The parables are ancient and Eastern; and that is part of their fascination.

- Hugh Martin

THE PARABLES OF RAMAKRISHNA: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW
Chapter Four

The Parables of Ramakrishna: A Bird’s-Eye View

"In Sri Ramakrishna we have the revealer and modern interpreter of the spiritual truths about which our minds may be in doubt for want of actual demonstration"

- Swami Nikhilananda

4.1. Ramakrishna’s Parables: A Content Analysis

This chapter, like the previous one, is devoted to a content analysis and categorization of the parables of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Besides those major themes of the parables of Jesus Christ, which Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has also expounded in his parables in his own way, there are other equally major themes like yoga, guru, maya, occult powers and unity of religions which, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa expounds through the parabolic medium, are exclusively oriental in nature, tone and tenor. The content analysis, as in the previous chapter, only seeks to hint at a few representative parables in order to highlight the general mode of delineation of the comparison and the spiritual (moral) truth presented by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa in his parables.
Unlike Christ's, the parables\(^1\) of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa are numerous as they cover a vast spectrum of parabolic expositions in the form of parables, allegories, similitudes and the fables. His parables are classic example of 'spurring' the listener to 'spiritual perception' even as they 'challenge' the listener to 'choice and decisive action'.

The parable "All for a Piece of Loin-cloth" is a story about a disciple of a certain guru who as instructed by his guru went to a distant place to live a secluded life. He had as his possession only a piece of loin-cloth. One day after his bath he left the loin-cloth to dry. A rat tore the loin-cloth and he had to beg for another piece of cloth. The people advised him to keep a cat and so he had a cat to get rid of rats, then a cow to feed the cat with milk, then fields, and finally got married and settled happily with his wife and children and forgot completely his vision and mission. The guru, when he visited his disciple, was surprised to see the tremendous change that money had brought on him. This parable reveals the spiritual truth that money is a great hindrance to bring man closer to God.

\(^1\) A few of Sri Ramakrishna's parables are "All for a Piece of Loin-cloth" (TP 18), "Such is the Pride that Money Begets" (TP 46), "A Yogi Slips from his Yoga" (TP 29), "Such indeed is Maya" (TP 49), "Enmeshed in Maya Brahman Weeps" (TP 49), "In the Forest of the World" (TP 2), "Siddha Stopped a Storm" (TP 56), "A Boy Actually Fed God" (TP 82) and "A Salt Doll Went to Fathom the Depth of the Ocean" (TP 159).
The fable "Such is the Pride that Money Begets" is about a toad that lived in a hole. It happened to get a coin and preserved it safely. This coin completely changed its nature. One day an elephant happened to walk over the hole and the toad remarked, "How dare you walk over my hole?" Such is the pride that money begets. In the fable "A Yogi Slips from his Yoga" Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa brings out the message how a yogi lost his concentration in yoga when he fell a slave to the temptations of this world. A mongoose lived in a wall. When it came out people tied a brick to its tail. The mongoose wanted to be safe inside the hole, free from the turmoil of this world. But the pull of the brick forced it to come out.

Through these parables, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa describes the effect of worldly pleasures on man and how it prevents him from seeing God or Brahma. Here a yogi or even a saint is liable to drift away from his path if he is a slave to the pleasures of this world.

"Such is Maya" is a parable of a disciple who was forced to come out and dance when he saw a cloud in the sky. Maya evoked spirituality in him. The parable "Siddha Stopped a Storm" is about a siddha who had occult powers. He saw a ship full of voyagers sail in the sea. When a huge storm blew, the siddha stopped it with his occult powers. But the ship got drowned.
and many people lost their lives. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa asks, “What shall a man gain by having occult powers? Is he uplifted spiritually?” (TP 56).

The parable “The Salt Doll Went to Fathom the Ocean” is about a salt doll, which tried to measure the depth of the sea. But it got dissolved in salt water. In the same way no one can understand God fully. He cannot be seen in one particular form. “In the Forest of the World!” is a parable about three robbers Satva, Tamas, and Rajas who attack a traveller and rob all his money. They bind him and leave him alone. But Satva feels pity for him and at last releases him and directs him to his house. In the world there are people who are chained by Tamas, which stands for darkness; Rajas stands for worldliness, which prevent man from seeing Brahman. But Satva stands for truth and it shows man the path to Brahman, but he himself is not fully aware of God.

