In search of Ultimate Reality Prince Siddhartha left his house, abandoned everything and wandered here and there for years together and ultimately he attained the Nirvana - the Ultimate Reality. But after realizing the Truth, when he became the Buddha, then he could no more be in jungle but came in society and started explaining others what he attained. This is usually the case with every realized person.

But we have to be very careful in one thing that, what they say - through words - if we try to understand with our bodily sense organs then we may not reach to the stage from where all these realized persons are talking.

Truth - the Ultimate Reality - is infinite but the words are finite, Truth is that Noumena which cannot be completely expressed in the language of phenomena. So we have to look at all the sayings of all the saints as symbols. Through their speech all the realized persons are directing us towards the Silence. They are as knower of the Truth, talking to us (as we to get known) about that knowledge where the known, the knower and the knowledge are one and the same.

The seers are directing to the Moon (Truth) through their finger (speech) so we have to be very much careful
not to make the mistake to take the finger (speech, the scriptures) as the Moon (The Truth). Keeping this in mind and heart, let us see what we find as their affirmations:

The poet-seer Pragātha sings in the Rg-Veda:

We have drunk Soma and become immortal;
We have attained the light; the gods discovered.
Now what may foe man's malice do to harm us?
What, O immortal, mortal man's deception?

Rg-Veda, 8.43.3

Aspiration to this realization of immortality, to this attainment of light and this discovery of the gods.

In the Avesta, Zarathustra affirms:

When I behold Thee in my very eyes, then I realized Thee in my mind, O Mazda, as the First and also the Last of all Eternity, as the Father of Vohu Mana (The Good Mind), as the true Creator of Ashā (Holiness), and Lord over the actions of Life

Yasna 31.8.

Then did I realize Thee as the Most Bountiful One, O Mazda Ahura, when the Good Mind encircled me completely. He declared to me that Silent meditation is the best for attaining spiritual enlightenment

Yasna, 43.15.
Lao Tze writes in his Tao-Teh-King:

The greatest virtue is in simply following Tao, the intangible inscrutable,

Inscrutable, intangible, and yet containing forms.

Intangible, inscrutable, and yet containing things.

Profound and obscure, but having an essence, a veritable essence in which is consistence.

From eternity until now its nature has remained unchanged. It inheres in all things from their beginnings.

How do I know of the origin of things?

I know by Tao

No. 21

'The Empty Source'.

The Buddha declares:

So, I, bhikkhus, being liable, because of self, to birth... ageing... decaying... dying... sorrow... stain, seeking the unborn... unageing... undecaying... undying... sorrowless... stainless, the uttermost security from the bonds, nibbāna, won the unborn, the uttermost security from the bonds, nibbāna, knowledge and vision arose in me: unshakeable is freedom for me, this is the last conditioned state, there is now no more re-becoming

Majjhima Nikāya 1.171.
In the Old Testament we read:

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not: for God took him

Gen. 5:24.

I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved

Gen. 32:30

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM

Exod. 3:14

And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and got him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights

Exod. 24:38

Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
If I make my bed in sheol, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning,
and dwell in the utmost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
and thy right hand shall hold me.

Psalms 139:7-10

In the New Testament we find:

I and my Father are one

John 10:30

I am the Way, the truth, and the life

John 14:6
Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.
And now I am no more in the world... and I come to thee

John 17.11

Repeatedly in the Upanishads the great seers affirm their realization of the Ātman, their knowledge of Brahman. Svetāsvatara, Sākayanya, Sanatkumāra, Satyakāma Jābāla, King Pravāhana, Jaivali, Ajatasatru the king of Kāshi, Raikva, Sāndilya, Naciketas, Uddālaka aruni, Pippalāda, Yajnavalkya the prince of Yogis, and many others had realised union with God, or, to use that remarkable Upanisadic phrase, had become Brahman. Svetāsvatara affirmed:

I know the Spirit Supreme, radiant like the sun beyond darkness. He who knows him goes beyond death, for he is the only path to life immortal

Svet. Up. 3.8.

Pippalāda declared:

Thus far, in truth, I know that Supreme Brahman.

There is naught higher than It

Prasna. 6.7.

