



Simplicity of the Heart, by J. Krishnamurti

Simplicity of the heart is of far greater importance and significance than simplicity of possessions. To be content with few things is a comparatively easy matter. To renounce comfort, or to give up smoking and other habits, does not indicate simplicity of heart. To put on a loincloth in a world that is taken up with clothes, comforts and distractions, does not indicate a free being. There was a man who had given up the world and its ways, but his desires and passions were consuming him; he had put on the robes of a monk, but he did not know peace. His eyes were everlastingly seeking, and his mind was riven by his doubts and hopes.

Outwardly you discipline and renounce, you chart your course, step by step, to reach the end. You measure the progress of your achievement according to the standards of virtue: how you have given up this or that, how controlled you are in your behavior, how tolerant and kind you are, and so on and on. You have learnt the art of concentration, and you withdraw into a forest, a monastery or a darkened room to meditate; you pass your days in prayer and watchfulness. Outwardly you have made your life simple, and through this thoughtful and calculated arrangement you hope to reach the bliss that is not of this world.

But is reality reached through external control and sanctions? Though outward simplicity, the putting aside of comfort, is obviously necessary, will this gesture open the door to reality? To be occupied with comfort and success burdens the mind and the heart, and there must be freedom to travel; but why are we so concerned with the outward gesture? Why are we so eagerly determined to give an outward expression of our intention? Is it the fear of self-deception, or of what another might say? Why do we wish to convince ourselves of our integrity? Does not this whole problem lie in the desire to be sure, to be convinced of our own importance in becoming?

The desire to be is the beginning of complexity. Driven by the ever-increasing desire to be, inwardly and outwardly, we accumulate or renounce, cultivate or deny. Seeing that time steals all things, we cling to the timeless. This struggle to be, positively or negatively, through attachment or detachment, can never be resolved by any outward gesture, discipline or practice; but the understanding of this struggle will bring about, naturally and spontaneously, the freedom from outward and inward accumulation with their conflicts. Reality is not to be reached through detachment; it is unattainable through any means. All means and ends are a form of attachment, and they must cease for the being of reality.

