

## From Inner Harmony to Global Peace: A Spiritual Paradigm for Human Unity in the Light of Ramakrishna Paramahansa

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**Abstract:** *The pursuit of global peace in the twenty-first century confronts profound challenges arising from ideological polarization, religious conflict, and ethical fragmentation. While international institutions advocate diplomatic solutions, durable peace requires a deeper transformation of human consciousness. This paper critically examines the spiritual philosophy of Ramakrishna Paramahansa as a paradigm for human unity and sustainable global harmony. Through a close reading of primary texts and interpretive scholarship, the study argues that Ramakrishna's experiential pluralism—summarized in the principle “as many faiths, so many paths”—provides a coherent framework for interreligious dialogue and cultural integration. His insistence on the harmony of mind and speech establishes ethical authenticity as the cornerstone of peace. Furthermore, the paper highlights the role of spiritual freedom in preventing the degeneration of individualism into egoism. By situating Ramakrishna's universal humanism within contemporary global discourse, this research demonstrates that spiritual realization is not opposed to modernity but essential to its moral sustainability. The study concludes that global peace must emerge from inner harmony, ethical integrity, and inclusive spirituality.*

**Keywords:** Global Peace, Human Unity, Inner Harmony; Interreligious Harmony, Ramakrishna Paramahansa

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### Introduction

#### For World Peace

From the United Nations to the Non-Aligned Movement, various organizations have come out in favor of world peace. People are realizing that without it, their very existence is facing destruction. In the context of what we have discussed so far in the context of Sri Ramakrishna, it is necessary to take up several programmes for world peace and human progress.

Movement is needed at different levels. We have not rejected the proposals made by various scholars in favor of world peace; we have only shown their limitations. Despite the limitations, the peace movement needs to be multifaceted. People need to realize that if world peace does not come, different aspects of their existence will face problems and peace should be effective not only in the international arena but also in everyday working life.

Those countries which advocate for peace at the international level do not recognize democratic values in the internal affairs of their own countries. The leaders of the parties and institutions that proclaim the message of peace show the opposite behavior towards their subordinates. This inconsistency in people's words and behavior has spread at all levels. However, if these two are not coordinated, the words and writings in favor of peace and progress will be reduced to a farce.

That is why Sri Ramakrishna has repeatedly said: "The unification of mind and mouth is the real achievement." Not only at the international level, but also at the national-institutional-family level, the peace movement must be spread with constructive words and behavior and by protesting against injustice. Its basis will be respect for human rights and values.

This should be instilled in people from childhood, and adults should also be pressured to abandon the authoritarian mentality and harmonize their words and behavior. The path to bringing peace to the world should start from people's homes. If there is mistrust, jealousy, disrespect, and arrogance in small corners of the home or in institutions, if the generation gap continues to increase in social life, then how is it possible to bring peace to the world as a whole?

Sri Ramakrishna's saying: "Pundit, first understand yourself" — this will be the first step. So it is necessary to take programs in favor of peace at various levels.

#### Cultural Exchange and World-View

Cultural exchange is often undertaken for mutual understanding and friendship. Different countries exchange cultural groups for this purpose. But the way some artists go and sing and dance — it is as much a culture of entertainment as it is a culture of a society. Some literary texts have the imprint of literature, but they do not have the imprint of culture.

World-view is essential. What is man? What is the world? What is the relationship between these two? The world-view of a society is developed in finding the answers to these three questions. And its expression is found in art and literature. Therefore, the goal of a cultural group should be to express the essence of a nation through art, not just through dance and song.

Sri Ramakrishna, through various practices, absorbed the essence of different human groups in India and the world. It was through this practice that he discovered the diverse expression of human perception. What is very necessary today is to recognize this consciousness.

Through the saying "As many as there are ways", Sri Ramakrishna explained that truth cannot be limited anywhere, truth is not the exclusive property of anyone. The truth of life is being revealed in many different ways and is reflected in different cultures. Not knowing the contribution that human consciousness has made and is going on in diverse ways over the ages is an anti-historical mentality.

What Sri Ramakrishna has said in religious terms should be the goal of cultural exchange. Only then will people be able to come closer to each other in consciousness, understand each other, rise above dogma by recognizing the diverse manifestations of the truth of life, and strengthen friendship.

### **Importance of Spiritual Liberation**

Through food, clothes, housing, and treatment, a person improves physically, and through education, he improves mentally. The common man emphasizes more on these two. But even after this, one thing is needed, and that is spiritual development.

When a person wants to move towards another horizon after fulfilling his basic needs, wants to be unique, and wants the development of his own latent power, that is when he faces the question of life. Man does not live only in physical existence; he also has a mental existence. In the face of questions, he faces this existence, and that is when he feels the urge for spiritual liberation.

By developing mental freedom, man wants to express his individuality, to bring out his own characteristics. A society like a bee-hive, where the individual accepts complete obedience to the society, is not desirable for man. Man tries to transform himself from an average man into an individual man.

