

## The True Call

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Part 1 of the talk by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

OM namaH praNavArthAya shuddaGYAnaikamUrtaye  
 nirmalAya prashAntAya daxiNAMUrtaye namaH.

Dear brothers and sisters, there is a saying of Kabir that comes to my mind, "poothi pad pad jug mua pandit bhayanakoyi dhaai akshar prem ki pade so pandit hoi." You can read all the scriptures in the world and argue and counter argue but we do reach no where but true message of love, belongingness, a sense of understanding beyond the words alone can unite us. It was wonderful to hear Dr. Zakir, he so scholarly he read about all the Upanishads and everything and I wish every single citizen in the world reads all this knowledge at least a little bit so that their mind is not so narrow. They do not think only I go to heaven and everybody else goes to hell. Today, the world is a hell because people think only their path is right path. Every other path is wrong path. We need a broader understanding. I also thank Dr. Zakir, I know there are some mistakes in that book. I would have told him before also; this Book was printed in an emergency, in urgency, when there was riots in Gujarat. I wanted this book to immediately go. I did not go to big scholars because I do not know much about Qur'an. I myself not a big scholar but the intention he caught behind that is to bring people together. So that the Hindus respect the Muslims, and the Muslims feel a sense of brotherhood and belongingness to the Hindus. So, I am happy that though with the mistakes, which he has already pardoned me, he has accepted the intention behind it. You know, intention is what we need to see. Sometimes you know, the mother says to the child "get lost." She really does not mean; but if you hang on to the word, my mother told me "get lost," I am going to "get lost," you are causing pain to the mother also. Maharshi Naarad who is the proponent of love, the Bhakthi Sutra, he said one sutra waadonawa lambiah (do not depend on the logic or arguments). Arguments does not take you any further. Today, within one religion, there are so many arguments. Because everyone thinks they are right. In

Hindus, there are so many schools of thought each one fighting, everyone says I am the right. In Islam same thing the Shias and Sunni conflict and Ahmadias. One Buddha was there, today there are 32 sects of Buddhism. Different interpretation and everyone claims their interpretation is the correct. I would appeal to every single human being, take all that is common we all can live together as brothers and sisters. We can appreciate each other. A century ago, a decade ago, we thought about tolerance. I tell you today tolerance is a very feeble word. Today, not just tolerance, today the world should be loved. You tolerate something you don't like. If you do not like certain things, you say "Oh I tolerate this." Tolerance of religion is not necessary today, it is old. Today, love each other's religion. I want to tell you an event that happened. Once I was in Delhi, I was going in the car and there were elderly people whom I was dropping them to Cannaught Place but then they had to wait and take a Taxi back or an auto back, I gave them my car and I got out with my assistant and we took an Autorickshaw. So, I sat in that Autorickshaw and the driver was so humble, so beautiful soul. On either side of me there were some pictures of the actors and actresses. He told me Guruji maaf karna. Mai yahaan jiska thasveer lagaana chahtha hoon, uska koyi chahra hii nahi hai. Isiliye in logoan ka lagaaya. (Sorry Guruji, The persons' picture I wanted to hang here, does not have a picture at all, that's why I have hung these peoples' picture) Little further, he says Guruji, aaj kya hamara bhagya hai, wo hamara mehmaan banke gaadi mei ayaa hai our wahi chala bhi raha hai gaadi. Mana dhar deewar darpan bayojith dekhuoo jith thoye, kankad pathar sab jage wahi hai. Koun kahtha hai khuda nazar nahi aatha. Diwano se poocho khuda ke siva aur kuch nahi nazar na aatha. This is the essence seeing love. See, if you say, I do not appreciate the painting but I will appreciate the painter, you are not really 100% appreciating the painter. You appreciate the painter and you will also honor and appreciate the painting. So this whole world is God's. In the Upanishad as our Dr. Zakir saab said there are other verses which if he goes little deeper he can find, having created that he has entered that. He lives in every heart of every human being. Sufi saints in this country have sung on this. Bulleshah has sung. Tu maane ya na maano, dil daar thumne mai khuda maana, this is the language of not the professors but the lover of God. And I tell you it is only through love you can reach the ultimate. You can experience the truth, the reality. What is the concept of God? It is

