

CONTINUING EXPLORATION OF A MODEL OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.
JESUS AS GURU PART 2

(Part 1 can be found on the Metaphysical Bible Study link as a pdf download for July 10.)

EXCERPTS FROM BE LOVE NOW by RAM DASS (AS BEFORE, I WILL SOMETIMES SUBSTITUTE THE NAME JESUS FOR GURU. Most of the material is direct quotes, with a few paraphrases here and there. *My observations are in italics.*

I found this conversation between Ram Dass and his guru to be a wonderful starting point for this continuing exploration. (The name "Christ" is part of the original dialogue, I did not put it in there.)

MAHARAJ-JI: It is difficult to sacrifice thought. The mind, in a blink of an eye, goes many miles.

RAM DASS: How does one sacrifice thought?

MAHARAJ-JI: It comes through grace and blessings.

RAM DASS: Whose grace?

MAHARAJ-JI: The blessings of Christ. Then the mind will be empty. Concentrate on one thing.

RAM DASS: Which center should we concentrate on?

MAHARAJ-JI: Don't speak, see, or hear evil. Christ didn't. Purify and wait for grace. The worldly people go outward, but we must go inward like a tortoise withdrawing within his shell (senses). It's difficult to empty the mind. It's not necessary to go to the forest. One can do it anywhere, with any point. You begin to focus more on the internal quest than external stimuli. As the karma (your personal baggage) lightens, your faith gets stronger and you become more attuned to the feeling of that presence or guidance, even though you can't know it through your senses or your thinking mind. That faith allows you to come into a deeper intimacy with your guru.

The ways to hang out with Jesus are as various as the situations in my day. Every mantra or prayer that I say is taking me into him. Intervals of silence open into his being. Thoughts of him arise many times a day. I may be sitting with someone, looking into their eyes, and they turn into Christ over and over again. Just hanging out with this incredible being of consciousness and love and light is a way of opening oneself, a process of surrendering.

It's like having intense love for Jesus as a human being. Initially there's dualism. Then as your love for Jesus grows, you start to meet the Christ. Then as you love the Christ more and more, you keep merging into that love. When you've merged fully into the Christ, there is only One. That's the route of devotion to the guru. You feel the presence of the inner guru and then keep merging into that presence. Each of us has our way of tuning into that place where the guru dwells inside, the telltale sign of that presence. For me, it's as if I'm in a dark room and there's someone else in the room, the presence of another being whom my external senses don't register. It's like a faint fragrance that permeates the air and evokes a deep memory. If I'm really tuning into the Christ consciousness, there's a sense of joy, of truth. It feels right-on, it resonates, and I can't get away from it. It takes me over. I associate a feeling of deep harmony with him.

He comes to me in different ways, in different voices, in different people, and yet there's something about his presence that's the same. It's ecstatic. For you it might be a feeling or a remembrance that comes from looking at the infinity of the night sky, or meditating, or listening to certain music, or reading a poem with an intimation of divine love that stirs your heart. Being with Jesus is an eternal moment.

The relationship between guru and devotee is not the same as other human relationships. "By his mere glance, Bondage becomes liberation, And the knower becomes the known." — Jnaneshwar

Your attachment to how the Jesus will manifest is just your projection. Instead of judging and pushing and pulling, allow yourself to be here without clinging. You will let go of concepts and attachments sooner or later, and nobody's in any rush except you, because the beings who know aren't in time. You're the only one who's in time, and suffering. You have to let go of your self-pity, feelings of unworthiness, feelings of inadequacy, and the desires that increase your separateness and push the universe away.

"The Great Way is not difficult for those not attached to preferences. When neither love nor hate arises, all is clear and undisguised. Separate by the smallest amount, however, and you are as far from it as heaven is from earth." —Seng-ts'an, Third Patriarch of Zen

Here is where I get hung up also and that was one of the reasons for putting some of these thoughts together. I somehow thought this magical mystical presence would make itself know in my mind, and I would now be lovingly guided for the rest of my life.

The work I need to do here is my continuing willingness, my willingness to be loosened from my illusions and delusions, my willingness to let go of my anger and fear, my willingness to see myself and the world differently, my willingness to be loved, my willingness to be guided, my willingness to know that I don't know, and my continuing willingness to be willing.

As you see with clarity what's holding you back, you start trying to figure out how to release the attachments. You gravitate more toward identifying with the soul. As we begin to observe the roadblocks that impede our way, we see how we need to clean up our mental clutter and clear away the distractions. We may need some measure of quiet and clarity to plumb the depths of our spirit, to become whole. Clearing the mind is a process of becoming simple, but it's not a simple process. There's plenty of room for excursions into more delusion. We have all encountered, whether in ourselves or others, the tendency to substitute piety for purity, ritual for personal experience, or concepts for consciousness. These are ways we pretend to be spiritual while maintaining the fiction that we are the center of the universe. These delusions are not good or bad, but the ego can be very subtle and convincing at "being spiritual" too. "I'm a spiritual person"—how many lifetimes will we spend on that one? Eventually those fictions may lead us to real spiritual work anyway. The guru acts as a mirror for your soul and at the same time reflects your impurities and attachments back to you. As you surrender more and more to the Christ within those attachments begin to fall away. It's a natural process of seeing what keeps you separate from love and letting it go. They just start to fall away.