The parable “Enmeshed in Maya Brahman Weeps” is a story about Vishnu who was sent by God into the body of a sow to destroy a demon. But Vishnu, after destroying the demon, was safe inside the sow’s body and was fully satisfied to be there. He forgot about going back to heaven. But Brahma had to destroy the sow’s body to release Vishnu and take him back to heaven. There are people who forget their mission. They are surfeitingly satiated with earthly things.
4.2. Ramakrishna’s Parables: A Thematological Categorisation

The parabolist Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa used parables as a powerful vehicle of communication mostly for instruction, illustration and elucidation. Parables form an ideal medium for a preacher like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa to interact with his followers – the ordinary men and women and the unenlightened on matters that are fundamentally spiritual, divine and mysterious. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s parables are simple, vivid and numerous in number at once enlightening the reader and the listener and kindling the spiritual fire in them to burn and reveal to everyone the light of God.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s parables are marked by a good deal of philosophical bearing and deeper spiritual perceptions revealing to mankind the eternal bliss that one could enjoy when one acquires the knowledge and realizes the love of God. Man is like a crying baby which struggles to suck milk from the mother’s breast. When it does succeed not only the cry and struggle subside but it attains joy and contentment beyond words. Similarly the struggle of man is so great that he weeps to see God; but later becomes contended and overjoyed when he sees God the Almighty. (TP 127)

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa spent his time in the company of his disciples Narendra and Hiday. Narendra is a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna
Paramahamsa. Hiday is a nephew of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He attended on the master for a long time. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa conversed with them about God, salvation and divine mysteries on all such occasions when he was basically performing the functions of both a preacher and a teacher (of men). He was an instructor and he spoke to them in parables, similes and fables taken from life and ordinary events and things that would at once be intelligible and interesting. He quotes incidents from the *Mahabharatha*, the *Ramayana* and the *Vishnupurana* to bring out in the story form the truth of the kingdom of heaven, God, salvation and the path to tread in order to attain Brahman.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was a great social scientist in the realm of spirituality who followed to the very letter the disciplines and austerities laid down by his religion. Like all true scientists he knew that the success of an experiment depends upon the strict observance of its laws. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s first vision of God is the result of his passionate prayer and irresistible desire to see God (*TP* 25). But he did not blindly perform or follow any particular ritual or ceremony laid down by the scriptures.

The parables of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa are in the form of stories narrated briefly but marked with precision and rigour. That which is
very unique about his preaching is that the very art of narrating is interspersed with explanations and comments by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa himself. The parables of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa thus became simple, without any complexity whatever.

To Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa all gods are one. This is evident in his sayings, “God is one but has different names. All seek him but in different ways. He preached the unity of all religions and said that all the prophets were master spirits sent by God” (Geoffrey 2). ‘Service to mankind is service to God’ is the basic divine truth revealed in all his parables. No religion can be against another religion. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa insists on equality and fraternity and he is totally against caste, religion and creed. Perhaps his greatest contribution through his parables is his sustained endeavour to bring unity among all religions. Any reader who dwells deep into his parables would at once realize that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is a godly man whose words were the outcome of the divine inspiration which as he himself confesses was from the “All-pervading power” (Nicklananda 104).

To Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa everything is sacred. God is, and resides everywhere. There is no difference between the temple and the farm-yard. The cloister and the laboratory, the temple and the studio, the cell and the market place are equally places of worship. Sri Ramakrishna
Paramahamsa emphatically questions: "Where will you find God except in man? Man is the highest manifestation of the Divine. I will give up twenty thousands of such bodies to help one man. It is glorious to help even one man" (TP 44).

In short, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa tried to explain through his parables, God's relationship with the humanity, the human person. It is said that even as he was preaching through parables, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa achieved the Samadhi state. While one is performing yoga, he has to pass through three states, that is, Sadhana, Nivakalpa and the Samadhi state. Samadhi state is the state of being unaware of the outside world and the mind is fully concentrated on God. Hence the revelation of the total communication with the Lord Almighty.

Altogether Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has, in the course of his earthly life, given parables, of which there are too many parables in the strict technical sense of the term, and the rest are allegories, similitudes and fables. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's parables basically deal with the major themes that relate to God (Brahman), faith, love, renunciation, world (women and gold), force of evil, guru (teacher), yoga, maya, occult powers, yearning and unity of religions.
4.2.1. God / Brahman

Through his parables Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the godly man paves the way for the followers and readers to attain salvation, Brahman, the supreme being regarded as a person and divested of all quality and action. Brahman is both the efficient and the material cause of the invisible universe, the all-pervading sacred spirit of the universe, the essence from which all created things are produced and into which they are absorbed.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s parables portray God as an all-pervading power, omnipotent, omnipresent, father and mother. To see God one must possess a child-like faith, a faith pure and strong without any doubt and complete surrender to God and this truth is depicted clearly in many of his parables. While teaching his parables Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa emphasizes the fact that woman and gold are hindrances to attain salvation and to reach Brahman. A man must be like a lotus leaf that floats in water but does not get drenched in water. Complete detachment from the world and self-surrender are necessary to reach the knowledge of the Brahman.