sathyam, gyanam, anantham, brahma; truth, infinity, knowledge, the bliss, that is what is Brahma. You have already heard from our doctor professor, about the Upanishads and how the Vedas and the Upanishads are very similar; but the practices are many different where we are similar, we anyway shake hands, but where there is difference there also you shake hand, I tell you then you are really a human being because you love harmony in diversity. You love people of all traditions, whether Buddhism, Jainism, or Sufism, or any school of philosophy. Love should be the supreme. In the vedic concept of God, it is said, the whole Universe is made up of asthi, bhathi, and preethi. Asthi means it is, bhathi it expresses, and preethi, it is love. Naama roopam, "name and form." The world is all name and form but the consciousness is asthi, it is bhathi, it expresses as it is expressed in the Gita, it has expressed the truth in the Vedas in the hearts of the Rishis. It has expressed in the Holy Qur'an, and it is expressed in the Bible. It has expressed, it has brought into light asthi, bhathi, preethi, naama roopam jagath. This whole world is the name and form. You know, when I went to Pakistan, they asked me the same question. Why in India you worship so many Gods and Goddesses. There is only one God, even you say one God. I told them you know; there is only one aata (dough), one chapathi, in that you make samosa, you make poori, you make kachori, you make parata. Why? just the fun of it, just the joy of it. So it is called as a leela Ekuham bahusyama. I am one, but in many. In every heart, in every human being, there is one consciousness but with so many differences. This is the whole concept. If you really go deep into it, there is no differences. Otherwise Kabir and guleshan and people, many sufi saints and rishis, maharshis, they never had difference of opinions; sab sayane ek math. All those who love God, who have experienced God have no difference of opinion because it is pure love, and this is what today we need to do. Otherwise waada, vivada, argument, right, wrong, takes us so far way from innocence. Bhole bhaava mile raghurai and every child has this innocence. Every human being is born with the wisdom. It is natural to us all, don't you think so? what do you say? Am I correct? From the audience? You know sense of belongingness and everyone should learn about each other little bit little bit, I mean it is a very great example. I am happy to see all those Books. I am sure many of the Hindus would not have read all of these Upanishads. We need to bring people together today in spite of the differences,

different cultures, practices, habits, but remind them of the higher principle of one divinity, one love, one humanity. Do not hold on to the words but see the intention behind the words and that is what I call "Art of Living", broad vision. Whether some one thinks you belong to them or not, from your side, you embrace everybody vasudhaiva kutumbakam every one belongs to me and we cannot convert the whole world into thinking in one line, in one philosophy, we need to live amidst diversity, honor each other, like each other, support each other. Satyam gyanam anantham brahma, the infinity is divinity, now I know we have the concept of 4 hands, 4 legs, you know chatur has 2 meanings in Sanskrit. Chatur means intelligent, the creation is intelligent, the action in the creation is intelligent, now Vishnu is seen as 4 hands and you know what is in 4 hands, the 4 elements and Vishnu is blue in color, he is only blue, means the space like akasha, he has no form, formless. Akasha thathva, agni thathva, jala thathva, wayu thathva, prithvi thathva, it is prapancha, this is called prapancha, 5 principles make this whole world, whole universe and the ancient people made this, no, one thing I also would like to mention here about the purana, we usually say purana means old, but in Sanskrit pure-nava is purana that which is modern which is new in the city is called purana. So puranas are written where in all these forms are coming to inspire people, to bring some entertainment, joy, and kindle sense of feeling in people. Whatever people have understood and are following, I know many customs that people do are not right and each community has to look within and correct all that mistakes in their community somebody else cannot do it. Hindu leaders should correct anything wrong in the Hindu community similarly Muslim leaders will have to take responsibility and correct anything wrong in the Muslim community; then, we can reform the society. I know reform is essential in every field. Non violence should be given most prominence, which is said in all the scriptures. If you ask me, is this table made up of atoms, I would say yes where can I find atoms, I would say find in the table, find in this one, in the speaker, and every thing is made of up atoms my dear. You do not have to look for atoms somewhere out. Sarva vyapi, it is present everywhere. A nuclear scientist, an atomic scientist will agree 100% with vedaantha, he will see the theory of relativity and the knowledge that the divinity is not a substance; it is not a person away from somewhere. He is a substratum by which every thing is made. I would give one small story from the

