wonder if their spiritual teacher is aware of the nature or the degree of their spiritual unfoldment or lack of it. They may be assured that it is as impossible to hide their degree of spiritual unfoldment from the teacher as it would be to hide from God, because there is a sign, and that sign is an act of commitment. Until the teacher observes that sign, he knows exactly how far spiritual development has proceeded. The moment he witnesses the sign of commitment, he knows that the student has gone over the hump, has reached a place beyond humanhood. But this is not until that act of commitment in one form or another is observed. It does not have to be observed physically. One does not have to be within thousands of miles of the student to know when the commitment has taken place.

OUR INDIVIDUAL CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE JUDGE

This brings us to an important part of the Infinite Way unfoldment. It is not difficult to convince a person that he can get away with evil and be undetected by God, but we could do away with all the prisons on earth if it were cor-

rectly taught that no one gets away with anything because the judge is closer than breathing; it is one's very own consciousness.

The judge does not act as many people have believed that God acts, sitting with a ledger writing down the good deeds and the bad deeds and weighing them against each other. But rather it acts like the law of mathematics. As long as we keep putting two times two together and getting four, three times three and getting nine, all is going well within our mathematical kingdom. Nobody is being rewarded; mathematics is not being rewarded, and numbers are not being rewarded. It is just that all is well as the normal natural unfoldment of the laws of mathematics or science. On the other hand, if we put two times two together and get five, we do not receive any punishment: we merely have broken the rhythm of harmony. Nobody is being punished; the numbers are not being punished, and arithmetic is not being punished. There is just the erroneous fruitage from breaking the rhythm of mathematics.

H_2O is water, and as long as we keep putting H_2O together, we get water, but it will not be as a reward from God: it will be the normal natural rhythm of the divine order of science. Try to put $H_{1/2}O$ together, and we do not get water (in fact, no such formula or substance exists), but no one is being punished—not even the scientist who makes the mistake. The rhythm has merely been broken.

VIOLATING SPIRITUAL LAW BREAKS THE RHYTHM

Every time we violate spiritual law, the rhythm is broken, and we violate spiritual law every time that we do not acknowledge God as omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and every time that we do not love our neighbor as ourselves. These are the only two spiritual commandments there are. This is the rhythm of the entire created universe including man.

There is no way to violate the rhythm except to accept two powers: good and evil in the place of the omnipotence of Spirit: to accept a mind other than the mind of God; to accept a presence other than the presence of God. To do that breaks the rhythm. No one breaks it for us. As long as we are in obedience to acknowledging God in all our ways, knowing Him aright as the one and only power, the one and only presence, the one and only intelligence, and loving our neighbor as ourselves, acknowledging the Christhood of ourselves, acknowledging the Christhood of our neighbor, and then acting out that love, "no weapon that is formed against [us] shall prosper."³ If anyone tries to send a weapon at us, he destroys himself, if we know this truth.

On the other hand, the moment we violate these commandments, the law is broken, and then whatever discord or inharmony comes we ourselves have set in motion. We have done this by a violation of the only two commandments that

exist in the spiritual kingdom. What about stealing? What about committing adultery? Is it not clear that if we are honoring our neighbor as the Christ we would hardly be stealing from him or committing adultery? Such acts would not come under the spiritual law of loving our neighbor as ourselves.

THE RHYTHM OF THE UNIVERSE PROVIDES ALL THINGS NECESSARY

There is a rhythm, and this rhythm of the universe makes each one of us an individual, an individual completely governed and fulfilled by the spirit of God, with all things provided for us in accord with the need of every particular moment, so that we never have to envy our neighbor, be jealous or lustful, because in the rhythm our own will come to us.

This is what John Burroughs really said in his poem, "Waiting." This poem is very much misunderstood, and there are many persons who believe that all they have to do is to sit and wait, and their own will come to them. There are those who have been waiting a whole lifetime, and it has not happened yet, because they are still in that human state of consciousness which is outside the rhythm of the universe. But John Burroughs was speaking from the Spirit Itself, and since he was in the rhythm of the Spirit, he was observing that our own will come to us and we do not have to seek it. We sit by the side of the stream, and our own comes.