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2 Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa explains the nature of Brahman in parables like “Neither Yes nor No” (TP 162), “The ‘King’ and the Magician” (163), “When Face to Face” (164), “Behold oh King Behold” (165), “He Eats yet He Eats” (167) and “All Pure Spirit” (168).
Again Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa stressed the need to practise yoga which is very often repeated in many of his parables to attain concentration in meditation. Without concentration one cannot unite oneself with God and reach the Samadhi stage, the state of a man’s mind getting united with God. The blind cannot lead the blind. The parable “Why a Yogi Slips from his Yoga” (TP 29) reveals that a divine person can also slip away from the attachment to God by becoming a prey to the wealth of this world.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, in one of his parables (TP 52), shows how man always wants to be free from the turmoil of the world, little realizing that oneness with God alone will fetch him complete freedom. When a person is in prayer if he is disturbed he cannot tolerate it. He gets irritated. But when he is so disturbed sometimes he is diverted. Suddenly if his wife enters and tells him that a guest has come to see him, he feels irritated. But when he leaves his prayers and comes out of the room to meet him, he forgets about his prayer and is deeply involved in the conversation with him. This, of course, is natural in any human being. In other words, man can attain psycho-spiritual equilibrium only through concentration and total freedom that he craves for is the natural resultant product of his union with God.

“The Jar of Desire Can Never be Filled Up” (TP 26) and “All for a Piece of Loin-cloth” reveal that the desire of wealth leads man away from
God. In these two parables Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa tries to convey the great spiritual truth that a man, when he sees wealth and gold, becomes a slave to the lust and pleasures of this world. It is also a natural instinct in man to be attracted by gold and wealth. The truth one understands is, if a man has given his heart to the lust and pleasures of this world, he cannot see God.

In the parable “Master of Everything; Slave of Sex” (TP 35) Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa reveals the truth about the character of men who do not know the ‘necessity’ of another person to realize the Ultimate, the Brahman. Usually women are very kind and they can easily understand the feelings of others. The parable “A Man Who is not Able to Get a Job” (TP 35) presents the sad tale of the man who did not succeed in getting the job through the manager but when he approached the manager through the manager’s wife, who recommends for him, he easily gets a job.

A job seeker got tired of visiting the manager in an office. He could not get the job. The manager said to him, “There is no vacancy now; but come and see me now and then” (TP 35). He visited him frequently for the job but he did not get it. But when he approached the manager’s wife she felt pity for him and said “Ah! The poor brahmana! He has been suffering too much” (TP 36) and she pleaded with her husband for him and the manager offered him a job. This parable not only reveals the power of woman on man, but also
if a person often implores God for a particular thing even though he does not
give him the blessings immediately, later when asked frequently will pour out
in abundance from his jar of blessing.

Man can attain the divine state and the Brahman by living a pure life. Purity takes him nearer to the divine. Purity in heart, mind and deed is a
prerequisite to enter into an eternal relationship with the Lord Almighty who
is the pure of the purest. The vision of God the Almighty as viewed by Sri
Ramakrishna defines God as All Pervading Power and is involved in creating,
nurturing and destroying. He may be named as the Divine Father, or the
Divine Mother who exists everywhere and who can be with form as well as
without, according to the faith of each individual; but its immensity and
magnitude is certainly beyond human comprehension. His parable “A Salt
Doll Went to Fathom the Depth of the Ocean” tells of a doll who went to
fathom the depth of the sea and got dissolved in the water. The doll itself
disappeared and it could not measure the depth of the sea. Similarly man
cannot find God in one particular form.

When a man is in communion with God each and every minute, he is
brought closer and closer to God. Then he can get a clear glimpse of the face
of God and can enjoy his loving care and tender mercies. God is different
from what man thinks he is. He is pure spirit prevailing everywhere. The
parable “All Pure Spirit” (*TP* 168) delineates the formless, shapeless, pure-spirit-existence of God. The realization of God by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is revealed in this parable. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was a worshipper of Kali and always went to the temple to worship God. But one-day revelation came to him and he saw God to be a spirit. The utensils, the altar and the wooden frame are all pure spirit. After realizing this great spiritual truth Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa stopped worshipping in the temple (*TP* 168).

