

## Talk on “Devotional Love” by Swami Chidatmananda

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Introduction by Dr. Fran Grace, author of *The Power of Love*:

Welcome everyone. Some of you are from faraway places - Africa, South Korea, Europe, Canada -- and even Texas! I would like to introduce you to Swami Chidatmananda, whom we affectionately refer to as Swamiji, by reading from the *The Power of Love* book (dedicated to Dr. David R. Hawkins and his wife Susan), reading from the chapter that includes Swamiji's teachings on Devotional Love:

I first saw Swami Chidatmananda, a Hindu *acharya* (leader) from India, at a seminar given by my teacher, Dr. Hawkins.... You might think Swamiji stood out to me for his orange robe, brown skin, and striking white beard, but this was not the case. It was his focused attention—sharp as a knife—that struck me. I said to myself: *Now here is true devotion*. His whole being expressed one-pointedness of mind, fixed on the Divine and nothing/no one else. I imagined that upon seeing Swamiji, God would say, “That one belongs to Me.”

It wasn't that Swamiji acted like a devotee. Previously, I had noticed devotionism of the outward kind. People arrived at the seminar at 3 a.m. to be first in line, to claim a seat closest to the teacher. They sat in public places, eyes closed, meditating; they swooned dramatically, supposedly "blissed out." When I asked my teacher about such things, he said, “They have a picture in mind of what they think a spiritual person is supposed to act like, and then the ego produces it.” Swamiji did none of this. His devotion was inward, private. He was in a state of constant inner meditation, so there was no need to sit and close his eyes in the middle of a crowd.

Since he trusted the will of Divinity to put him exactly where he needed to be, there was no rush to be first in line. He was natural, efficient, respectful, joyous, and full of good humor.

His initiation into spiritual life came under the authority of his Guru, Swami Chinmayananda (d. 1993), whom he serves to this day. In 2001, he came upon the writings of my teacher, Dr. Hawkins, recognized their resonance with the scriptures of India, and made it a priority to be in his presence. He is devoted to the Supreme in whatever form It takes.

In July 2012, the Swami brought a small group from India to meet with Doc and Susan at their home. They were doctors, business professionals, mothers, and monks....

The visit was inspiring. Their questions came from the heart. They asked Doc how he maintained a loving state. He replied, "I sense the spirit in each person, and it's the spirit I love. I love because the spirit of God is in each living thing. Everything is part of God. By loving each other, we love God. And by loving God, we love each other. Each one of us is an expression of God. I say to God, Thank you for their devotion. Thank you for my life. I bless all living things in Thy name with gratitude. Amen." He gave thanks for their presence and love. At their request, he blessed them.

This meeting turned out to be the last meeting Doc had with a group. I interviewed Swamiji just a few days before Doc passed from this world. (pp. 550-554).

We are privileged to have Swamiji here tonight to give us a talk on the most important topic of Devotional Love and The True Teacher. Our heartfelt gratitude to you Swamiji for coming to be with us.

#### **Swami Chidatmananda:**

Offering my humble prostrations at the Divine feet of Dr. Hawkins whom we all from India regard as one of the greatest teachers. And I also offer my prostrations at the feet of Susan Hawkins. According to the tradition in India, the wife of the teacher also is equally greeted alongside the teacher, the Guru. So, I offer my prostrations. And I also extend my salutation to Fran Grace who made many things possible for us in connection with Dr. Hawkins. And I also extend my love and affection to each one of you who is present here. With your permission, I would like to offer a small prayer and then begin with the topic, "Devotional Love", as selected by Fran Grace and blessed by Susan Hawkins.

OM! OM!! OM!!!

*Namaste Paramam Brahma*

*Namaste Parmaatmane Nirgunaaya*

*Namastubhyam Sadroopaya Namoh Namah*

*Namaste Paramam Brahma*. Offering salutations to the Supreme Pure Consciousness. *Namaste Parmaatmane*. Offering salutations to the same Supreme Pure Consciousness who has manifested as the Godhead. *Nirgunaaya Namastubhyam*. Offering salutations to that Pure Consciousness, which is beyond form, beyond qualities, beyond all descriptions, even beyond the mind and intellect as well. *Sadroopaya Namoh Namah*. The same Pure Consciousness, which is beyond the form, beyond the qualities, beyond the descriptions - also has manifested in form and we offer salutations to that Pure Consciousness that has manifested in form to bless humanity.

