



## Seven Principles of Spiritualism

Spiritualists have no fixed creed; however, they have adopted the following "Seven Principles" as a simple basis for their religion (or 'way of life'). These Principles, originally five in number, were given through the mediumship of Emma Hardinge Britten (1823—1899) by Robert Owen, the great Socialist.

- 1) **The Fatherhood of God.**
- 2) **The Brotherhood of Man.**
- 3) **Communion of Spirits and the Ministry of Angels.**
- 4) **The continuous existence of the human Soul.**
- 5) **Personal Responsibility.**
- 6) **Compensation and retribution hereafter for all good and evil deeds done on earth.**
- 7) **Eternal progress open to every Soul.**

### *The fatherhood of god*

Andrew Jackson Davis perceived God as an Eternal Spirit which is omnipresent in the entire universe. Man himself is an individualisation of this Spirit which expresses itself in unchangeable laws. Harmonious co-operation with these laws leads man towards a conscious unity with God. God is the Father Spirit of the great universal Brotherhood of Man.

In "More Spirit Teaching", transmitted through the mediumship of William Stainton Moses, the spirit communicators described God as the informing, energising Spirit, permeating all. The word Father is the true concept of a God of love, perfect and perpetual, who knows no distinction of race or creed.

The guide "Silver Birch" declared; "The Great Spirit is infinite and you are parts of the Great Spirit. We preach the gospel of the Spiritual brotherhood of all peoples, with the Great White Spirit as the common Father."

### *The brotherhood of man*

The second principle of Spiritualism covers a vast field of obligations and constitutes the essence of Religion in practice.

Without this principle Religion would be mere phrase-mongering. He that serves his neighbour serves God. There is no material

advantage in serving your neighbour, but there is the blessing of the spirit. The greatest incentive to love and service is the inequality of life.

Spiritualism proves that service is not unrewarded, and establishes beyond doubt that only by service can spiritual progress be made. This does not follow that service should be undertaken for the sake of personal spiritual advancement. On the contrary, it is essentially the spirit in which the service is given, that spirit of pure unselfishness which enhances the soul. Spiritualism also proves that spiritual qualities are the only permanent treasures of life.

In our daily lives, in our immediate contacts at work, home, school and play, we meet those who need help. They may need a material gift, a kindly word, advice, or sacrifice of time. We should give as we should hope to receive in similar circumstances. The spirit of such a gift of service should be the motive of sharing our advantages, material and spiritual, in an effort to increase our friends' participation in the good things of life to the level of our own. The benefit is mutual. Our friends are helped along the road of life and our spiritual statures are equally enhanced. We cannot make sunshine and escape it ourselves.

Our capacity to love, and our knowledge of life, are both developed to a higher stage of perfection which automatically increases our power to do good, and to appreciate the attendant happiness and satisfaction. In short we become more and more in harmony with the Supreme Spirit of all.

Great opportunities are given to all who serve social causes which exist to bring economic security, peace, charity and culture to the people.

The highest cause of all is the propagation of the truths of immortality, for this is the greatest spiritual blessing of the universe. To be ignorant of its truth, is to be blind to the real meaning of existence, and its eternal obligations.

The truths of spirit communication not only extend the bonds of brotherhood to the eternal spirit spheres but clearly indicate that we all belong to one great unity. Membership of this union depends upon our harmonious relationships with one another in universal brotherhood. Spiritualism gives a new and higher meaning to the principle of Brotherhood.

## *Communion of spirits & the ministry of angels*

The Communion of Spirits, is often considered to be the key principle of Spiritualism. It brings out, in sharp contrast, the basic difference between materialism and spiritualism as a philosophy and between Christianity and Spiritualism as a religion, because of our claim to hold communion with departed spirits. Our demonstrations of proved survival have transformed philosophy from a theory into a reality and religion from a creed into a living experience.

We have now proved, consistently and continuously, for a period of over one hundred years, that those who die in this material world continue their life without break or interruption in another world, another dimension, which intermingles with our own. Not only do they return to communicate with us, and so prove their survival, but they also, for a period, spend a considerable part of their time helping and guiding us in our earthly problems. We too are essentially spirit, and that vital part of us, which we call the subconscious, is sensitive to spirit influence. Many of us, therefore, although not conscious of the influence of spirit, are nevertheless spirit guided. The spirit inspired mental impressions received by the subconscious will filter through to the conscious level and influence, in varying degrees, the thoughts and actions of the recipients.

In certain individuals, called sensitives, there is a close relationship between the conscious and subconscious levels to such an extent that they are more directly aware, through the extra-sensory perceptive faculties of their spirit body, of the 'finer vibrations' - the different frequency of spirit thought and form, thus making it possible for them to communicate with the spirit people.

Our communication brings us precious and vital knowledge of our immortal natures and eternal destiny. In our communications we learn that those who have passed on have not changed, except in the physical vehicle through which they express themselves. Their interests and desires, loves and hates, wisdom and stupidity remain identical the moment after final separation from the body has been effected. New laws of a new world however have to be learned. New problems, trials and joys await the unfoldment of their spirits. This realisation helps us to understand the continuity and evolutionary aspects of all life and which practical expression leads us to draw ever nearer towards complete unity. It teaches us to serve in harmony with the Supreme Spirit which expresses itself in us and gives us life. No religion has ever revealed such a clear relationship between our individual lives and their divine source.

## *Continuous existence of the human soul*

The philosophy of Spiritualism asserts that man has a continuous spiritual existence which extends beyond his physical life into eternity. Our special mission, as a progressive movement, is to propagate this conception to a world which has been bereft of a responsible spiritual leadership, and is overshadowed by the narrowness and selfishness of a materialist outlook.