In the parable “Where Silence is Eloquence and Speech doth Falter” (*TP* 169) a man sends his two sons to a preceptor to attain the knowledge of Brahman. When he asks the first son about Brahman, he explains by quoting from various texts. But the other remains silent. There are many saints and men of great knowledge in this world who always remain calm and silent. They do not try to show off their knowledge. This nature is seen not only in persons with abundance of spiritual knowledge but also in men of great learning. This parable shows that if a man has got great (real) knowledge about God he becomes as silent as the divine being itself. Greater the knowledge of God, humbler the human person becomes and he is the focal point of silence, the most eloquent form of the human language.
In the parable “The King and the Magician” (TP 163) Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa presents the truth that when one goes closer to God one will understand God to be without any form but as only a ray of light. The greater the spiritual experience, the deeper is the knowledge of God. Only by deep intimacy with God one can understand God fully. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has experienced God fully and that is why he could firmly speak about God who is a pure spirit and pure light. As one goes nearer to God one sees less and less of his Upadhis (discriminative or distinguishing property and attributes). A devotee at first may see the deity as the ten armed Divine Mother and when he goes nearer he sees him possessed of six arms, still nearer he sees the deity as the two armed Gopala. The nearer he comes to the deity, the fewer attributes he sees. When he comes into the presence of the deity he sees only light without any attribute (TP 168).

This is the truth about Brahman. The God who is seen wholly cannot be with a shape or form. He is formless but the bright ray of light can be seen when a believer comes very near to God. God alone is real. Everything else is illusory. After one attains the knowledge of Brahman he sees no illusion. The silent nature of the second son in the parables, “Where Silence is Eloquence” proves that he has attained the knowledge of Brahman.
‘Empty vessels make sound noise’ is a proverb to be remembered of one who shows himself to be full of divine knowledge, of a believer. When a believer of God remains calm and silent he proves to be blessed with divine knowledge. A true believer of God is always humble and calm and does not show himself off. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is a divine-manifested human person who has tasted the love of God and his spiritual wisdom is greater when compared to an ordinary man who arrogantly thinks that he is more spiritual.

In the parable “The King and the Magician” (163) Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa demonstrates that one cannot understand God completely and God cannot be identified in one form. Man may make images of gods and give different names. But in reality God is formless. “When Face to Face” (103) is a parable which reveals the truth that as one reaches the knowledge of God there will be no doubt about God. One has to climb the ladder and reach the top step to see God. When the devotee climbs one step he finds very little about God. His knowledge goes on increasing as he goes higher and higher. A few friends while going to meet the king who lived in a palace had to cross seven gates. When he reached the first gate he asked in suspicion whether they have reached the palace. Finally, when they reached the seventh gate the grandeur and glory was higher than the others. Now the friend was sure that
he has reached the palace. Similarly the true knowledge of God can be gained only when he comes face to face with God.

The Absolute has no attachment with good as well as evil. It is like the light of a lamp. With its help one can read the Holy Scriptures. But one can equally well commit forgery with the same lamp. Above all Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has portrayed God as with form and formless. God assumes different forms and reveals himself in different shapes for the sake of his devotees. His parables "A Tub of Dye" (TP 170) is a telling example of how God differs to different men. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa proclaims that "if God can be worshipped through a clay why not through a man?" (TP 170). But there must be an eternal quest in man to attain the Absolute or the supreme being. He says whosoever calls him will be blessed by his vision.

4.2.2. Faith

Every religion stresses on the importance of faith. Without faith one cannot survive in this world. Faith is inevitable to see God Almighty. The parables of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa throw light upon this doctrine of ‘faith’. There are quite a few parables of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa which reveal the salient aspects of faith and the need for faith to see God.
To see God one must have the thirst or faith that he will see God. True knowledge of God can be attained only through experience and only gradually one can attain full knowledge. When one attains the knowledge of God he becomes calm and 'reserved'. This intimacy with God is achieved by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and his parables lay bare the spiritual truth that he has gained through his spiritual experiences.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa often narrated stories from the Indian ethics (Itihasas) bearing divine truth. These parables are recreations of the stories in the Mahabharatha and the Ramayana, which his followers and his listeners knew well. His parables had the power to rouse the slumbering hearts to spiritual revival. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa holds the view that a true devotee must have faith in both the formless reality and God with form, the Divine Mother. He profusely draws on the Mahabharatha to drive home his message through the stories with which his audiences are already familiar. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa poignantly portrays the faith of a common disciple in the parable "A Disciple and her Pot of Curd" (TP 84).