Devotional Love – Love we know; we have many kinds of experiences. There is no one who will say that he or she does not know anything about love. But Devotion, according to the Indian scriptures especially connected with Bhakti, which is Devotion, it is said that Devotion is supreme love (*Param Prem Swarupa*) of the form of the nature of Supreme Love.

In ordinary love, there are expectations. If my expectations are fulfilled, I express my love. If my expectations are not fulfilled, I restrict my love towards anyone who do not fulfill my expectations. In ordinary love, there is a craving for recognition: “I have done so much, I have expressed so much, I have served so much but I am not getting enough recognition.” So there is a craving for recognition.

6:50

In ordinary love, there is a need for assurance. Ordinary love seeks assurance. It seeks security. It is afraid of insecure being. So it wants the security, a guarantee sought after. And it needs satisfaction. In ordinary love there is a need for satisfaction. “I want to be satisfied, when I am satisfied, you satisfy me, because of my satisfaction, I will give my love to you. Otherwise, I’ll see to it that you are also equally dissatisfied.”

But in Supreme Love, none of these things are there. It is beyond these kinds of cravings. There is no expectation, there is no need for recognition, there is no need for assurance, nobody asks for security. There is no need for satisfaction because Divine Love gives total satisfaction, complete satisfaction so there is no need for any further satisfaction. When I do not have

satisfaction, I seek it from others in various ways and whether it is things, or people or situations, I keep seeking. In Supreme Love, all thoughts are directed towards God. 8:30

As Dr. Hawkins has very clearly depicted, explained and demonstrated, that there are various manifestations of God that are equally Divine. And the same Divinity is there in all of us, equally present in all of us. So, all of us are equally Divine, whether we recognize it or not. So, in Supreme Love, all thoughts are directed towards God. But in ordinary love, there are so many other things, including God, there is a time for God also, but not exclusively for God.

In Supreme Love, love is exclusively for God. One-pointed, as was mentioned, single-pointed. Total love and there is total involvement. And when there is total love and total involvement, there is a manifestation of supremeness. So, through the path of love also one can attain the supreme blissfulness. I have heard that a young boy asked an experienced, educated person, “I have heard many things about love and marriage. I would like to know the difference between love and marriage in your view.” And that man said, “Love is blind. And marriage is an eye-opener” [laughter]. And he further said, “Love is like a long, sweet dream and marriage is like an alarm clock” [laughter].

10:45

When love is exclusively directed from the heart to God, then it becomes devotion, one-pointed devotion where there is no one else, nobody else, nothing else, the one and only God or the same love can also be directed towards the teacher who, according to Indian tradition, is called the Guru. Guru is none other than Divinity manifested for the sake of all of us so we can interact, so that we can talk, so that we can clarify our doubts, so that we can get guidance. Otherwise, as it is said in the scriptures, God is beyond form, beyond name, beyond properties, beyond qualities; you cannot think of God, you cannot imagine God. Then who wants such a God? [laughter]. Let Him stay in the scriptures. We respect Him. But if there is a manifestation of God who can know about our problems, our issues, our situations, our doubts, our quest and can clarify to us, can interact with us, can explain to us, can relate to us, can understand us, then clearly we are in need of such a God. So, God is beyond form also and God is in form also, in form is only to inform all of us so that we are informed always, not out of form.

And it is said in the scriptures that are connected with the devotion, one of the Avatars which is mentioned in Dr. Hawkins book also, Sri Krishna, “When any devotee constantly remembers Me, he ultimately merges into Me.” Constantly remembering God makes the mind merge in to God. And not only merge in God but revel in God. Not merging in God and afterwards, that person does not know what to do and gets bored - it is not like that. The nature of God is Existence, Consciousness, and Blissfulness — so there is constant blissfulness in that state of merger or union with Divinity- God.

14:00

A little boy asked his father, because they were living near by a church. So, this boy heard some sounds, so he asked his father, “See, there are sounds that I am listening to. I hear the sounds, they are beeping the horns of the cars, many cars together — why is this happening here?”

The father said, “There is a marriage going to take place and they are welcoming the guests, the gathering.” And the little boy said, “To me, it sounds like a warning of a siren, of impending danger.” And the father said, “You are smart. I was not!” [laughter].

