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Quotes and Quips

To define God is grinding what is already ground; for He is the only being we know.

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), founder of the Ramakrishna Mission

Hindu sages have told us that to live the spiritual life, no matter how hampered it might be, no matter with what limitations, is infinitely superior to having a mental grasp of things Divine. They have taught us that until we have woven these things into our lives, one by one and step by step, we would not be able to have a grasp of the whole of the Divine teaching. Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

Expecting the world to treat you fairly because you are a good person is a little like expecting the bull not to attack you because you are a vegetarian. Dennis Wholey, American entertainer

The sages, being filled with universal love for all beings, did not want to keep their enlightenment to themselves. They declared to all: "O mortals, striving and struggling upon this Earth plane, weeping, wailing, buffeted by the vicissitudes of life: we have come upon a great discovery. There is something beyond these appearances, these vanishing names and forms that go to make up this universe. There is something beyond, which is the very source and support of all these objects of the phenomenal world. Why do you search in vain for happiness outside? Come, come, happiness resides within." Swami Chidananda (1916-2008), president of the Divine Life Society

There are three kinds of devotees. The inferior devotee says, "God is out there" and thinks God is different from His creation. The mediocre devotee says, "God is antaryami, the inner guide who dwells in everyone's heart;" thus the mediocre devotee sees God within. But the superior devotee sees that God alone is

everything, for He has become the twenty-four cosmic tattvas. That devotee finds that everything, above and below, is filled with God. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886)

Build your inner environment. Practice silence! Paramahansa Yogananda (1893-1952), founder of Self-Realization Fellowship

In May, 2009, the Western media was celebrating the success of an American ecologist's first expedition to Everest, led by his much less famous sherpa guide. One newspaper, the Salt Lake Tribune, simply stated in its headline: "Apa Sherpa Summits Mount Everest for the 19th time."

Life is a pilgrimage. The wise man does not rest by the roadside inns. He marches direct to the illimitable domain of eternal bliss, his ultimate destination. Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh (1887-1963), founder of the Divine Life Society

For seven lives in seven bodies the grateful will remember friends who relieved their anguish and affliction. Tirukural 107

Disease is but a milestone; neither is good health our greater purpose in life. We are wellness. We are consciousness. That is our natural state. Swamini Mayatitananda, founder of the Wise Earth Monastery

Man flows at once to God when the channel of purity is open. By turns our purity inspires and our impurity casts us down. He is blessed who is assured that the animal is dying out in him day by day, and the divine being established. Henry David Thoreau, (1817-1862), American Transcendentalist author

I believe that dance communicates man's deepest, highest and most truly spiritual thoughts and emotions far better than words, spoken or written. Ted Shawn (1891-1972), American dancer

The road to success is always under construction. Anonymous

Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be the miracle. Phillips Brooks (1835-1893), American author

Silence is the language of the real. Nagarjuna (ca. 150-250), Buddhist philosopher

Many people are afraid of silence. They have to be doing something all the time. Many people also are afraid of being alone. But actually no one ever is alone. He's always with his great divine Self. Every person has a great, divine Self within him, an absolutely perfect, shining, sublime being of light. The voice of this being is a loud silence. The voice of your soul is a loud silence. Many people have said that the voice of God is a deep, profound silence. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927-2001), founder of Hinduism Today

Did You Know?

USS Warships Krishna & Indra

They fought valiantly in wars, defended the United States and were manned by hundreds of sea men for decades. The American Navy's Achelous class of ships, named after a Greek river Deity, includes the USS Krishna (left) and USS Indra (right). Built during World War II, they are the only two US Navy ships named after Hindu Gods. There are specific naming conventions. Submarines, for example, are always named after fish and marine creatures. Repair ships are named after Deities of various religions traditions.

Both USS Krishna and USS Indra are repair ships, support units that provide maintenance and succor for other ships. At 100-meters long, they are built to be able to stand on their own in a battle.

The ships had their maiden voyage in 1945. They both participated in the Vietnam war and were functional until the 1970s, when USS Krishna was sold and USS Indra was retired. The latter was ceremonially sunk in 1992 off the coast of North Carolina, in an effort to create an artificial coral reef.

Basics of Hinduism

Moksha, Freedom from Rebirth

The destiny of all souls is moksha, liberation from rebirth on the physical plane. Our soul then continues evolving in the Antarloka and Sivaloka, and finally merges with God like water returning to the sea.

Moksha in Sanskrit comes from the root muc, meaning "to let loose." The Mahamrityumjaya mantra intoned at the heart the Rig Veda says, "May we be freed from the bondage of death as a cucumber from its stalk."

Hindu scripture tells us that moksha comes when earthly karma has been resolved, dharma well performed and God fully realized. Each soul must have performed well through through life's varied experiences in order to not be pulled back to physical birth by a deed left undone.

Though all souls are destined to achieve moksha, the breaking of samsara's chains will not necessarily happen after this one life. While seeking and attaining profound realizations, Hindus know there is much to be done in fulfilling life's other purusharthas, or goals: dharma (righteousness), artha (wealth) and kama (pleasure.) Moksha is the last goal to be desired and the last one to be attained.

Both old and young souls are on a journey to realize God, whether they understand this or not. Old souls renounce worldly ambitions and take up sannyasa at a young age, striving on the quest to let go of the world. But all Hindus use the later years of life to move closer to moksha by intensifying spiritual practices, tying loose ends and letting go of attachments.

The Vedas say, "If here one is able to realize Him before the death of the body, he

will be liberated from the bondage of the world."

After moksha, subtle karmas are made in inner realms and swiftly resolved, like writing on water. Eventually, at the end of each soul's evolution comes vishvagrasi, total absorption in God.