In an annaprasana ceremony in a guru’s house a poor woman disciple gave her offering of a pot of milk she had milked from her cow. The guru got angry and threw the milk away because he thought that she would supply her with milk for the whole ceremony. She went to drown herself in the river.
God appeared before her and gave a pot of curd which will not become empty. The guru was surprised and he wanted to see God. But God did not appear to him. But he appeared only after the poor woman pleaded for him for fear that he would die if God did not reveal himself to him. This parable emphasizes the abundance of child-like faith that the woman has in God. Sadly enough the guru did not have that innocent faith in God.

There are men in this world who claim themselves to be God’s servant but they do not have any faith in God. If the guru had had faith that God would provide him with milk enough for the ceremony he would have accepted the poor women’s offering. Faith in God is necessary for a man to live a happy and contented life. The poor woman had faith in God. She did not suspect that the curd would not come to an end. She believed God and so she gave the pot of curd to the guru. Similar faith is necessary for a man to see God.

In the parable “How a Child Actually Fed God” Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is pointing out the tendency in a child to believe every word that the mother tells him and the purity of heart of the child to see God. That is why Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa emphasizes the necessity of concentration and a child-like faith to see God.
Strong faith in God can perform miracles. One can move mountains and can control the storm if he has got faith in God. The parable “Faith Knows no Miracles” (TP 94) and “Faith Works Miracles (TP 95) reveals this truth. One day two yogis were practising austerities with a view to realizing the Lord. Narada a divine singer was passing by a hermitage. A yogi asked him, “Are you coming from heaven?” Narada said that he was coming from heaven. Then the yogi asked him to tell what he saw God doing. Narada replied that he saw God playing by making camels, elephants and was making the gods pass through a needle’s eye. The first yogi could not see anything marvellous in this action. The passing of God or a toy or image of God through the eye of a needle is a thing which is impossible with man. But the truth is, the things which are impossible with men are possible with God, a truth that can be grasped and accepted only by a true believer in God.

Faith in God does not merely mean faith that ignored God without seeing miracles. There are people who could believe God only when they see miracles. But true faith is faith in God even when miracles are not performed. This parable recalls the faith of the two yogis, one with great faith from his full realization of God and the other without the full understanding of God. The first yogi believed that nothing is impossible with God. But the next yogi could not believe. The first yogi has reached the Bhakti stage of having strong faith in God and he was able to see God. In other words, if one has strong
faith in God, one will not run after miracles because God is powerful and is capable of doing still greater things. Is it easy to believe that God is performing miracles each and every minute in one's life? That indeed is faith.

But at the same time Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa succinctly drives home the truth that faith can perform miracles. All that is needed is faith in great measure to perform miracles. A man was able to save his son's life because of his strong faith in God. When a man believes God without the lightest tinge of doubt, he can see miracles in life. Having faith and vision of God has close bearing on each other. If one has got faith he can make a mountain move and stop the storm. But faith should not be belittled as a mean thing or merely for performing miracles. Here Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa highlights the important faces (aspects) of faith. One is the faith that performs miracles. The other is the faith that enables man to see God. One must give priority to the necessity of faith to see God. The other faith is only secondary. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa through his parables clearly points out the basic need for faith and the importance of faith in one's life.

4.2.3. Love

Everyone must strive to possess the divine love in large measure. While teaching his disciples Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa "exhorted them to
God in everything and serve not as philanthropist but as a spiritual practice as we worship” (Swami Prabhvananda 222). He taught his people with loving care and his teaching and life went together. As Swami Prabhvananda says, “Those who came to Sri Ramakrishna saw God. The women devotees forgot the distinction between man and woman and were putting questions and listening without hesitation whatever” (348-349). In all his teachings, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa insisted upon ‘fruits first flowers next’. A man who has realized the love of God must bear fruits.

All religions teach that ‘love’ of God is important to every believer. God is the symbol of love and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s parables bear ample testimony to the importance of love, which always prefers ‘fruits’ to ‘flowers’. In the words of Swami Prabhvananda:

The master always used to quote in connection with the lives of the eternally free Isvanakotis the saying, fruits first flowers next as in the case with creepers called gourds. The meaning of the saying is whatever practice they are seen to undertake, similar practice in order to achieve similar results from a critical study of the lives of these persons, one fact stands out. It is this from their childhood they believe every matter in a way within is only possible for those who are full possession of the knowledge (404).
A true servant of God will live a holy life shedding God's love upon every individual he meets. He will love not only his friends but also his enemies. The good character of "love" is superior to all the other characters. There is joy among the fellowmen and the whole world will remain in peace. There will be no quarrel, no hatred, no envy, no theft, no pride, and no ill-will but always good to others. Love can conquer the whole world. It can bear all sufferings in patience and this good character is seen in a believer who has tasted the love of God. Only such a person can bear fruits. The normal state of a plant is to produce flowers first and fruits next. But it is the reverse with the believer. He will bear fruits first and then flowers and spreads God's fragrance of love and mercy from him everywhere. But at the same time one must be wary of worldly love, a love that binds and not liberates.