When there is love, there cannot be any division; when there is love, there is trust, there is complete faith. We must have great faith. And what is this great faith? In one of the scriptures it is explained further. Great faith means:

1. Knowledge of the true nature of God
2. Belief in God
3. Love for God
4. Respect for God
5. Surrender to God

When these five are there in a devotee, he is said to have great faith.

Then it is further explained that fixing the mind on God, and having great faith in God, and meditating on God with undivided devotion – very important requirement, when this happens, it leads the devotee into union with God, meaning that Pure Consciousness. So through devotion also, like through meditation, like through selfless action, one can reach God, or through highest form of knowledge, reveling in that knowledge, one can attain that Supreme Consciousness. There are various paths, which are called Karma Yoga (the path of selfless action), Bhakti Yoga (the path of devotion), Jnana Yoga (the path of knowledge), Dhyana Yoga (the path of meditation). Through love also, through devotion also, one can attain.

18:00

The wife says to her husband, “I’d like to know how you’d describe me.” The husband replies, “A B C D E F G H I J K.” The wife asks, “What is this?! What does it mean?” The husband replies:

A for Adorable

B for Beautiful

C for Cute

D for Delightful

E for Elegant

F for Fashionable

G for Gorgeous

H for Hot!!

IJK for "I am just kidding!" [laughter]

If there is a serious expectation of description, then the wife will get disappointed. But if there is love, then accommodativeness will be there; the wife also will enjoy the way the husband explained. Just as we all laughed, she'd also laugh because one understands, one accommodates, one adjusts in love. The accommodativeness, the adjustment, the flexibility is there in love. Otherwise, in ordinary love, rigidity will be there. In supreme love, there is total flexibility and complete acceptance. As you are, you are accepted, without any reservation, without any conditions. That is where Dr. Hawkins has mentioned and the scriptures also mention that unconditional love is possible. Otherwise there are always conditions.

And one important thing that is mentioned in the scripture is the qualities of a devotee. If I think about myself as a devotee to God or to the teacher, with devotion unto him or her, whoever may be the teacher, there are a few qualities which are very important which should reflect in the devotee. Only such a devotee is a true devotee, otherwise, he is not a true devotee but only for name's sake. So, these qualities that are mentioned are as follows.

Friendliness: One should be friendly, like a friend, open; in other relationships, there may be certain reservations, some hesitation but with a friend, in the friendliness, everything is kept open. There is nothing that is closed. There is nothing that is hidden.

Compassion: There is compassion flowing from the heart in a devotee.

Neutrality: The devotee feels always neutral. There are no specific reservations in the mind of the devotee to bother others: that you are higher, that you are lower, you are greater, you are lesser. So, the devotee treats all equally.

Forgiveness: The devotee forgives instantly and immediately. He does not keep anything for the next moment. If there is anything that is not agreeable or something has happened unexpectedly - because they say to expect the unexpected – immediately, the devotee forgives.

Contentment: The heart of the devotee is contented because of its association with and involvement with the most contented Divinity.

Self-control: The devotee has self-control. People have some things that are attempting to manifest from the unmanifest of the lower levels or layers of the mind which have been gathered over a long time from many births. Control is exercised and one successfully manages them, sublimates them.

24:00

Self-knowledge: The devotee is interested in gaining knowledge about the true Self and the Self-knowledge is also there.

Like that, there are many other qualities also mentioned: Total Purity, Efficiency, Equanimity, Devotion, Gentleness. When these qualities are there, then the person is called a true devotee.

Like that, there are qualities mentioned about the one who has supreme devotion, who is able to express supreme devotion. There is no hatred in that person. There is no sense of I-ness. There is no sense of my-ness. There is no Anxiety, no Over-Elation, no Intolerance, no Fear, no Dependency, no Selfish Action, no Grief, no Desire. There is Freedom from Pairs of Opposites. When an individual does not have the knowledge of that higher state of knowledge, one identifies oneself with the body, mind, intellect, ego, and memory and confines oneself to this body-mind-intellect complex which is limited and considers oneself as limited. And whatever is referred to as "I", this individual understands "I" means the physical body, and things that belong to this "I" are mine. So: "I like myself and I like all things that belong to me." Beyond this identification, I do not like unless and until I am satisfied by your interaction and by your relationship. So, "I and my," "I-ness and my-ness" – when an individual has this attitude, whatever is fulfilling the desires of that "I", whatever gratifies the mind of that "I" is accepted: "I like those things otherwise I dislike them." When one dislikes something, one ends up hating it. The mind that gets caught up in likes and dislikes is always without peace, always annoyed, always in disturbance, always restless.

