

On Western Post-Christianity By Sadhu Sundar Singh

"I have been asked, 'Is Christianity a failure in Europe? I have seen some true servants of Christ in Europe.' *Christ has not been a failure, but people have failed to understand Him.* Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness know Him. He reveals Himself to such people -- those who spend time in prayer. We see our face sometimes not in a mirror but in a river, but when there are waves in the river we are not able to see ourselves. When our lives are full of hurry and bustle we fail to see ourselves, but in a quiet place we see ourselves and we shall be entirely changed -- a new life. Then we shall not be ashamed. We shall know Him by living with Him -- and we must live in Him through a life of prayer."

A friend arranged for him to interview the Pope, but when he discovered that many formalities had to be observed, he was unwilling. For he believes neither in the infallibility of the Pope nor that of the Roman Church.

In Germany he was asked about the survival of the fittest. He told them it was not a strange thing at all -- the fit will survive of themselves. "But in my experience," he said, "what I have seen is the survival of the unfit. And that is where God's glory comes in."

"How are we to deal with people who are utterly indifferent to religion?"

He replied, "God Himself can do nothing with such people so what can you and I do? Orthodox and strict Hindus and Mohammedans are better than many of the reformed liberals. The latter are stones in their own community and if they come over into the Christian Church they will be stones there too. Far better a man who is strict in the observance of his own religion."

"A great professor in America once asked me, 'Why do we need to go to the Father through Christ?'

I answered, 'Did Jesus lie when He said, "No man cometh to the Father but by Me?"'... 'But,' said he, 'there is no mediator in the Parable of the Prodigal Son'... I replied, 'Are you so wise and cannot understand that? There was no need of a mediator there. The son had lived with the father before leaving him. He had enjoyed his fellowship. He knew him and knew the way back to him. But it is impossible for those who don't know God to come to Him except through Christ. He is the only Saviour. It is only Jesus who has revealed the Father. The *Gyana Marga* of the Hindus is only for a few; but if it is true it ought to be for every body.'

On Prayer

"Those who think that prayer is asking are only beggars. I have not seen any beggar understand the truth of Christianity."

"Every day whenever we spend time in prayer and realize His presence, we must hold these things fast in our heart. Without prayer it is impossible. Prayer is not asking for this thing or that thing, but for the Giver of blessing Himself -- that He may live in us. See how wonderful our Saviour is!"

"Some people are very thankful when their prayer is answered. But the people who think that prayer is merely asking are greatly mistaken. God gives Himself. Even wicked are receiving all kinds of things from God. If the Holy Spirit were given without prayer, we should not be able to appreciate Him. But the people who receive Him can't live without prayer. They may fall, they may make mistakes, but they know the value of prayer; and those who know the value of a life of fellowship will never cease."

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"Prayer is to live in Him for others. We can't stop breathing in the air of the Holy Spirit, and by the Holy Spirit we are being prepared for the world to come -- for the Kingdom of God where we are going to spend eternity. We have not been created to live in this world forever but to get ready for our Heavenly Home."

"A child two or three days old does not know anything about this world -- about his mother and about milk, but he knows how to suck milk. He does not know Khasi or Hindi, but he knows how to suck. God has provided milk for the child in his mother's breast, but it does not flow into the child's mouth. He has to suck and he gets stronger and stronger every day. God is our spiritual Mother and we experience that when we lead a life of prayer. We have desire. This desire is to be satisfied, and only He can meet the needs of the human heart. Everybody knows something about prayer. A child can cry."

"St. Paul was such a practical man of God that he didn't tell others to do what he didn't try to do himself. He lived a life of prayer, he never ceased to pray. When on a long journey, he prayed. He knew the value of prayer from experience. He knew how important and essential it is. Just as breathing and circulation of the blood are functions of the body, so prayer is a function of the soul. The circulation of the blood will not continue forever, the beating of the heart will stop, but prayer will continue. Prayer is to breathe in God -- to breathe in the air of the Holy Spirit. Those who cannot breathe are dead. We breathe in our sleep, so, '*Pray without ceasing.*'

To live in Him we are to breathe in Him Who is our life."

"A naturalist noticing that certain beautiful birds flew away to a hot country at the beginning of winter, had a great desire that the birds should stay, but was unable to retain them. So he thought of another plan. He got some of these birds' eggs from a hot country. He thought that if these young ones were born in a cold country they would think they belonged to the cold country. But when the winter came they flew away. No one told them, but they went back again to the country whence they had come. They had that instinct, that sense which told them. So we too are going to fly away from here."

"If eggs are not properly hatched they become rotten. So we too are in danger of perishing from sin. But we are being prepared and we shall fly from our shell into our heavenly home.

Even animals know their master but we don't know our Creator. We cannot change His will but through prayer we can understand His will. What is necessary for His will, will be given to us to carry out His plans. We are being changed. When the egg is being hatched it is changed; then, in time, the chick will become like the mother-bird. The liquid matter is changed until it becomes a young bird which becomes like its mother. In prayer we are being hatched and changed and prepared to be like Him.

...all eggs do not get hatched. They need the Mother's warmth. So too we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit to make us warm. We must receive the warmth and heat from Him in prayer."

"Why doesn't God give spiritual blessings without prayer? There was Saul. Saul received a kingdom and the Holy Spirit, but he did not pray for the Holy Spirit and was not anxious. The result was that he lost both. Through prayer we are being prepared. We are receiving a blessing through the prayer of preparation. Instead of donkeys Saul found a kingdom. If we receive the Holy Spirit before we are ready we shall lose Him. But if we are ready then our lives will be entirely changed. But if we lose Him we are worse than before. Such men are the incarnation of the devil -- their condition afterwards is worse."