Sanatkumāra said:

Where there is the Infinite there is joy. There is no joy in the finite.

Only in the Infinite there is joy; know the nature
of the Infinite.
Where nothing else is seen, or heard, or known,
there is the Infinite
Where something else is seen, or heard, or known,
there is the finite.
The Infinite is immortal; but the finite is mortal.
The Infinite is above and below, north and south and
east and west. The Infinite is the Whole universe.
I am above and below, north and south and east and
west.
I am the whole Universe.
Atman is above and below, north and south and east
and west.
Atman is the whole universe

Chānd. 7.23-25.

I am the alone, the attributeless, I am the Lord
taking away sin. I am the quiescent, the endless,
the all-full and the ancient. I am neither the
agent nor the enjoyer.
I am the changeless and the decayless. I am of the
nature of pure enlightenment. I am the one and
everlasting bliss

Adhyātma, 68 §69

The Kumāra Karttikeya asked his father to expound the
realization of Atman.

And Śiva declared:

I am of the nature of Parabrahman ... I am the I
that has given up "I" ... I am beyond the reach of
mind and speech... I am Atman and Sādāsiva
(the ever auspicious one)... There is none other
than Brahman, and that is I ... I am Brahman that
is Sat (Being or Truth), and bliss and the ancient
... I alone am the Adisera (Primeval time), with­
out name and form, of the nature of bliss ...
I am of the nature of the All-Void ... I am the
unconditioned, the permanent, the Unborn ...

Tejobindu, Chapter 3.

Sri Krishna affirmed:
I am the abode of Brahman, the Immortal, the Inex­
haustable of eternal righteousness and unending
bliss

B.G. 14.27.

I am seated in the hearts of all

B.G. 15.18.

Because I am beyond the perishable and even beyond
the imperishable, in this world and in the Veda I
am proclaimed the Spirit Supreme

B.G. 15.18.

Al-Hallāj affirmed:
If ye do not recognize God, at least recognize
His signs. I am that sign, I am the Creative Truth
(anal haqq), because through the Truth I am a Truth
eternally

Kitab al-Tawāsin.
Mohammad declared:

This is God your Lord. There is no God but He the Creator of all things; therefore worship Him alone — and He watcheth over all things.

No vision taketh in Him, but He taketh in all vision; and He is the Subtile, the All-informed

The Quran, Sura 6, verses 102 & 103.

Persian Poet — mystic Iraqi:

I have no other in my cloak but God ...

When thou transcendest Glory be to God,
Wipe off the dust of Selfhood from the soul.

Another Persian Sufi piet Babakuhi of Shiraz affirms:

I passed away into nothingness, I vanished and, lo,
I am the All-Living-one God I saw.

Tauler — the fourteenth century friar — Preacher of Strasbourg, one of the most virile of the German mystics says:

The great wastes to be found in this divine ground have neither image nor form nor condition for they are neither here nor there. They are like unto a fathomless Abyss, bottomless and floating in itself...

A man who deserves to enter will surely find God here and himself simply in God; for God never separates Himself from this ground. God will be present with him and he will find and enjoy Eternity here.

There is no past nor present here, and no created light.
can reach unto or shine into this divine ground; for here only is the dwelling place of God and His sanctuary...

This ground is so desert and bare that no thought can ever there... It is so close and yet so far off, and so far beyond all things, that it has neither time nor place. It is a simple and unchanging condition. A man who really and truly enters, feels as though he had been here throughout eternity, as though he were one therewith.

Tauler: The Inner Way, quoted in Underhill: Mysticism.

St. John of the Cross speaks of deification in these words:

Then the two natures are, so united, what is divine so communicated to what is human that "without undergoing any essential change each seem to be God - yet not perfectly so in this life, though still in a manner which cannot be described nor conceived.

The Spiritual Canticle -
St. John of the Cross.

The fourth century German Dominican, the Blessed Henry Suso, expressed himself thus:

"He forgets himself, he is no longer conscious of his selfhood, he disappears and loses himself in God, and becomes one spirit drowned in a great quantity of wine."
Yet a letter in the same passage he adds:

His being remains, but in another form.