But this great individual who has supreme devotion, supreme love, does not have this notion of I-ness and my-ness. There is no hatred at all. The mind that is freed from hatred, the heart where there is no hatred, is completely free and love flows and devotion flows from it. So, what creates impurity in the mind is this I-ness and my-ness. That is a limited knowledge about ourselves, considering myself as limited to this body-mind-intellect-memory-ego complex. Identifying with the mind and its contents is a limitation but when there is a manifestation of supreme love, one goes beyond these identifications. Then one

identifies with the higher and goes beyond the lower. There is no sense of I-ness, my-ness, no hatred, no anxiety in the supreme devotee. The mind is in a state of surrender hence anxiety finds no place. And there is no fear, no dependency, no intolerance, no over-attachment, no greed, no desire, no impact of the pairs of opposites (at the body level, there is heat and cold; at the mental level, there is pain and pleasure; and at the intellectual level, there is agree and disagree). The pairs of opposites affect the ordinary individuals but the one who has supreme love does not get affected by these pairs of opposites. The world is the same, the people are the same, the situations are the same, everything keeps happening all around, but they do not impact the supreme devotee so that the same world is experienced differently by the supreme devotee.

A supreme devotee knows the Truth, understands the Truth, looks at the Truth, recognizes the Truth, values the Truth, gives importance to the Truth. When such a devotee looks at individuals, the mind does not recognize the disparities and he sees all as equal. Bodies are different, minds are different, intellects are different, memory capacities are different, ego levels are different, so where does he see equality? By seeing that which is behind the body-mind-intellect-memory-ego equipment. By recognizing the presence of the Divine in every individual which is always there, shining, ever shining, by recognizing that one Divinity, one can see everyone as equal. Otherwise, when one focuses on the body, on the mannerisms, on the behavior, different capacities, strengths, finances, power over others, position, name, fame – there is no equality there, in fact, there are so many differences there.

And the mind according to one's own thinking patterns gives preferences, choices, and importance to the people accordingly, so there is no equality there. But in a supreme devotee, everyone is considered as equal because there is only one Divine presence in everyone and that alone is given importance and that alone is referenced. Other things are there, they are all seen and experienced, but value is given only to the presence of the Divine.

The teacher or the Guru who experiences the Truth, who realizes the one Self, the presence of the Divine, becomes a link for all those who do not have that experience and do not understand the Truth as it is. So, the teacher is the link between the ignorant and the Divine. The teacher communicates in a language which people can understand. And the teacher is supremely devoted to Divinity and functions as a medium of communication, linking both the Divine state and the ordinary state so that the students can understand. The teacher explains in a language, a way, a manner in which it is understood by the students or the disciples or the devotees; it becomes easy. So, in that manner, we are all greatly blessed to have the Divine manifestation of David R. Hawkins who ever revels in that supreme state because everything he taught and write reflects that. In the scripture, it is

said that for the Pure Consciousness to manifest, it takes the assistance of the Divine power, the power that has manifested so many other things. So, it is called traditionally as Purusha (Pure Consciousness) and Prakriti (witnessed as Nature). So, we see the combination here in David R. Hawkins (Purusha) and Susan Hawkins (Prakriti). It is Divine Will that they have combined together to bless humanity.

35:50

The teachings of Dr. Hawkins reach far and wide. When we came and experienced the teachings, I was really astonished to see that whatever is mentioned there in our scriptures, these teachings from him are exactly in the same way. Then I went and asked Dr. Hawkins a question. Contemplating the scriptural teachings, it is said that one can attain the highest Truth. My question was, "By contemplating upon your teachings, can we attain the highest Truth?" Dr. Hawkins replied, "Yes!" He was so kind. That "Yes!" does not come from an ordinary individual but that "Yes!" comes from that Divine state, that Divinity Itself. So, to such a great master, the more we surrender to the great master, the more we revere, the more we express our love and devotion, the more we come near God.

The real teacher or the real master seeks nothing from the disciples or the devotees except the higher evolution of the devotees and disciples. The teacher is already fulfilled, completely contented and fulfilled. There is nothing left incomplete for the teacher. There is no need for such a teacher to do anything in this world. There is no duty, there is no responsibility, there is no need for doing anything. But still, to set an example for others, out of the infinite compassion of the teacher, the teacher acts in the world outside. Those actions come out of total fulfillment.