The necessity of thirst to taste the love of God is revealed through the parable "The Peacock that Tasted Opium" (TP 189). A drinker or a man who loves intoxication cannot live in this world without drinking. A drunkard is addicted to drinking. He can be normal only if he drinks. This similar tendency is seen in a peacock which is fed with opium. A seeker of God must have thirst to taste the love of God. A person can understand the taste of the food only if he has got appetite to taste it or a mind to taste it. When he starts eating he understands whether the food is sweet, sour or bitter.
A peacock is fed with a pill of opium at 4 o’clock in the afternoon. The next day exactly at that time the peacock came back. It has felt the intoxication of that drug and returned just in time to have another dose. Similarly a devotee who had the good fortune to meet the master felt an uncontrollable and irresistible desire to meet him again and again. When a man has the thirst to taste the love of God and attain his knowledge he cannot be calm. He wants to seek God and enjoy him fully. He becomes an addict just like the peacock that became an addict to opium.

The parable “Not until the Illusion Breaks” (TP 142) brings into focus the fickleness of worldly or carnal love and how a disciple was taught by the guru to renounce world and wealth. A disciple was not willing to leave his family and follow his guru. One day the guru gave him a pill to swallow which will make him appear dead, but he will be conscious of what is happening in the outside and could hear people talk. When the disciple swallowed it he appeared to be dead. The whole family wept bitterly. But the guru said that one of them should take the medicine and die so that the disciple could live. No one was willing to die, even his wife. The guru offered another pill and the disciple regained consciousness. At once the disciple left his family and followed the guru.
This parable of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa reveals the great truth that in this world none loves so truly as God. The love of God is greater than man’s love. Moreover, if one loves the world and the family more than God, then one cannot be a true servant of God. This deep spiritual truth is exemplified through this parable. One has, therefore, to renounce this world, women and wealth in order to attain salvation, for as long one loves this world he cannot give his heart to God.

4.2.4. Renunciation/Detachment

Renunciation or total detachment is a Dharma, a way of life. The upholder of the dharma is a man of all virtues, a passionate devotee of God, a man of intense self-realisation and above all a man who enjoys eternal union with the Brahman. But subtle are the ways of Dharma. One cannot realize God if one has even the least trace of desire. A thread cannot pass through the eye of a needle if it has the smallest fibre sticking out (TP 58)

Renouncing the desires and luxuries of the world, especially woman, is an essential ingredient of one’s quest for spirituality. For, as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa holds, a woman is a hindrance to attain Brahman. If one is attached to the world one can be sure of drifting away from God. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa insists that a man must completely be detached
from worldly pleasures in order to attain salvation. As Swami Melananda clearly points out:

> When a man does all sorts of worldly things he should not say, I am Brahman. Those who could not give up attachment to worldly things and also finds no means to shake off the feeling of ‘I’ should neither cherish the idea that ‘I am God’s servant’ [...] Those who love woman and gold cannot be separated from the ego ‘I’. [...] it is a slave of her” (3).

Again to attain spirituality, man must renounce the world. Renunciation is the key that opens the eternal world of happiness. The parables “The Jar of Desire can Never be Filled up” (*TP* 26), “The Worldly Goods are not Thine Forever” (25), “Equalization is the First and Last Renunciation” (47), “Even if You Wish to Renounce the World” (156), “When Renunciation Becomes the Life Breath” (157) all focus on the truth that one must renounce the world to attain spirituality.

As long as one does not trust in God that God will provide one’s needs, one cannot be free from the pleasures and cares of this world. A child does not care for anything because he has got faith in his mother that she will provide all his needs. His heart is pure and not corrupted and child-like renunciation is necessary to attain salvation. Absolute surrender to God
without any slight doubt is necessary for a believer in God. It may, therefore, be inferred from the parable of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa that renunciation coupled with child-like faith is necessary to realize God. Swami Saradananda says, “Faith, renunciation and strength of character are the signs of realization of spirituality. All of these are possible, emphasizes Sri Ramakrishna, only with the grace of God” (348).

A reader of the parable “Not Until the Illusion Breaks” may think that what the disciple did was a foolish act of renunciation. Renunciation actually means not leaving the family but in mind one must renounce himself of the lusts and pleasures of this world. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has often stated that one must be just like a lotus leaf that floats on water but is not stained with water. This is the real meaning of renunciation that is necessary for eternal bliss. If a person appears to renounce worldly pleasures, but still have his heart in the worldly things then it is not renunciation.

