

Sat Chit Anand

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Stages of Spiritual Evolution

*Isaiah 43: I have called you by name - you are mine.
 You are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you.*

We are looking at the 4 levels of spiritual growth: from individual > to collective > to universal > to Divine. We all make this journey, because we belong to the Divine, we yearn for the Divine, and we seek to re-unite with the Divine. This is the movement of love, the most powerful energy in the universe. It is expressed at the time of Easter in the self-offering and sacrifice of love that was made for humanity. Divinity is clothed with a frail human body, which is shattered to reveal love unlimited. The cross is a sign of love unlimited. We are called upon to offer ourselves, to joyfully give our lives as a living offering of love. If you open yourself up to love, it will possess you and raise you up.

UNIVERSAL: conscious universal mind

Jesus: I am in the Father and the Father is in me.

In this stage, actions are done for the welfare of all. You are aware of the interconnectedness of all things. You know you are not acting for yourself alone. The selfish work for their own benefit; the wise work for the benefit of all, said Shantideva, Buddhist saint. Because you are not acting for an individual self, but for all, you cease to create personal karma. At this level, you go beyond duality, and beyond karma. It is no longer I, but God that lives and acts in me: *The works I do are not my own, but the Father who dwells in me.* By you surrendering your actions to God, the responsibility and the burden of interconnectedness is taken away.

DIVINE: Conscious unitary mind

Jesus: I and the Father are one = the experience of non-duality (advaita).

In the final stage, you realize your unity with God: I and God are one. This is not blasphemy or arrogant to say. It is actually very humble, because you acknowledge that only God is, and you have no reality apart from God: I have no reality apart from God, because at the deepest reality, only God exists. Only God is acting. You go beyond judgement, beyond good and bad. To live in God means to accept everything and not judge.

You go beyond karma. When you realize union with the Divine, then you are no longer bound by karma, because it is not you acting but God acting through you. All your actions are surrendered to God, and you know it is God acting and not you, because only God is. *Jesus said: it is not I who does these works but Thy.* You are free from karma, because actions are done by God and not by you. Actions done by God do not bind the soul of man [Upanishads]. If you are not the doer, then there is no karma.

The circle is completed and you have come back to the beginning: come from God and go back to God. I and my Father are one in the beginning and the end. There is once again unity, but now it is conscious unity. You participate in the Christ Consciousness, which is one with God, and this union is expressed as the bliss of love. This is salvation, liberation, freedom, moksha, enlightenment, Sat-Chit-Ananda.

When Jesus said: I and the Father are one, he completed the evolutionary process of human spiritual growth. Unconscious original unity became conscious unity in him, and he knew his oneness with God from the beginning – that he came from the Father and he will go back to the Father. But this experience is not limited to Jesus alone. He made a blueprint of the spiritual journey for every human being, that we may die to the false self (ego), be resurrected in love, and born into eternal universal divine consciousness.

Based on teachings by Br Martin at Saccidananda Ashram, South India, Dec 2010 / Jan 2011

Wishing everyone a blessed Easter. The depth of your love determines the depth of your experience.

With prayers that our love ever deepens so we may experience deeper union with God / the Source of Love,
and become fuller expressions of that love. OM SHANTI, LOVE LEELA



*When love beckons to you, follow him,
Though his ways are hard and steep.
And when his wings enfold you yield to him,
Though the sword hidden among his
pinions may wound you ...
For even as love crowns you so shall he
crucify you.
Even as he is for your growth so is he
for your pruning ...
Love gives naught but itself and takes
naught but from itself.
Love possesses not nor would it be
possessed;
For love is sufficient unto love.
And think not you can direct the course
of love,
For love, if it finds you worthy, directs
your course ...
[Kahlil Gibran: The Prophet: Speak to
us of Love]*

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