One is complete in oneself; one is fulfilled. Such a teacher wants nothing, desires nothing, seeks nothing, there is nothing in this world that can add any fulfillment except the attainment of that same state of fulfillment in the devotees and disciples. Then only the teacher will feel very happy. So, the only thing that can make Dr. Hawkins happy is our purity, our evolution, our attainment of the higher states of happiness. There is nothing in the world that makes Dr. Hawkins happy, but he is Happiness Itself, he is of the nature of Happiness. He is totally fulfilled and contented. He is one with the Divine. And we are fortunate enough to have Susan Hawkins amidst us. Divinity has chosen her to serve Dr. Hawkins. It is not an ordinary mind's plan; it is a divine plan, the divine Will. It is Divinity Itself that has chosen Susan and Dr. Hawkins to come together.

And let me tell you one thing: even the great manifestations of God, the Avatars, pay respect to the teacher's wife. Here again, I take the support of the teachings of Dr. Hawkins. He has mentioned Krishna as an Avatar, Jesus as an Avatar, Buddha as an Avatar. When an

Avatar does something, there is no personal benefit or gain out of it. There is no selfish motive or intent in it. They do it out of tranquility, out of totality, completeness, wholesomeness; there is no fragmentation, no division, no incompleteness. Out of the completion and out of the totality they do (their works).

40:15

So, I am taking this example from the Indian scriptures to make us understand how important the “Guru-Patni” (the wife of the teacher) also is. In the ancient Indian tradition, the students go to the Ashram of the Guru and stay there for a few years and learn so many scriptures, so much of knowledge, various kinds of knowledge. And after the completion of their education, the students offer their respects, they pay their respects to the teacher and they ask, “What can we offer you?” What can one offer the Guru who taught about the Great Reality and so many other things? But still the tradition says something we must offer.

After Krishna completed his education at the feet of his Guru, he along with his brother (Balarama) asks his teacher what he can offer to the Guru and the Guru says to them to go to his wife because she wants something, “go ask her” [laughter]. And then both of them go to and ask the wife and she says, “I don’t need anything other than my whole family. We lost our son. He went to the ocean side and he disappeared, vanished from there. We want our dear son back. You do something; this is what you can offer to us as a gratitude for the teachings from my husband, your teacher.” So, he (Krishna) goes in search of that soul, to find where that soul is, where the son is. And to summarize the story, Krishna finally even goes to the realm of death (“Yama Loka” as they call in Indian scriptures) and summons that soul. And brings back that boy into manifested form again and offers him to the teacher’s wife. This shows that even an Avatar respects the wife of the teacher as equal to the teacher.

Please remember that, because the energy of the teacher, that Divinity of the teacher, Godliness of the teacher, flows through the wife of the teacher also. The wife is not lesser, just because she is a woman. And the teacher is not greater because he is a man. There is no disparity. We get the benefit by respecting them, by being devoted to both of them. Not that Susan or Dr. Hawkins get any benefit, because they have already done their job. They have done their service to humanity. Susan Hawkins has given her best in service of Dr. Hawkins. Only because of that all the teachings have come in the way in which they were destined to come out by Divine Will. Otherwise, we would not have benefited from the teachings. So many seminars were conducted. In every way, Dr. Hawkins has expressed his Divinity for the sake of all of us. What is a greater gift than giving us the greatest teachings? You can give cards also; some presents also and so many other things. But this (the greatest

teachings) is the greatest gift that anybody can give as this has no equal. We cannot give anything in return that will equal what Dr. Hawkins has given. What can we give him in return? If at all we can give anything, we have to follow the teachings, we have to implement the teachings, we have to practice the teachings. And we have to serve and support Susan Hawkins in spreading the message of Dr. Hawkins.

44:35

When we look up to Susan Hawkins, through whom even now the Divine presence of Dr. Hawkins flows, we get elevated, we get uplifted, we get evolved, we become purer. It is an easier way to show our love and devotion to Dr. Hawkins and Susan Hawkins and thereby attain evolution, attain the higher states of happiness, higher states of blissfulness. It becomes easier for all of us because it is a Source, like a door to the Divine.