But in his attempt to become an individual man, he often indulges in extreme individualism, turns benevolence into ambition, which later hurts his creativity. The reason for this is that man, although he has attained human liberation, has not attempted spiritual liberation.

Swamiji wrote: Sri Ramakrishna was original, each of us must also become original. Sri Ramakrishna has shown the right path to becoming original. If the confusion of one's mind is not removed, any self-expression turns into self-conceit, self-satisfaction turns into an expression of arrogance.

Therefore, as man seeks to express himself, he must also strive to remove his own confusion and ignorance. If he does not focus on spiritual liberation, man's attempt to become unique will bring about new conflicts.

Some say that as long as all people have food and clothing, there is no need for spiritual liberation. It should be remembered that the extreme leftists and the extreme rightists also give this argument, and in this way, both establish their own dictatorship in society. First let the hands and feet be strong, and then the brain can be thought of as strong — this is a ridiculous argument. It is necessary to make all parts of the body strong together.

Similarly, along with social and mental freedom, it is also necessary to emphasize spiritual freedom. With the mass movements that have started in every country, it is no longer possible for the state to deprive people of food and clothing. The ruling class will give people this right to save their own position. But spiritual freedom cannot be obtained from outside. It cannot be taken from the state like food. This is possible only on the path of developing through creative wisdom through one's own efforts. Standing at the crossroads of today's human civilization, people are urged to give priority to this spiritual freedom. Otherwise, the

immense power that man has acquired through science cannot be properly utilized. And this is where Sri Ramakrishna's relevance lies.

### Sri Ramakrishna's Practice of Religious Harmony

Sri Ramakrishna became curious about Islam after coming into contact with the Sufi saint Govinda Roy. A free-minded seeker of the deep mysteries of religion, Sri Ramakrishna took initiation into Islam from Govinda Roy. But initiation was not everything. To enter the movement of this religion, he started practicing religion as usual. Because he did not want to become a Muslim, he wanted to reveal the main mystery of Islam in the mirror of his consciousness.

The nature of his Islamic practice as revealed in his own admission: "At that time, I used to chant Allah, wear loose clothes like a Muslim, pray five times a day and since Hinduism had disappeared from my mind, I did not even have the desire to bow down to Hindu gods and goddesses. After three days passed in this way, the fruits of that faith were fully attained."

Shambhu Babu of Dakshineswar, though a Hindu, read the Bible with an open mind. Hearing this Bible and seeing the picture of Jesus in the arms of his mother, Sri Ramakrishna became attached to Christianity. Immersed in Christian ideology, for a moment his mind raised a conscious revolt: "What are you doing?" But the Hindu religious consciousness temporarily disappeared, and he became absorbed in the meditation of Jesus. The sacrifice of Jesus for the sake of the world's living beings particularly impressed Sri Ramakrishna. Jesus is his beloved as the messenger of the one and only Creator.

He also considered Buddha to be an incarnation of God in his deep yogic samadhi. He also had deep respect for the Tirthankaras, the founders of Jainism, and the Ten Gurus of Sikhism. In his house, along with other gods and goddesses, there was a large statue of Mahavira Tirthankara and a portrait of Jesus.

While showing respect for different religions and seeking harmony between different religions, Sri Ramakrishna said: "Just as there are many ways to climb a roof, such as by ladders, bamboos, stairs, etc., similarly there are many ways to reach the one God. Every religion is a way."

He further said that those who are narrow-minded only condemn other religions and form groups by saying that their religion is the best. And those who are devoted to God, who only do sadhana and worship, there is no groupism among them. Feeling saddened by the behavior of those who say that only their religion is right and the ideas of others are wrong and will not receive God's grace, he said: God is the father and mother of all. If you are sincere, He is merciful to everyone, and you can find Him by all means.

He said: "There are many ghats in a pond; Hindus take water from one ghat in a pitcher and say 'water'. Muslims take water from another ghat in a leather bucket and say 'water'. Christians take water from another ghat and say 'water'. If someone says it is not water but something else, it is a laughing matter."

Therefore, factions, differences of opinion, quarrels, gossiping about religion, fights, arguments — all these are not good. Everyone is following his path; only if they are sincere and eager will they attain Him.

### Universal Humanism

Sri Ramakrishna's universal humanism echoes the perfectionism of the Western philosopher Hegel. The meaning of Hegel's "Be human" is self-expansion or the realization of oneness with all, through which an individual's true personality blossoms. This is true self-realization. The second maxim of perfectionism, "Be alive by giving life," means to renounce one's sensual, self-interested, and self-centered life and attain a greater and nobler life.

Sri Ramakrishna's advice to Swami Vivekananda is a perfect example of universal love for humanity: "You will become like a huge banyan tree. Your branches will spread for hundreds of thousands of yojanas. Those who are suffering, weak, and distressed in the world will come and take shelter in the soft shade of your life spirit. Inspired by self-confidence, you will gain the strength to win the battle of life. Your life will be dedicated to all."

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