When the author of the "Theologia Germanica" is asked, who it is who becomes a partaker of the Divine Nature and is made a Godlike or deified man, he replies:

He who is imbued with or illuminated by the Eternal or Divine Light and inflamed or consumed by Eternal or Divine Love, he is a deified man and a partaker of the Divine Nature.

Jesus Christ says:

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself

II Corinthians 5.

When we contemplate these interrelated and evolving insights what picture of reality emerges?

It is one of a universe which is a dynamic unfolding of Spirit. There is nothing in it which is not Spirit. The Seed of all Seeds. By us this dynamic unfolding of spirit is experienced and seen in the setting of space-time. We are involved in an evolutionary process which contains the elements of succession and expansion. The evolutionary process is however, the unfolding of spirit in a timeless Now. The higher consciousness ad-
vances in the process of evolution. The more it moves out of succession. To be fully conscious is to escape from time, from expansion, from separateness from contradictions. Growth, movement and change dissolve in permanence, stillness, and completeness. Though the universe we perceive has the quality of maya. There is in it a mysterious coinherence between spirit and matter. Matter has as it were a reality in its own right. It is as it were, an incarnation of spirit. But since man is contained in space-time phenomena, he does not easily perceive the real nature of the world or of himself. He imagines he is wholly bound up with his ephemeral phenomenal self. He does not easily perceive that his true self is of that changeless Spirit, with which it is of its nature one.

One in God, timeless Spirit, far yet near, unknown and unknowable yet intimately known, hidden beyond the coincidence of opposites the sustaining, all-pervading Love, which moves the Sun and the other stars, can the nature of the universe and of man be understood and then only in part 'as in a glass darkly', and only, as Nicholas of Cusa knew, by transcending those perennial Truths that can be reached by reason.

So there are the many forms of affirmation. All the realized persons, what they affirm is one and the same and their ways of expressing, go on changing according to their existing contemporary situation or environment.
Now the further part we are seeing is the part of promise. What all these realized persons have to give the promise to the world? By realization what exactly will happen, that they are telling—promising—to us.

In the Brahadaranyaka Upanisad, Yajnavalkya says:
He who is free from desire, whose desire finds fulfillment since the Atman is his desire, the powers of life leave not. Being one with Brahman, in Brahman he abides.

When all desires that cling to the heart disappear, then a mortal becomes immortal, and ever in this life attains liberation.

While we are here in this life we may reach the light of wisdom, and if we reach it not how deep is the darkness. Those who see the light enter life; those who live in darkness enter sorrow

4.4.6,7,14.

The Aitareya says:
He (Vāmadeva) having ascended aloft from this world... become immortal, yea, become immortal

5.4.

The Katta Upanisad says:
He who has understanding,
who is mindful and ever pure,
Reaches the End of the Journey
from which he never returns

3.8.
Then Naciketas, having received this knowledge declared by Death, and the whole teaching of Yoga, attained Brahman and became free from passion, immortal. And so may any other who knows this in regard to the Atman 6.18.

The Kena Upanisad:

When known by an awakening, it is conceived of truly it is immortality one finds 12 (or 2.4).

The Kausitaki Upanisad:

Having reached That, he becomes immortal as the gods are immortal 2.14.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Shri Krishna declares:

He who serveth me unfailingly by the Yoga of devotion, he crossing beyond the qualities, is fit to become Brahman 14.26.

Though ever performing all actions, taking refuse in me, by my grace he obtaineth the eternal, changeless abode. Merge thy mind in me, by my devotee, sacrifice to me, prostrate thyself before me, thou shalt come even unto me, I pledge thee my troth; thou art dear to me.

Abandoning all other spiritual paths, come unto me alone for shelter; sorrow not; I will
liberate thee from all sins

18.56, 65, 66.

Zarathustra's promise:
Whoever comes after the follower of Āshā (holiness),
his dwelling in future shall be the light.
To him who is His friend in spirit and action,
Mazdā Ahūra will grant Perfection and Immortality,
and out of His abundance Āshā as well, and through
His own overflowing strength His Might and Majesty,
and the Firm support of His Good Mind.

Yasna, 31.20.21.