Someone had asked why God (formless) has manifested in the form also. The form is not a limitation, not a wall or confinement or restriction; the form is like a door to infinity. When you go near to the door are the doors open to infinity, what remains is infinity as there is nothing else. So, the form of Dr. Hawkins and Susan Hawkins is only like doors to infinity. We need a door to get into infinity because our mind is identified with names and forms. We need a name and form to look up to. And this is the easiest way: through his name and form, through his teachings, through his guidance, we can go out through these doors.

Any form of Divine does not say, “to become confined only to me, love me, respect me, honor me, get conditioned by me, hold on to me, only look up to me, follow only what I say” —that is like a prison. No Divine form says like that. All Divine forms are opening doors to infinity. You hold on to that name and form so that the mind becomes pure, it gets rid of polluting names and forms, focuses on the Divine name and form. Go near that name and form and that form opens into infinity, that form leads to the infinite. There is no restriction, no confinement there. So, our reverence, our love, our devotion, our service that we offer at the feet of the great teacher is directly connected with Divinity. This is an easier way. We need a medium through which we can connect (to the Divine). By ourselves, we can connect within our own heart because someone said there are two forms of the teacher. One is the physical form which will not remain forever. Another one is the form of the teacher in our own heart, which remains forever with us, which is immortal. Supreme Love leads us to the state of immortality (“Amrita Swarupa”) where there is no death, no limitation. One goes into that state which goes beyond the cycle of birth and death, beyond the limitations of space and time.

48:20

One person asked an elderly man, "How to impress a woman? I am trying to get close to a woman, how to impress her?" The reply came, "You have to talk to her. And when she talks, you have to listen to her. You have to respect her. You have to treat her, you have to praise her, you have to take her out for some tours or picnics, you have to give gifts, you have to make her happy, you have to make her feel elated. You can even go to the end of the world to satisfy her." The person noted down all these things, then asked, "OK, how to satisfy a man?" Response: "The woman needs to go to the man and simply say, 'I am satisfied.' Then the man is satisfied! [laughter]. 'Whew! You are satisfied with me?!' The man is happy she is satisfied." The path of devotion is as easy as that because the love we all know. When we express our love, all that we need to do is to uplift this love from the ordinary level to a higher level through prayer, through respect, through surrender. We have already seen this point.

There was a person who came to a priest and said, "I cannot come in public and then confess because people will know that I am confessing. I want a private confession." So, the priest said, "OK, I'll give you a private time so you can come privately and confess." The priest opened another room and the man went and said, "I am going very steady with my girlfriend, I am in love with her, I love her like anything. And I committed sin." The priest said, "You love her like anything, you are steady, how did you commit sin?" The man said, "I went to her home to meet her. She was not there. And no one was around except her sister. I got into a romance with her sister." The priest said, "Very bad." The man said, "But my sin did not end there." The priest asked, "Then what happened?" The man said, "I went to meet her after I got the information that she went to her uncle's house. No one was around except her aunt. I romanced with her aunt." The priest said, "Bad, very bad." And the man continued, "And I went to her workplace. And that day was a holiday and I thought she would be there, but no one was around. Only her friend was there. I romanced with her also." The priest said, "Very, very, very bad. This cannot be love." And the man continued further, closing his eyes briefly but when he opened his eyes, the priest was not there, he had vanished. When the man searched for the priest, he found him hiding in a corner under a table and asked the priest, "Why?" The priest replied, "There is no one around here" [laughter].

53:35

In true love, there is no craving for gratification from the many. The craving for the multiplicity and the many is a sign of impure love. There may be love but it is not pure love. In pure love, in one itself the whole humanity is experienced. Loving one individual is loving the whole of humanity because the individual represents the entire humanity. Loving one itself is fulfillment, is contentment, is attainment. So, one can befriend many, one can also

express love towards all but in exclusive devotion, it is only one point. There is only a single point. When one goes into higher states of meditation, there can't be many. Salutations to all, greetings to all, interactions with all, but ultimate meditation is only with One that suits me, my temperament, my mind, my intellect, my thought patterns. And that I select because God is limitless, boundless, infinite with as many manifestations as we want are there for us to focus.