All great modern religions teach the idea of some future spiritual state in heaven or hell but their teachings have failed to produce any fundamental or lasting influence in the lives of the majority of the people. This is largely because they have failed to satisfy the demands of the present day realists who require facts to support theories.

Spiritualism can prove to the individual the fact that life is continuous by demonstrating the return of those who have passed to the Spirit World. This great truth is of the greatest spiritual value, because it profoundly revolutionises our outlook on life and consequently our behaviour.

We realise that our strategy of life must be determined by the broader conception of an eternal destiny, and not by the narrow limits of material life. Spiritualism reveals that we are all part of the Supreme Cosmic Spirit, which is the life principle of the Universe and that we are indestructible parts of the eternal whole.

As spirits we incarnate into this material world, utilising a suitable vehicle - a physical body - which makes us aware of our physical environment and gives us expression. We incarnate in order to be of service to God and to gain self experience. We give in service and receive in spiritual progress and by so doing bring ever greater powers and virtues within the orbit of our expanding influence. At physical death when the material vehicle which houses the soul decays and dies our dynamic spirit, an infinitesimal part of the Supreme Spirit, will automatically utilise another vehicle more suitable for its expression in the next level of existence.

As the spirit evolves, its vibrations become finer and it automatically 'dies' to live again on yet another level, another dimension. In each succeeding level of its existence it will be housed in a vehicle which is suitable for its needs at that level. The indwelling spirit becomes aware of its environment and can express itself only through the body which houses it. We progress then from one level to another in eternal duration, assuming ever greater responsibilities in the supreme plan of evolution and progress.

## *Personal Responsibility*

In sharp contradiction to the Christian principle of the 'vicarious atonement', we assert that each individual is personally responsible for his or her own thoughts and actions. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap". Spiritualism asserts that if you transgress the Laws of Nature you will suffer in proportion to your transgression.

Unless a man can conquer his own evil tendencies, banish evil from his life, and make personal atonement for his own sins, by his thoughts and actions, he cannot achieve spiritual progress.

Unless we face up to the reality that all the evil or negative effects of our actions and thoughts remain with us and indeed affect those with whom we come in contact; until by our efforts we change them, we shall never make real spiritual progress. We shall

merely live a life of spiritual self-deception, only to come to a grim realisation of our mistakes when ultimately we arrive in the Spirit World. This is no theological postulate but is based on evidence and experiences of the spirit people themselves.

In our principle of Personal Responsibility we have a moral stimulus for men to lead a better life, to desire brotherhood in their mutual relationships, to do good for the sake of good and to live in harmony with God.

### *Compensation and retribution for all good and evil deeds done on earth*

Spiritualism breaks with orthodox beliefs and asserts that heaven and hell are purely states of consciousness which can as easily manifest with us on earth as in a future existence.

When we say that there will be compensation and retribution hereafter for all the good and evil done here, we mean that as we live this life, we are determining the course of our future life in the Spirit World. If we do evil, or neglect our cultural development, we are merely developing our souls in such a way as will demand a period of painful struggles to undo and amend what we have neglected to do according to the opportunities accorded to us whilst on earth. On the other hand, if we have lived good lives, loved our neighbours, and used our opportunities for intellectual progress we will enjoy the advantages which are accrued from our earthly efforts in the form of spiritual advancement and happiness in the hereafter. In other words we set in motion causes which are carried forward from this life and have their effects in the next.

Life is the unbroken eternal struggle towards greater love and wisdom. The extent to which we can make the effort here relative to our inherited endowments, environment, destiny and opportunities, determined the degree of harmony and happiness which we will obtain in our future spiritual life. This is a natural law of life and operates in proportion to what is potential in our nature.

Our souls are forged in the fire of experience, but none of us is called upon to accomplish the impossible. Each has his appropriate part to play in the Universal Plan. Some have mighty tasks, others humble assignments but all is in accordance with the nature of universal justice which in its perfect operation ensures that spiritual progress and happiness is the equal opportunity of all spirits. Spiritual progress which we are told is not in some inconceivable heaven, but is simply a state of consciousness within where our judge is our conscience.

Life is one continuous unfoldment of spirit in which there is action and reaction, compensation and retribution, both here and hereafter.

From this a philosophy emerges which reveals a purpose in life, and gives a satisfactory explanation of our existence.

### *Eternal progress open to every soul*

To progress is to constantly aim for higher spiritual achievements, and as we do so we realise that the accomplishments of yesterday are soon outmoded, and new victories must be won. The old, however, invariably resists the birth of the new, and what was once progressive, now tends to become contradictory and retrogressive, setting in motion forces of disharmony which we recognise as negative influences. Within each one of us there is a constant struggle between what we are and what we should be.

Our primitive animal instincts hold us down to the material sensuous plane. Our Spiritualist philosophy urges us to higher spheres of consciousness. These opposing forces struggle within us, and often it is with difficulty and pain that we prevail against the temptation of the flesh; but those pains are the birth pangs of progress.

Progress is never easy, and great progress demands sacrifice, but our spiritual blessings are in proportion to the efforts we make, stimulating finer vibrations within our souls which raise us ever higher in the great divine spiral of spiritual progress, from sphere to sphere in eternal duration.

Our vast Spiritualist literature contains overwhelming evidence and teachings regarding our eternal future, based upon the personal experiences and knowledge of those now living in the higher spheres of spirit life. God is eternal and therefore the Universe. As we are indivisible parts of God, we are also eternal. This does not necessarily mean that we existed prior to birth as we now find ourselves or that we shall continue eternally in our present form of spiritual existence. One thing is certain; a path of eternal progress lies before us.