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Quotes and Quips

Your actions express your priorities. Mahatma Gandhi
(1869-1948)

If you must be mad, be it not for the things of the world. Be mad with the love of God. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886)

Bliss is the dance-stage, bliss is the lyric; Bliss are the diverse instruments, Bliss is the meaning; The supreme felicity of the universe is bliss, For he who yearns for His dance of bliss. Tirumantiram a sacred mystical treatise by Rishi Tirumular, verse v. 2725

When I think of myself as a body, I am your servant, my Lord; when I think of myself as an individual soul, I am part of you; but when I realize I am atman, you and I become one. Hanuman in the epic Ramayana

A great thing about being an archeologist is that you are always doing ground-breaking research. Anonymous

All differences in this world are of degree, and not of kind, because oneness is the secret of everything. All is God. But you cannot believe in God until you believe in yourself. Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), disciple of Sri Ramakrishna

The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either. Sir William Jones (1746-1794), English philologist, the first to propose Indo-European as a common root between these languages

Go beyond science, into the region of metaphysics. Real religion is beyond argument. It can only be lived simultaneously inwardly and outwardly. Swami Sivananda (1887-1963), founder of the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh

To later generations of the faithful, what was written in fluctuating circumstances has assumed the status of immutable truth. To suggest that supernatural stories are allegorical can be considered a radical position in even the most liberal precincts of the Christian world. Yes, faith requires a willing suspension of disbelief; I do it myself all the time. But that is a different thing from the suspension of reason and critical intelligence--faculties that tell us that something is not necessarily the case simply because it is written down somewhere or repeated over and over. Jon Meacham, American journalist, Editor of Newsweek

People fight for religion, die for religion, but rarely follow religion. Anonymous

Be as you wish to seem. Socrates, (470-399 bce) Greek philosopher

This body of mine brought seeds with it. Illness is one of them. Activity passes on and so does the body. Of what concern is it to us? All this was settled long ago. Don't be afraid of anything. Satguru Siva Yogaswami (1872-1964), Sri Lankan mystic

There are three rules to live a serene life: be kind, be kind, be kind. Henry James (1843-1916), American-born English writer

When one teaches, two learn. Anonymous

Peace has three dimensions. Peace within ourselves, peace among nations and peace with nature. Dada J.P. Vaswani, head of the Sadhu Vaswani Mission

A conservative is a man who sits and thinks, mostly sits. Woodrow Wilson, (1856-1924), U.S. President

The cultured give happiness wherever they go. The uncultured whenever they go.
Anonymous

Take care of other's needs, and your needs will be taken care of; take care of other's prosperity, and your prosperity will be taken care of; take care of other's moksha, and your moksha will be taken care of. Serve the poor; feed the hungry, care for the sick, go from door to door to see what their problems are. This is the only path to peace. These are the commands of all spiritual masters. There is nothing else you need to know. The secret lies simply in implementation. Swami Satyananda Saraswati (1923-2009), disciple of Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh

The contemplation of celestial things will make a man both speak and think more sublimely and magnificently when he descends to human affairs. Marcus Tullius Cicero(106-43 bce), Roman statesman

The good-and-bad concept should be thrown out with a lot of other things, including the up-and-down concept. There is no good; there is no bad. You don't raise your consciousness, nor do you lower it. These are just concepts that have come in by various philosophers who tried to explain these deeper teachings the very best that they could. What is bad is good, and what is good is good. And a higher state of consciousness and a lower state of consciousness, they don't exist at all. We simply hold a certain perspective of awareness, and we look out, and we go in. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniaswami (1927-2001), founder of Hinduism Today

Did You Know?

The Magical Color of Rudrakshas

Sacred for many reasons, rudraksha fruits are a jewel of Hinduism. They are said to be Siva's tears of compassion and love, a symbol of his grace. They are thought to have several medicinal properties and the remarkably beautiful seeds, once dry, are strung into malas. The trees themselves, so the tradition goes, only grow in

places favored by Lord Siva.

To hold a rudraksha fruit in your hands is to be intrigued by its otherworldly color. It is a hue unseen in any other part of nature, a cobalt blue fused with indigo that seems to turn to violet as the light changes.

Scientists have an explanation for this almost iridescent tint. Rudraksha skins are colored through refraction of light, not reflection, a singular phenomenon in the plant world.

In most materials, light is absorbed as energy and then, an infinitesimal fraction of a second later, some of it is released back. A red cup, for example, is perceived by us as red because it absorbs all light except red--which is reflected and caught by our eyes. White materials are white because they reflect the whole light spectrum equally.

Rudrakshas, however, do not parse light to then reflect it. Instead, its amazing structure splits light rays open, in the same way a crystal prism or rain drops create rainbows. In this process, called refraction, light touches our eyes in a myriad of rays that we perceive as rudraksha's unique shade of blue--which can only be seen on the fruit and not on this printed page.

Basics of Hinduism

Hinduism and Other Religions

Religious beliefs are as manifold as they are different. Hindus, understanding the strength of this diversity, wholeheartedly respect and encourage all who believe in God. They honor the fact that Truth is one, paths are many.

Since the inner intent of all religions is to bind man back to God, the devout Hindu seeks not to interfere with anyone's faith or practice. We believe that there is no exclusive path, no one way for all. Hindus profoundly know that He whom we call God is the same Supreme Being in whom peoples of all faiths find solace, peace and liberation.

Nonetheless, we realize that all religions are not the same. Each has its unique beliefs, practices, goals and paths of attainment, and the doctrines of one often conflict with those of another. Conversion, when it happens, must be a result of profound soul-searching and follow rigorous ethical guidelines.

But differences should never be cause for religious tension or intolerance. Hindus respect all religious traditions and the people within them. They know that good citizens and stable societies are created from groups of religious people. Leaders of our faith support and participate in ecumenical gatherings with all religions.

Still, Hindus defend their faith, proceed contentedly with their practices and avoid the enchantment of other ways, be they ancient or modern. The Vedas impel, "Let us have concord with our own people, and concord with people who are strangers to us. Ashvins, create between us and the strangers a unity of hearts."