"This is a warning from the Lord Himself. *'Hold fast thy crown.'* All will be clear if we live a life of prayer. We must spend time in prayer -- then we shall know who our Saviour is. We receive blessings even through our mistakes. But our God works quietly. He never makes a noise... God give me strength and power that I may not lose this blessing. My prayer is to continue. Then Heaven will begin on earth for all who have had this experience. Then we shall see others entering into the kingdom of God. We shall see with our spiritual eyes and fly away and be with our Saviour and be in His Kingdom forever.

May God help us so that we may live in Him in this life -- and that is only possible through prayer which is the vital breath of life -- before we enter into the Heavenly Kingdom where we are going to live with Him forever.

We must begin in our home on earth, otherwise we shall feel out of place in Heaven. If we live in Him now, we shall be prepared to live with Him forever..."

"May God help us to pray without ceasing."

On Persecution, Suffering and Discipleship

"...a little girl thirteen years of age was going from her village to another when she was met by a Lama who said to her, "Your father has become a Christian and that is, I suppose, why you are a Christian too."

She replied, "A Christian Sadhu came to our village to tell of Christ. My family has become Christian -- I am a Christian because I know from my own experience that Christ is my Saviour." The Lama seized her and shut her up in a dark room with the door locked for twenty-four hours without food or water. At the end of the twenty-four hours the Lama thought she would ask to be freed. To his great amazement he found her singing. He shut her up for three days more without food or water. When he opened the door this time he didn't find her singing but she was on her knees in a corner of the room talking to somebody. He could see her lips moving but her eyes were shut. He began to listen to what she was saying. "Lord, I thank Thee for this honour of suffering for Thee." Christ was living in her otherwise it would have been impossible for her.

"Lord, forgive that Lama. Open his spiritual eyes that he may see Thy glory."

The Lama burst into tears, and taking off his turban he laid it on her feet and said, "I am like your grandfather in age, but today you have become my guru." To the Sadhu whom he met afterwards, he said, "I didn't learn as much from you as I learnt from the girl."

"I was so thankful. Can't we have that experience? She is on her way to perfection and has given her life to work for her Saviour."

"When I was preaching between Nepal and Tibet, I was asked in one place not to preach Christianity. But I said, 'I must give my testimony to what my Saviour has done for me.' I was arrested and put in prison for six months. An excellent opportunity of preaching the Gospel! I preached to the criminals but was forbidden.

The jailer said, 'You were put into prison on account of your preaching and here you are preaching again!'

I said, 'I can't keep quiet, I must tell about my Saviour.' Then he told the prisoners not to listen. They said, 'You have failed to make us better. If listening to him makes us better you ought to be glad.' The jailer was terrified lest all the criminals become Christians and took me away.

This time I was put into the jailer's cowhouse as there was no other separate room. The place was full of mosquitoes. My clothes were taken away and my legs and arms put into stocks. Then a basketful of leeches were put on my body. There were leeches round my eyes shutting them, and they were sucking away all my blood. It was very painful. I confess my weakness. God wanted to show me myself. I almost wanted to cry. 'By tomorrow,' I thought, 'I shall be dead from loss of blood.' When I was praying, however, I felt something like electricity all through my body and my prison was changed to Heaven. 'Will heaven be better than this?' I

forgot the leeches, and though I am no singer I began to sing a Hindi hymn. Such wonderful joy! In the midst of suffering I had no external comfort of any kind but I experienced such wonderful peace from my living Saviour.

I had given St. Mark's Gospel to the man who had reported me, who immediately tore it up. He came to look at me in astonishment with the jailer. 'What do you think of him?' he asked the jailer.

'I think he is mad,' replied the jailer.

'If by becoming mad one can become so happy, then I should like to become mad too,' said the man."

"These eighteen years He is everything to me -- the life of my life and I am never sorry. My relations ask, 'Are you not sorry now that you have to suffer?'

'I am only sorry I did not follow Him before eighteen years ago.'"

"It is a great pity any of us are living without this wonderful Saviour. We must follow Him. We must be with Him and then we shall be on our way to perfection. Unless we follow our Saviour we cannot be saved. There is a wonderful fish which can change its colour, but a blind fish cannot change its colour."

"Nobody will be allowed to enter into Heaven who has not a face like Jesus Christ. That is the only ticket, otherwise we shall find ourselves out of place there. Only those who follow Him will feel at home there. Are we willing to follow Him? There will be no hiding place in Heaven -- only in Hell. I who used to persecute Him, I who used to tear up Scripture, I must follow Him."

He thanked God that he had been enabled to go to the West. Before he went, he thought that there must be something in Modernist theories, otherwise so many men would not write so many books. Besides, Christianity had been in force for so many centuries in the West. But when he discovered how busy these scholars were and how much of their knowledge was second-hand and not the fruit of their experience with Christ, he announced that all their speculations would not move him an inch from his faith.

"We are called to work for Him. Are we misled by Modernists and Higher Criticism? Is our faith

shaken? If we believe that Christ was merely a great man then we have no message for the world. We will have to jump down into Hell to hide ourselves for every shame. We are to be fishers of men and are we still fishermen? The angels would have been glad to preach the Gospel in this world for five minutes, and that would have been enough. But the privilege is not granted to them. Only saved sinners can preach the Gospel."

"The Gospels are genuine; we find proof of that in the Gospels themselves. They were written by simple unlettered men. If the Gospels were not genuine, more care would have been taken in their composition and arrangement; there would have been more method. For example, the parables would all have been arranged in one place, the miracles in another and so on; but they all have been mixed up!"

People read many books about the Bible, but very few read the Bible itself. The Sadhu himself read very little besides the Bible.