So, in devotional love, we attain that higher state by focusing our love and devotion towards a form that has a name. Through that, we also reach that state where there is no need for form or name. In that state of blissfulness, where there is no need for name and form – one can reach that state through devotional love. And even in our normal relationships, when we come across people who express this kind of love – without their “doing” anything to us, we feel content in their presence. We feel peaceful in their presence because that peace radiates constantly and continuously. Every opportunity that we have to serve great masters, especially Dr. Hawkins, we must utilize. We must take it as the God-given opportunity only for our evolution, our higher attainment. And it is easy for all of us to connect to Divinity through the teachings of Dr. Hawkins. And I sincerely feel that it is Divine blessings in the form of this opportunity to serve Susan Hawkins and Dr. Hawkins. And to get blessed by this service.

Many of us from India have got highly inspired and uplifted by the Divine teachings of Dr. Hawkins. Whatever Dr. Hawkins has said, every statement he has made is like a mantra. Mantra means that which takes us to the higher states. So full of Divine potency! If we keep contemplating, if we keep on contemplating on these statements, we are automatically entering into the state of meditation. Our love for the teacher, our love for the teachings of the teacher, our love for the service of the organization connected with the teacher automatically draws us into the state of devotion and meditation.

58:35

And after that, the Divine Will alone manifests. We attain. God has to be attained in this *human* life. All of us have equal opportunity, nobody is higher, nobody is lower, nobody has more, and nobody has less. All of us have equal opportunity, and this is one of the easiest ways to serve the teacher and thereby purify ourselves. And according to the Indian tradition, I once again would like to share with you: “The teacher, the wife of the teacher, and God are all one and the same.”

So, I offer my prostrations at the feet of Susan Hawkins and Dr. Hawkins and also once again thank Fran Grace and all of you for making this Satsang possible.

And I also would like to say that Fran Grace is such a wonderful person! I'll always say it is the grace of God flowing through Fran. The name itself is Fran Grace. And her selfless efforts in making this book [*The Power of Love*] also come out in this most beautiful form. This highly respected book – may we all utilize this opportunity - even I bought those books to distribute because they are like a treasure. So, please help her in her “Inner Pathway” which can spread this message to many, many people around. Thank you! God bless us all!! [Audience cheers and claps as the talk ends.]

[at 1 Hour mark]

Swami responds to Questions from the Audience:

# 1 Thank you Swamiji for the truth that you shared tonight. The love and respect you shared for Dr. Hawkins, the reverence, filled this church. I have always been so eternally grateful as well to Susan because Susan is to me the catalyst to bring us Doc's teachings. None of us would have gotten the teachings without Susan's help so I have so much love and respect for her. And thank you for your love and beauty as well. Thank you! (Audience clapping.)

# 2 The Love which you were speaking about is very powerful and at the same time, we find ourselves in spaces where it is difficult to reach that Love. Could you speak about Grace and what is required to get beyond our limitations in these moments?

A: As human beings, we all have certain limitations. And by ourselves, we are not able to go beyond our limitations because we are limited in our capabilities and capacities. Like a small kid, the kid wants to move around and takes the support of the elders. If the kid wants to carry something, the elders have to help the kid to carry. Like that, the Grace of the teacher, the Grace of the Divine, enables us, makes us capable and eligible to understand our limitations and also purifies our mind to accept the limitations. Otherwise, when there is a limited mindset, it does not accept the limitations. Only when we accept the limitations, we can deal with them and rise above them. So, our devotion at the feet of the teacher and the Grace that flows enables us, enriches us, equips us and makes us capable to not only understand them but also transcend them. Individually, our energies are limited, our strengths are limited. But when we connect with unlimited Source, which is the teacher, because our teacher is in linked with the Divine, it becomes easy as Grace flows from the teacher to us. And unknowingly we are transported into higher levels. So that Gracefulness, that Divine Grace, through prayer we can attain. Through our devotion, we can attain. Through our service, we can attain. And also, by contemplating upon the Divinity, by thinking about Divinity, by listening about Divinity, by discussing Divinity, these are various

ways through which we can gain the Grace of the Divine so that we can transcend our limitations.

# 3 Thank you for your talk tonight, much appreciated. Dr. Hawkins spoke about the importance of being in the presence of the holy company. And I find myself sometimes wanting to isolate myself and contemplate by myself. But tonight, in the presence of our old friends, something arose that I haven't seen for a while. Could you speak about the importance of being in the presence of like-minded folks, people with the same aim and people as Dr. Hawkins called the holy company?