Upanishad. A boy asks the father, "father, what is god, how is god like?" the father takes the boy by hand and tells the boy "look, this building is there, before this building, what was here?" the boy said "space." "Where is the building now?" "In the space." Once the building is destroyed what will happen to the space, he said nothing will happen to the space, the space will remain he said that is what is aathma that is how is your soul is, the being is, consciousness is, come, come, Brahma, it is like the space where in every thing is and every thing born and in which every thing dissolves. My dear child, and know that when you go deep into your heart yeto vacho nivatrante aprapte manasa saha where your words cannot enter, even your mind cannot enter, in that silent corner of your heart, sit in meditation, go deep in and realize, that is love, that is bhathi, that is as asthi, that is preethi. I think we all need to get together more and more. We cannot argue on our differences because no body will give their differences. If you tell someone why are you doing Ganesha pooja, he will not listen because he has feelings toward it. From centuries it is continuing. But if you listen to the Ganesha's shloka ajaM nirvikalpaM nirAkAramekaM nirAna.ndamAna.ndamadvaitapUrNam paraM nirguNaM nirvisheShaM nirIhaM parabrahmarUpaM gaNeshaM bhajema. In the pooja it is said, you are formless, you are all over, but I would like to play with you for a little while. God, you are everywhere. Now I want to play with you. How do I play? Whatever you did to me, I am going to do to you. You take sun and moon around you I am going to lit a little lamp, I am going to around you like this. You gave me water I am going to play with you, I am going to give water. This is not to be taken serious, it is a play. It is a game, it is a joy, expression of joy, expression of gratitude. Pooja, as said that which comes from fullness. I feel so grateful for all that I have received in my life that I want to express myself. Today, see when we came, you all gave me flowers, why you give flowers to somebody, just an expression of goodwill. Roshan Baigji came up and offered me flowers. Why? There is some feeling, guruji has come, I want to offer him some flowers and this is in exchange of feelings, because feelings cannot be expressed enough; so man finds some way to express it. Wahaan Mecca main jaake pathar maarthe hai shaytaan ko, wo kya ek feeling, shytaan door ho jao. These are rituals. You know Hindus can criticize that, Muslims can criticize Ganapathi, this will all cause more trouble, more problems, please do not go on that path. That is a request from my side. Do not

criticize anybody's practices unless they come to you for knowledge. If they come to you, then you can tell them. Otherwise, people will defend what they are doing is correct and there is no way we can unite the people together, we can bring people together. I think this we should all remember. Do not criticize the idol worshipers, because in this country thousands of years people have been doing worship. At the most, we have to respect what they are doing; and when we respect each other, we can bring about big transformation in the society. The confidence, trust comes in. No one thinks that you are against them. So, we need to bring people together and I see that is the real service that we do to God. Nonviolence should be our foremost, in the first, in the yogas, in the 8 limbs of Yoga. You know if you read yoga pathanjali, yoga sutra, it is so secular, any religion can adopt yoga. Because exactly what definition you said about Allah is the definition of pathanjali maharshi about who is Eshwara; Kaaya klesha one who do not have any klesha, any suffering, any problem, one who do not have a body, that consciousness is Eshwara. The soothra of pathanjali maharshi. So pathanjali maharshi says about yama, about ahimsa - nonviolence, sathya - truth, astheya - do not steal anything from anybody. Brahmacharya - abstinence, aparigraha - not abasing for oneself all the time. Yamas and niyamas, pranayama, prathyahara, dhyana, dharana samadhi, these 8 angaas are renunciated by Maharshi Pathanjali and it is beneficial for people world over. See your breath has so much to tell you. From your breath, you can make your body better, you can make your mind better, all the negative emotions in your heart just goes out. See if you sit for prayers, to do namaaz, your mind is all over the place. But if you attend to your breath, your mind gets so focussed and you become so authentic and so friendly. People world over have undergone these breathing techniques, exercises, though it is an ancient technique where people would never teach them unless the student is really dedicated and worthy of teaching these lessons. I thought, this knowledge is so beneficial, it should go to all the people in the world, and everyone should get benefit of it, irrespective of their religion. I first opened the doors of pranayama and yoga to the world. I said does not matter what ever is your belief system you would learn about your breath because your breath and emotions are linked. By harnessing the breath your mind becomes so calm and serene and there are number of research work on the scientific studies are all done on this. All India