The ego can still stalemate the process of growth. There are many times I need to ask, “Is it Jesus, or is it my ego?” I have to listen very carefully. When a new experience presents itself, I ask, “Does it fit? Is it a teaching from the guru? Does it feel right?” Your intuition, the quality of the heart that connects you to the guru, is how you validate and integrate the teachings. There is an intuitive stamp of approval. You’re using the spiritual heart as your radar, not your intellect to judge.

As long as we perceive ourselves as separate entities, this relationship with the Jesus helps us to witness everything we do, everything we think, everything we feel is seen from the perspective of the Christ who witnesses with absolute wisdom and compassion. It keeps us seeing our life as a spiritual play.

All the world’s a stage, And all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances, And one man in his time plays many parts. —Shakespeare

This world is like a stage, where men perform many parts under various disguises. They do not like to take off the mask, unless they have played for some time. Let them play for a while, and they will leave off the mask of their own accord. —Sri Ramakrishna

NTI ACTS

Chapter 25

(1-12) 3The world is not real. 4It is like a play, with actors playing their roles. 5Only in the play of the world, the script has been forgotten, so that the play seems very real.

6This play has many endings, like slits cut in the script, where one can choose to step out of the play. 7But if one believes the play and is focused on playing his role, he will miss his opportunities to step out.

(v 13 – 22) 1When you remember the script, the drama is removed and replaced with a feeling of love. 2For then you see that each player in the script has only one purpose for you. 3Each one is playing his role so that the script may unfold and lead you to your place to step out. 4Each one is your brother and your savior engaged fully in helping you to find your slit of release.

(v 23 – 27) 1As the script plays out, you may realize your joy and realize your gratitude for your brothers. 2For everything is working just as it is set to work to bring you to the place of release.

Chapter 26

(v 1 – 32) 1There is a reason for your role in the play and a reason to let the script continue. 2As you play your part, remembering it is but a part, others will see the script in you. 3They will loosen their hold on the drama of the play as they begin to see beyond it through you. 4Through them, others will awaken, until no one is left in the play.

Ramana Maharshi said that God, guru, and Self are the same. The guru, the true guide, awakens our own deeper being which is God itself. That unity of God, guru, and Self is the higher truth, and if your veil of attachment is very thin, you may be able, like Ramana, to penetrate directly to that essence in the heart. But most of us, to get through our busy human

incarnation and the profusion of forms we find in our lives, need guidance and help. Seeing Jesus as separate from oneself is a way to approach it in steps of lesser truths. It's a first step toward becoming One. The reality of the guru or guide as separate from oneself is a method or vehicle for coming to God. It's using a relationship with a separate entity, dualism, to get to the One, to the reality that Jesus is identical with your inmost being.

There may be some fear of the ego losing control, of the surrender, but it disappears in merging into the depth of the love. As the fear diminishes, the guru may more openly manifest the true form behind the form, as Krishna reveals to Arjuna his universal form in the Bhagavad Gita. In similar fashion, the fear and awe of God referred to in the Bible are steps on the path. As the attachments of the mind begin to disappear, even the awe is transcended as the separation begins to dissolve between lover and beloved.

In the Old Testament Moses could not look at the Face of God. In the ONT Jesus transfigured himself to Peter James and John and "His face shown as the sun."

In the NTI the Transfiguration is no longer a scary scene, because Peter is reminded that Jesus is Peace. NTI MARK CHAP 9 (2-13)

As I become more identified with the loving guidance of Jesus, my sense of self diminishes. As John the Baptist said in the ONT, "He must increase; I must decrease."

The passage below sums it all up. I believe one of my goals here is to make Jesus/the Christ a constant and continual part of my awareness so that I am always open to love, joy, peace, and guidance.

For me the path to merging is just hanging out with my guru. On the dashboard of my car, next to my bed, in my meditation spot, and in the kitchen by the refrigerator are pictures of my guru. They're constant reminders of the relationship. He keeps butting into my thoughts and conversations; I hear his voice in my head. If I find myself in situations or with emotions that take me away, missing his presence reminds me how far I have gotten from him. That nearness to Jesus has become so natural that when I am removed from it, when I get captivated by pain in my leg or some other situation, I suddenly think, "What am I doing caught in this place? This is a terrible place to be." Then I remember him again and somehow pull myself back to his force field, his presence. If out in the world I find myself becoming paranoid or lost in the material stuff of the marketplace, eventually the discomfort leads me back to him. That suffering reminds me that I've lost my connection to Jesus. I immediately start a mechanism of reorienting or centering, of coming back into the moment, of opening the flow of love again. I know my heart has closed, and I know it feels wrong. So I start working to get out of it. I start a mantra like "I am loving awareness" or another mantra or start attending to my breath. I make an intention to love everything again.

I began this as a project for self-education. I hope you might find it helpful. Let me know if you do and I can publish other "projects."