Renunciation, thus, becomes a psycho-mental exercise of divesting the human mind of its ego and everything that is evil and carnal, that, in turn will lead to a spiritual discipline of total detachment. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa obviously narrated this parable to make one understand the importance of getting rid of the ego, ‘I or mine’. Renunciation, in other words, would mean the ‘dissolving’ or the ‘dissolution’ of the ego in the
supreme being so that like the supreme being the individual self becomes universal and all-pervasive without any trace of the personal self whatsoever.

4.2.5. Woman/Gold

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was a great lover of women and he adored them as divine beings, the holy ones. He considered every woman as a Divine Mother. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa treated even his wife as a Divine Mother and worshipped her by offering flowers. But this did not blind him to the alluring side of women. He always taught his disciples to be “Beware of Women and Gold”. He says to Keshab:

Renounce everything and call on God. He alone is real. All else is illusory. Without the realization of God everything is futile. All seek to enjoy woman and gold but there is too much worry and misery in that. This world is like the whirlpool of Visalekshmi. If a boat gets into it there is no hope of its rescue (TP 43).

In the parable, “Lust and Gold” (TP 44), Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa shows how women and gold blind man and rob him of his freedom and autonomy. It is the woman who creates the need and craving for gold and, in the process, becomes a slave of gold. Man who becomes a slave
of woman, in turn, becomes the slave of gold and loses his freedom. The king of Jaipur sent for the priests in the temple of Gorindaji. But they asked the king to come to see them. After consultation, the king and the ministers arranged for the marriage of the priest. From then on the king did not have to send for them. They would come to him of themselves with flowers of the temple. They came for money (TP 34). In other words, even the priests, the so-called chosen ones, fall a prey to the temptations of gold, money and wealth.

That men are slaves to women is a recurrent theme in the parabolic teaching of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He aptly points out in the parable, "I would Conquer Lust, Look on Women as Mother" (TP 43) that man could save himself from the evil snare of woman if he looks upon every woman as mother on earth and adore them" (TP 43).

Money is the root of all trouble in one's life. As long as money is with a person he cannot be happy. A simple incident will prove that money is the root of all troubles. If a wealthy man has a lot of money and jewels in his house, he has to be keen and cautious and at the same time spends nights without sleep to see that it is not stolen. A poor man sleeps well as long as he does not have any money. But if he happens to get a lot of money he has to keep lock and key and see that it is kept safe. Sri Ramakrishna
Paramahamsa’s parable “The Root of All Trouble” (17) teaches in the simplest way possible that money brings problem to man. A few fishermen were catching fish and a kite took a fish and flew away. A crow started chasing the kite and as long as the fish was in its mouth it could not be free. But when it let the fish down, the crow stopped chasing the kite. Just like the kite man also, if he has given his heart to the world and wealth, he feels restless. He cannot remain in peace. But when he renounces this world and its pleasure he can live a very contented life. This parable proves that money or the craze for material prosperity is a great hindrance in man to reach God.

Man is also bound by the fetters of the world. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa uses the parable “There are such Men Indeed” (TP 7) to explain the bondage of men. The fishermen catches the fish in the net. Men are caught in it (the world) and they perish like fishes. The parable “All for a Piece of Loin-cloth” (TP 15) points out how lust for wealth has deprived him of the joy of salvation and eternal bliss. A disciple as instructed by the guru left his place to live a solitary life in a distant place. There he had only a piece of loin-cloth as his possession. Every morning he went into the village, begged and returned to his shelter. One day a rat tore his cloth and he was urged to beg for one. The people advised him to get a cat to get rid of rats. He bought a cat, then a cow and fields. Since he had to maintain the field he got married and settled happily with his wife and children.
When his guru came there to see how his disciple lived, he was surprised to see the tremendous change that worldly wealth had brought on him. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa explains in this parable the divine truth that material concerns always stand as a stumbling-block to bring man closer to God. He draws the attention of the devotees to the disturbing reality of the world, the natural tendency of man to acquire wealth through endless struggles. As a logical corollary Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa also emphasizes another important spiritual truth that even a sanyasi, who has abandoned the lust of the flesh and riches, falls a prey to wealth and temptations and forgets completely about his vision and mission. Man must, therefore, be extremely careful and cautious when mad pursuit for material possession comes like an evil in one’s life. In short, world, money, women and gold deprive man of the fruits of eternal blessings.