Medical Institute, NIMHANS they are all doing. So, when we went to Iraq, there were thousands of women and children suffering, they cannot sleep in the night and doctors are giving them steroids and prozac just to sleep. We taught them simple breathing exercises, on second day you could see what a transformation happened. Thousands of them, they said we are able to sleep well, we are able to get over the trauma. Now in Kashmir it is happening, in Pakistan it is happening, so if there is good knowledge from any corner of the world in any religion it is good we adopt them, we do not be fanatic oh this is not my religion this is not your religion, no good knowledge Unani comes though its source is very closely connected with Islam if I am correct. Unani medicine is good for everybody, similarly Chinese medicine acupuncture and acupressure world over people can do it. I say when we accept food from every part of the world, technology from every part of the world; we use cars from any part of the world, music from any part of the world, why not we assimilate wisdom also. This globalizing wisdom is essential today, in the world, where there are torn between each other, I am happy the peace initiatives are taking up now in this big manner here, we all should come together every individual should learn a little bit about all the different religions in the world not saying my religion is better your's is little low, this is not acceptable because you can put any logic, this is called kutharka you know what is kutharka? There are 3 things, tharka, vitharka, and kutharka. Tharka is logic. Kutharka is saying if a door is half closed that means it is half opened. If a door is fully closed that means it is fully opened; this logic is called kutharka. We say a door is half opened means it is half closed but if you say it is half open it is half closed then if it is fully opened means fully closed this is not the logic, we should leave the kutharka aside. World has suffered a lot by kutharka. Honor the uniqueness of every tradition, every culture, and take what is good from them and make your life so beautiful, so loving that every one comes to you and you feel that you are part of everybody; what do you say? There in the back? So "dhai akshar prem ka pade so pandith hoi." Main to ithana hi jaantha hoon, I know only this much. I have considered everybody as part of my family; and knowledge is enormous, so much it is not just the books that are here, it is ocean even the story goes Vedavyasa wanted knowledge and then the Brahma showed him the mountain this is knowledge and how much you can take it, he took only 4 hand fulls and that became the Vedas. You know the stories



are fascinating, it is nice. There are 2 things one is stories and another is thathva means knowledge behind them and it all leads to one thing let us get over our craving and aversions. Let us live a life full of love. I would like to repeat that word again "Log kehatha hai khudha nazar nahi aatha, hum kehethe hai khudha ke siva kuch nazar nahi aatha". For God is all love asthi, bhathi, preethi. Let us see the commonness in everything and celebrate our differences. We do not have to be the same in order to celebrate, we can be different and still celebrate and we honor each other. Let us keep this as our guiding light and let us teach nonviolence to people. Violence is not sanctioned as far as I know in any religion. No religious scripture sanctions violence but we need to work on that. Is it not so? That is wonderful. (Have I exceeded my time or there is still time? Because I don't talk too much, here I have spoken too much. 33 minutes left?) Muskuraana seekhe, let us smile more and make our anger expensive. We are angry so easy and we smile very rarely so we need to shift our tendency smile more and make your anger very expensive get angry once in a while. I can say oh when there is injustice then I should get angry, okay baba but do not make anger your own nature. In the name of justice if you all get angry you know what happens we lose our perception our state of mind affects our perception, our observation and our expression. So, if you are stressed our perception is different if we are narrow minded our perception is wrong even when some one comes to greet you, you will they are all against you. So you need to change your perception that is why I tell even the worst criminal in their heart he is a beautiful person do not hate the criminal also. We brand him a criminal , you just talk to a criminal in his heart he is a lovely human being because of stress and tension, long understanding, he has committed a crime. We need to have that compassion, sense of belongingness. So the concept of God is not somebody sitting out there and giving you some messages, he is what everything is. "Sarvam kalvidam brahma" everything here is brahman, is made up of brahman, is brahman, "sarvam thaluidam brahman" everything in the universe is made up of atoms, his vibrations and vibration has no name, no form, yet, he is adored by many names and many forms and this is the wonderful, ancient knowledge that this country has produced, a timeless wisdom has come here and as Indians we are all very happy that we have this ability in harmony in diversity there are so many Sufi saints in this land who have rejoiced of course, many of them have been prosecuted



in Iran and other places but this country recognized the Sufis, the Sufi saints and the saints, the rishis, maharshis and honor each other. That is why I said "maathru devo bhavo" see love of the divinity in mother, "pitru devo bhavo" see your father as divinity. Devo means what devo means it is not God as you understand deva means the light, your mother is your light, your father is your light they are bringing first lessons to you. So, a physicist would 100% agree with the Vedanta in fact they are doing a lot of work on that, the physics and the Vedanta as Dr. Zakir Naik may know that I do not know much as I said hum to dhai akshar waale hai sub ko gale lagaathe hai kuch maan ke chalo, kuch jaan ke chalo, prem se sub ko gale lagaathe chalo, prem se sub ko gale lagaathe chalo, jeevan ka yeh hum soothra banaale. Let us make this as our guiding light, let us understand some thing, we cannot understand everything in the world, you cannot read every scripture, let us understand some understanding, let us have our belief system, whatever belief we have let us be strong in our belief, and let us in love greet each other and walk in our life together Rig Veda said in the last. Let us walk together, let us be together. With these few words I will finish my talk. I don't know how to take one whole hour !But I think I have made all the points that I wanted to say. Wonderful, nice being with you all. Thank You.