In the New Testament:
For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God
is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord

Romans, 6.23

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit
saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh
will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is
in the midst of the paradise of God.... He that
overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death...
To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the
hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and
in the stone a new name written, which no man
knoweth saving he that receiveth it

Revelation, 2.7, 11, 17.
He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment;
and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God. And he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon my new name

Revelation, 3.5-12.

...If a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto Him, and make our abode with him

John, 14.23.

The Buddha's assurance:

Going along in accordance with what is enjoyed, having soon realized here and now by your own superknowledge that supreme goal of the Brahma-faring for the sake of which young men of family rightly go forth from home into homelessness, you will abide in it

Majjhima Nikaya 1.172.

What these affirmations mean, we cannot understand the meaning of it verbally. Our minds are finite, and our
words are ghostly echoes of the silent sound that sings the glory of the Transcendent Real. Truly the awe of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Because our awe is an intensity of love - longing. So, we stand our ground in the presence of that Majesty unbetrayed by feet of clay, uplifted with awe, we tremble with the passion of self-giving, not daring to ask anything, yet with heart all tremulous for our ravishment by the fire of divine love. Then we are given the divine eye which sees without mediating light. We are made wise. And we know. And we are silent.

So this is, beyond the highest heaven. But we the mortals have to use the mortal language on the earth. Touched to purity by the flame of truth, we converse together with the humility born of the vision that gave us the knowledge of the ignorance of our minds. The intellect is in bound to desire. It invents the ways and means to serve its master. Desire springs dually; and the conscious desire is in discordant play with its unconscious twin. Desire is conflict, and desire blinds seeing and deafens hearing. Our senses are rendered untrue. We have taken leave of good sense in all our living here. So our body is bruised, our heart is pierced.

But this very intellect when hurt, distressed, rebels against its tyrant desire. It discovers the great delusion, selfness. It discovers that all its proud knowledge, its cunning techniques and its alluring skills
are a fabric made of illusions. In that discovery itself is its purification and its release. Now, there is intelligence. Now, the senses, pure and free, are the instruments for maintaining perfect relationship between all the parts of the unity sensuously experienced as the multiplicity. Seeing the One is the Many and Many are One division-making intellect is transformed into intelligence which understands, without intellect losing a single one of its own special powers. For now it is the \textit{Atman}, God the Unknown Immanent, that sees, by means of the eye and hears by means of the ear, cognizes by means of the intellect and understands by means of intelligence. And knows with the heart. Then the Affirmations are Light, Truth, for the words have vanished like ghosts before the shining dawn which heralds the rising Sun. And We are that Sun.

The Truth which is the affirmation is not the words. The \textit{Living Substance} which is the affirmation is not this, not that - \textit{neti, neti}, as Yajnavalkya said. The \textit{Nirvana} renders all existential manifestation, all perceptions and feelings, all words and symbols, \textit{anatta}, not the \textit{Transcendent Real}. Eat the bread, which is the Body, and drink the wine, which is the Blood, in remembrance - in remembrance only - of Me, the Living One, the One whose name must never be taken in vain.

There is the Path, which is itself enlightenment, which is itself realization of the \textit{Transcendent}. The
Truth, Life Eternal, shows its face in him who knows all the paths of the self, and thus knowing, stands beyond all self-ness whilst still embodied in a unique self. He can say truly "I am the way, the truth, and the life". Of this path, there is no chart, no instructions, no symbols, no word. But this WAY is reflected here as many paths, paths which are charted, taught, describable. Not by blindly obedient following of any of these paths, for all blind following is unhappy folly leading to a dead-end, but by ceaseless, open-minded enquiry into these parts, we get free of them all and become the WAY, of which each one of us may truly say, "I am the WAY".

He who has become the WAY is the intelligent one with unerring insight. The slave of desire, however trained, cannot conduct the openminded enquiry into the charted paths leading to a definite goal as described in the Scriptures of the world. Intellect, without going through the fire, merely makes new, illusory patterns kaleidoscopically. But by watching the intellect at work, by becoming aware of its servitude to desire, the released insight of intelligence uncovers the WAY through the examination of the paths.

Thereupon we know the meaning of the Affirmations and also the meaning of the Promise, for we are now the very Substance of that Promise.