As long as we are in the flow of obedience to loving God

supremely, acknowledging the infinite *I*, the infinite Consciousness as the only power, the only presence, the only wisdom, loving our neighbor as ourselves, doing unto our neighbor as we would have our neighbor do unto us, we are living in the rhythm.

Sitting in the silence, acknowledging the *I* of my being, acknowledging omniscient, omnipotent Omnipresence is the way. This is the way of restoring harmony, but always it must be accompanied by an act of commitment.

SILENCE IS THE WOMB OF CREATION

We must have our realization and our act of reliance. But then we cannot separate this loving of God supremely from loving our neighbor as ourselves as if they were two separate commandments. They are virtually two parts of one commandment. If we were to acknowledge God but not love our neighbor as ourselves, our formula would not work. We must acknowledge the flow of this rhythm from the Silence that we enter which is the womb from which all creation flows. The Silence that we attain within is the womb, and out of this Silence within flows all creation as it is necessary to our individual experience.

With it flows the loving of our neighbor as ourselves. That comes quickly, but then it must be acted upon. There must be an act of commitment, an "inasmuch as ye have

higher our state of consciousness rises in obedience to the two commandments, the more joyous, peaceful, and harmonious becomes the created world, because the created world is a creation of our consciousness.

If we could see or feel that behind our head was this great Consciousness projecting Itself, and then if we did not get in Its way by taking thought, this Consciousness would flow in Its infinite form and variety, and there would be no limitation to our universe or its harmony. It is only as we in some measure get in the way of this flow with that personal sense of "I," "me," and "mine" that our universe is a bit less infinite than it should be.

You may believe that you are following this Infinite Way of life by reading the books or hearing the message, but I say that you are not, until you have arrived at the place of an act of commitment. You may believe that you are under the law of God, but I say that you are not, until you have brought yourself there by an act of commitment. You may believe that God's grace is going to take care of you, and I say that it is not, until you have been brought to a place of commitment.

THE REASON FOR MEDITATION

From this, you can see the importance of meditation, a meditation which is not a stopping of thought, not a deadening of consciousness, nor an escaping from the world, but a meditation in which the darkness or the silence is so great

done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto" yourself; or "inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these,"⁴ ye have not done it unto yourself.

We cheat ourselves by not doing unto our neighbor, for our neighbor is our Self. If we are limiting our neighbor to our relatives, countrymen, fellow religionists, we are cheating our Self, because it is only as we do unto another that we have done it unto the Self of us.

The rhythm of the universe is made up of the acknowledgment of *I* as God, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and by an act of commitment. The loving of our neighbor as ourselves is an act of commitment. There must be dedication and devotion to this principle, not to persons, but to this principle. It should not make any difference to us whether the Russians get the benefit of our benefactions or the Chinese or the Cubans. What must concern us is our act of commitment to those outside our family circle of nations, of allies, or of friends.

CONSCIOUSNESS PROJECTING ITSELF

Man shall live by the Word, not merely by bread. As we receive the Word flowing from our consciousness through the silence and perform an act of commitment that binds and relates us to It, that identifies us with It, then we have come out from the rest of the world and become separate. Our world is an emanation of our state of consciousness. The

be established on earth as it is in heaven. God forbid that we should want the kingdom of God on earth for us alone. This would be very much like persons who buy bombproof shelters for their protection, and then after the world has been blown up, come out and find that they are the only people left on earth. Imagine what kind of a lonesome world that is going to be for them—a hell on earth. Or it is like the people who are stocking their bombproof shelters with food, and when it is all over they expect to come out and find that nobody else has food except themselves. Can you imagine their being able to eat a bite of it?

THE ILLUMINED:
MASTERS OR SERVANTS?

