

*To whose temple the Arch is starlit,  
In whose temple the Sun is the image of God,  
To whose temple the Moon goes every month  
And brings the message out every full Moon,  
And whose message the Moon sings as a word of sixteen letters,  
His religion I belong to, His temple I visit,  
His name I utter, His glory I live in.  
To Him I offer the lotus of my day,  
To Him I offer the lotus of my night.*

*These seed thoughts from the Spiritual Psychology meditations of Dr Ekkirala Krishnamacharya give the note for the Lunar Messenger of the Circle of Good Will. The Moon is the reflective principle and symbol of the mind. When pure and calm, it reflects impressions from higher circles. The time of the full Moon is especially conducive for higher alignment if we are poised enough. The alignment of the Sun, Moon and Earth in the sky helps us to experience the magic of the light of the soul and its manifestation down to the physical.*

*The Lunar Messenger is published every month in time for the full Moon. It contains thoughts from the teachings of eternal wisdom. Its purpose is to inspire us to put the teachings into practical life.*

## VISTAS OF WISDOM 163: CONSCIENCE

### *The Awakening of Conscience*

We are all divine in our very essence and therefore carry the divine nature within us. From this centre of the divine, we receive the will to good to guide our actions. We also receive the knowledge to achieve good things. When we strive to develop the divine within us, love grows quite naturally within and around us, and we make wise use of nature's resources for the benefit of all living beings on this planet. Where there is no search for the divine within and in nature, there is a lack of inclination to engage with and embrace values. Only those who seek the light can embody values.

Many people lack a proper understanding of the soul and immortality. Science has told them that there is no God and no spirit within human beings. Spiritual life is denied, stifled and suppressed. People turn to the idolisation of worldly things. The inner voice that bears witness to life beyond the material world is drowned out by the noise and hustle and bustle of work, leisure and entertainment. When one's entire life is focused on the material, the purpose of existence disappears. The incentive to lead a righteous life is lost.

When we recognise the divine within us, we awaken our conscience and develop it further. The emergence of conscience is based on our connection with the divine within ourselves and in others. This conscience does not allow us to do just anything. It brings about self-control. Self-control so as not to hurt others; restraint so as not to manipulate others; restraint so as not to steal other people's belongings. All this happens quite naturally when our conscience awakens.

In the average person, the conscience is not very highly developed. In a disciple on the spiritual path, however, the conscience is very much present. Conscience is the mind of the inner being, known as *Buddhi*. Conscience is the mind of

the soul, but not of the personality. The personality mind works for the desires of the personality. Through the conscience, flashes of insight given by the soul appear. The personality mind pays no heed to such flashes of insight and often does not even understand why it should follow a sudden idea. It makes no effort to understand or act upon the prompts that come from the soul via *Buddhi*.

Reasoning is the *modus operandi* of the personality mind. It requires answers for everything it does. For every 'why', it needs a 'therefore'. Those who seek the 'why' remain stuck in the world of causes. The effect of wisdom upon the conscience initially requires no reason. The question of why we love a particular person finds no answer within our own mind. Conscience extends beyond mind. The intellect is part of mind. Mind is the ruler of the personality, which allows nothing that goes beyond the personality. When we develop our conscience and act in accordance with it, then mind constructs its own rationale for following the conscience. We learn to exercise self-control and to set our personality aside.

### *The Voice of Conscience*

Once conscience is born within us, we can engage in dialogue with it and receive guidance. It develops through contemplation and the regular study of the wisdom teachings. Conscience begins to speak to us and often guides us.

We close our eyes, turn our thoughts inwards and receive the answer from our conscience. It is a focused connection; we can connect with every single action we perform. When we are aware of our conscience, it tells us very clearly whether we should do or change something now or later. We then simply follow our conscience and do what it suggests.

Once we have developed our conscience, life becomes much easier for us.

Discipleship is an endeavour to act as a soul rather than as a great personality. It is therefore important to consult one's conscience regularly. Disciples are always in dialogue with themselves – a dialogue between their conscience and their personality. They continually develop their conscience and subject their daily actions as a personality to a test of conscience. They regularly check whether their thoughts, words and actions stand up to the scrutiny of their conscience. This fosters the process of questioning and self-analysis through introspection.