A: Our mind gets easily uplifted when there is a group of like-minded people. When all the mindsets are oriented towards one common goal – that is purity, that is devotion to the teacher, devotion to the Divine — when they all come together and sit in one place and express their feelings of devotional love. Individually we are not even able to uplift our mind. Individually, one can meditate, contemplate but in a company or in a group – which is called Satsang – the individual mind because of the “grooves” created flows towards the Divine and the higher goal. But even in Vedic times, they all came together to sit and render their prayers, meditate, do their services and in that group, the individual incapacities are transcended, limitations are transcended, maybe only temporarily, for the time being. But when this becomes a regular practice, we can permanently transcend these kinds of limitations. And when the group sits for meditation, our experiences are entirely different. Even when we are individually sitting for meditation, the Grace of the masters flows equally but all those practitioners who are practicing devotion and meditation, if they come together and utilize the help of the group, the group dynamics work wonders and easily we can attain the higher experiences. We can feel that energy, we can feel that upliftment, we can experience something different when we get together in a devotional group. That is why Satsang or group gathering like this is given great importance. Thank you.

# 4 Thank you, Swamiji! Sometimes there is a struggle within me between the higher and the lower. When I want to choose the higher, my personal self in the moment wants to fight. Or get back at somebody. My intention is to have compassion. Could you please talk about choice, to choose the higher over the lower?

A: Intellectually we are aware of the difference between the higher and the lower. But that intellectual understanding has to get translated into personal experience. At the experiential level even though at times we are aware of the higher, because of the previous tendencies that are there and which are deeply ingrained in our mind – grooves get formed in the mind – these impressions become tendencies and have a greater influence upon our mind than the intellectual knowledge. Whatever our mind sees, thinks about or experiences, or interacts with, impressions are formed in our mind. And when these

impressions are repeated, alongside the interactions and experiences and perceptions, they slowly and slowly become tendencies. These tendencies become very strong and are responsible for the struggle between the higher and the lower. The intellect and the mind should get linked. The mind is aware at the intellectual level that there is this knowledge – “I have to choose the higher – there is a choice.” But when we are exercising the choice, the tendencies force the mind to compromise. And we tend to succumb to that force and compromise and afterward, we realize we should not have done that. I don’t know we did that! [Audience laughter.] The intellectual knowledge that is there, we have to contemplate upon it. When we contemplate upon the knowledge, repeat it again and again, it sinks deep into our mind and this also becomes powerful. Previously, the tendencies were more powerful than intellectual understanding. We make spiritual understandings stronger by thinking about them, by reflecting on them, by repeating them in our mind. So – listening, thinking, contemplating, reflecting, and automatically meditating upon it. Then it becomes so strong that when the tendencies try to influence our mind — situations might be there, experiences might be there — but when the intellectual value is so strong in us, and the principle is so strong in us, it can easily brush aside these tendencies for lower choices and overcome them. The higher becomes an automatic choice for us. Just as, before this practice, the automatic choice was the lower. Later on, automatic choice is the higher. Effortlessly. We listen, we reflect, we contemplate, we meditate, then it takes over. With practice, it can become effortless, no struggle, no resentment, no kind of restriction, no conditioning. We immediately recognize and our heart vibes with the higher, our mind attunes to that higher. But we have to put effort to make it happen, then Grace makes it effortless. Thank you.

# 5 Swamiji, thank you very much for your talk. You have talked about the pure qualities of a devotee. What would the qualities of a student of Dr. Hawkins be?

A: [Laughter.] Whatever the teachings Dr. Hawkins has given us, as a student we should live up to those. As a humble student, we should regularly read the teachings, listen to the teachings, or watch the teachings on video. This should become a regular practice because the mind when it is not given a regular practice it starts gathering other things. One of the teachers said, “In a pond, unless regular cleansing is done, moss gathers. If you leave it like that, it covers up the whole pond. And afterward, the reflection of the sun cannot brighten up the pond. So, like that, for the higher to illumine our mind, which is like a pond, where the Divinity can reflect in us and illumine and enlighten us, we have to practice as a student regularly reading, listening to and watching the teachings as given and continuously make it a regular practice to contemplate upon them. That should be the topmost priority. No day should start without this practice. And no day should end without this practice. And whenever we find some time at our disposal, we should utilize it to contemplate on the

teachings. This way we can Divinize our days. It is said that for a student there is only one duty: to live up to the teachings of the teacher. And one can say that there are so many other responsibilities also. So, we have to take care of all of them, but this should be given top priority. Then we become a true student of Dr. Hawkins [audience cheers].