We do not meditate that we may find our peace, but that through us peace may flow to the world. Moses did not receive his enlightenment that he might become a glorious king, but that he might go right down to the valley with his Hebrew people and suffer with them in bringing them forth into freedom. Gautama the Buddha did not receive his enlightenment to be set apart on a mountaintop and bowed down to and worshiped, but that he might walk the length and breadth of India, teaching disciples and establishing healing ashramas. Jesus Christ did not receive his enlightenment that he might be set apart from the rest of the world to sing hymns and play harps while the rest of the world was in

that you can look through it and see the whole of infinite Consciousness behind you, ready to pour Itself forth into your expectant inner ear as you invite It to “speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.”⁵

You can almost feel that great, great area of Consciousness behind you, pushing and pushing, sending Itself forth into expression through your consciousness, as your consciousness, as the Word, as the still small voice, over and over repeating, “*I am come that you might have life. I am come that you might have. Take no thought for your life. I am come.*”

And then you say, “Ah, that is why I have hidden manna; that is why I have meat the world knows not of. I have this *I* in the depth of this inner stillness and darkness, in the depth of this inner womb of Silence. There is *I*. ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’ This is the hidden manna. This is the meat the world knows not of. This is the manna that I must keep sacred and secret, sharing only as those who come to me are ready.”

Do not think for a moment that you can turn to this rhythm of the Spirit just to have your life made healthy, wealthy, and wise. There is no provision for that in the spiritual kingdom. You turn within that the word of God may flow through you to this world. You will be taken care of, certainly. “The way that provides not for the wayfarer is no way to fare upon.”⁶ This way of *I* does provide for us. But that is not the reason that we meditate.

The reason we meditate is that the kingdom of God may

that if there is illumination there is an act of commitment to the entire world, not just to a sect and not just to a community. It is not merely setting up office hours three hours a day, three days a week. To receive illumination and dedication means an act of commitment to the world seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day.

God does not reveal Himself lightly, or for selfish purposes, or to those who would use God. The pure in heart are those who understand the nature of the two commandments as constituting the rhythm of the universe, and in obedience to those two commandments, they are in attunement with the rhythm of the universe as it flows from the silence that they attain within themselves. "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."⁸ Be still and know that *I* in the midst of you am God. Be still and let the rhythm flow from that Silence within your own being, and then follow it with the act of commitment that aligns you with the people of this world.

If anyone's name is to survive as a spiritual leader or teacher, it must be that of an individual who has come into attunement with the spirit of God, which is the Spirit of all mankind, of all men and all women and all children everywhere. It leaves no one out. There is a Spirit in man, and it is to This that we attune ourselves, and then receive fruitage as we attain the state of consciousness that enables us to make the act of commitment. Whether it is to leave our nets, to sell all that we have to purchase the pearl, or to leave

slavery. To no man is it given to be enlightened for his own sake. It has never happened in the history of the world.

And yet there are thousands and thousands of people who are seeking enlightenment, seeking illumination, believing that when they receive it they are going to be healthy, wealthy, and wise forever after, all by themselves. No, let us have no such illusions. If you are seeking enlightenment, you will receive it as long as you are not dreaming of it as setting you apart from the world or as making you a master on earth.

Illumination will make you a servant. Other people may call you a master, but in your heart you will be smiling, "You call me master, but I know the extent to which I am a servant. I know the extent to which I am called upon to serve. All the rest of the world seems to be my master." No, illumination does not bring fancy titles or robes, or a life of peace set apart: it brings a life of dedication, of devotion, of service.

When the Master told his disciples to leave their nets, he was asking for a sign of commitment, and if they received illumination from him it was only that they should become "fishers of men."⁷

Read the story of the life of Paul and notice the whippings, the imprisonments, and the hunger he endured in order to carry the message of the Christ to mankind. Examine the lives of all the mystics and see the misunderstandings and sometimes imprisonments that were their lot. Illumination carries a price: leave the world, leave mother, brother, sister, and father if necessary for *My* sake. Be assured

mother and father, there is an act of commitment that unites us with God and man.