This dialogue is an important aspect of a disciple's life. Being in harmony with one's conscience is always more important than deriving a particular advantage or benefit from one's actions. When engaging in introspection, one must ask: Am I really doing what I am meant to do? Whose agenda am I fulfilling? Am I being drawn by my personality or by the soul? There is only one I AM. Does it exist within the personality, or does it reign over the personality?

Most people align their way of life with public opinion. Many intellectuals do not speak out, even if they may consider something else to be right. They make compromises in order to be accepted by society. From a spiritual point of view, this is nothing other than personal gratification at the expense of the Self, the Soul, and, in the long term, also at the expense of the public good. With such behaviour, we kill our conscience.

### Development of the Conscience

Right at the very beginning of discipleship, the principle of the 'here and now' is introduced. It is the principle of conscious living. When we practise being in the 'here and now', we are deeply connected to our conscience. We become fully absorbed in whatever we are experiencing at that moment. For example, if we pay very close attention to our toothbrush and do not merely glance at it superficially, we are mindful to apply the toothpaste carefully to the brush and to brush our teeth. Our thoughts are entirely focused on this moment and nowhere else. When we eat, we eat very mindfully, and the same applies when we move. In this way, we develop a very mindful way of life.

If we follow what our conscience tells us, our train of thought will gradually unfold from this. When we gain knowledge through information, we should reflect on it and, if necessary, think it through again. If we embrace something too quickly, we are likely to abandon it later. Hasty action is a trick of the mind, so that it can discard the matter later. We do not accept anything too quickly, nor do we abandon it too quickly. We should present the whole matter to our conscience, not to our mind.

Until we have sufficiently developed our conscience and are entirely certain of our inner voice, it is good to connect with someone we trust and whose wisdom we believe in. Especially when we have doubts, it is better to ask someone who has developed their conscience, not just anyone or everyone. Otherwise, we will not know which advice to follow. Once advice has been given, we should reflect upon it ourselves for two or three days and follow our conscience. Having made a conscious decision, we accept the consequences, whatever they may be. We must never criticise the person who gave us advice, for we asked them for it.

If we cannot find anyone to advise us, we can open a scripture. A scripture is not just a book of paper; it is a living being. When we open it and read a page, it shows us a path. We may also encounter various practices, whether arising from within, suggested by a teacher, or through a book recommendation. Some of these methods speak directly to our conscience. These are the best methods for bringing about change in our lives. We should always be guided by our own conscience and make conscious decisions.

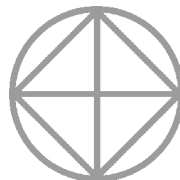
Those who have developed their conscience can identify with others. They have the ability to empathise with others and to connect with their inner conscience. It is *one* conscience within many. It is from this point that advice then arises. This is a way of receiving guidance. When that guidance comes from within ourselves, that is best.

We should not be imitators, but rather do what we think is right, as it emerges from our conscience: through our conscience we get the direction since essentially we are a soul. Through our connection to a genuine teacher, our conscience awakens ever more deeply. Gradually, the conscience grows stronger and envelops the personality in a shell through which consciousness shines as the light of the soul. In the higher form of communication between soul and personality, the personality receives its programme from the soul and works it out day by day. We become masters of our own lives and examples for others to follow.

The ideal of discipleship lies in touching the undercurrent of the one consciousness of humanity. We can touch this plane by delving into ever deeper layers of our own consciousness until we reach the deepest layer, which is the one consciousness of all humanity. This is the curriculum and the scope of today's discipleship. Our daily duty is our curriculum. The unified consciousness of humanity is the test. May we endeavour to prove our worth.

Sources used: K.P. Kumar: *From the Teacher's Pen*. Var. seminar notes. Dhanishta, Visakhapatnam, India ([www.aquariusbookhouse.com](http://www.aquariusbookhouse.com)).

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Good Will is contagious!

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*Circle of Good Will*