4.2.6. Force of Evil

Fickle mindedness is another deceptively mild face of the force of evil. Owing allegiance to more than one ‘reality’ is not only a logical impossibility, but a manifestation of the human frailty. It is this frailty that makes man wavering and unsteady when he should have the steadfast faith in the one unshakable ‘reality’.
The force of evil is stressed by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, though not in separate parables, but severally in many parables. The parables denoting woman, wealth, gold and renunciation reveal that evil forces can be women, wealth and gold because they are hindrances to bring man closer to God. Egoism/egotism is undoubtedly yet another a force of evil. The parable “How Vanity Ruins a Person’s Head” (74), points out how those who have read a few books and attained superficial knowledge cannot get rid of conceit, a cruel manifestation of the force of evil.

Once Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa had a talk with Kalikrishna Tagore about God. As soon as he started the conversation Tagore said that he knows everything about God. To this Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa replied, “Does a man who has visited Delhi brag about that? Does a gentleman go about telling everyone that he is a gentleman?” (TP 74). Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa narrates the tale of the vanity of a scavenger woman who had a lot of ornaments. When she saw a few young men pass by she shouted at them and asked them to get away from her way. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa points out that if a scavenger woman would speak in this manner, then how would others talk. Pride changes completely the nature of man and pride, needless to say, goes before fall.
Even people who claim to know more about God prove to have spiritual pride. Only if a person is humble and does not give room for the forces of evil he can see God. While sharply reacting, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa only points out the spiritual pride in Tagore. Such men cannot attain salvation. Money, the evil force, also brings pride in man which prevents him from realizing the truth about God.

To explain the simple fact of life that man cannot serve two masters, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa narrates the parable “If You must Serve but One Master” (TP 247). It is true that the meaning of the parable is not apparently clear; one can easily discern that the hidden message of the parable is that one cannot serve two masters.

4.2.7. Guru

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has laid down certain rules or code of behaviour for a teacher or a guru, for ‘a blind cannot lead the blind’ (TP 21). A guru must be a model and an ideal. He must be spotlessly clean and the disciples must look upon him as a living example of the precepts he preaches. Only then he can preach with authority and he himself will be an authority. There are a few parables conveying this role-model of a guru. The parable “Physician with a Jar of Molasses” (TP 209) shows how one cannot lead the
other without receiving commission from God (TP 211). In this parable the physician could not advise the patient to avoid taking molasses because he had molasses in his room and he himself was using it. Only when the molasses were removed he could advise the patient.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa narrates in a parable "One cannot Teach Others without Receiving from God" (TP 211) that once a Brahmin preacher began to preach and while preaching he said how he used to drink. This upset the listeners. They began to whisper and it produced a very unfavourable effect. Such is the pathetic state of the preacher who himself is full of blemishes. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa himself makes it clear:

> To teach others one must have a badge of authority, otherwise teaching becomes a mockery. A man who is himself ignorant starts out to teach others like the blind leading the blind. Instead of doing good such teachers do harm (TP 211).

Once a high official told Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa that he would join him in preaching. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa told the story of people's destroying the bank of the Haldarpukur and how it could be stopped only when a constable, armed with authority from the government put up a notice, prohibiting it. What the master stresses is the fact that only a person who had the real commission from God can do his mission.
In the parable "Like Teacher, like Disciple" (TP 219), Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa points out how a Sanyasi who renounces worldly pleasures and women, if he enjoys outwardly, he cannot be a good preacher. A preacher must be a model to others. He should follow his teachings in his life. Then only his teachings will be more effective. Through Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's parables one is enlightened as to how a teacher or a guru should live a model life. Even the yogi must follow the guru, because guru is the very force that would not allow the yogi or any seeker to go astray.

In the parable, "None Will follow thee After Death" (TP 142) Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa explains the misfortunes and the unfortunate turn of events in the life of the yogi who claimed not to follow the guru because of his wife and her affection. But when he reached the samadhi and since the people could not remove the body, they started breaking the door. The wife asked the people to cut his legs. The yogi hearing this left the house and became a follower of the guru.

4.2.8. Yoga

Throughout his teachings Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa emphasizes that a disciple must practise yoga, controlling all activities of body, mind and will in order that the self may realize and attain its distinction from them and
attain liberty. There are various types of yogas. They are *Tajayoga*, *Bhaktiyoga*, *Karthayoga* and such to develop concentration in meditation. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has stressed the importance of performing yoga in order to reach Brahman. If one performs yoga he is able to control himself from the lusts and pleasures of this world.

When one performs yoga his mind is united with God and his body is released from the contact with the world. This state is called the *Samadhi* stage. There are three stages in yoga. They are: *Sadhana*, *Nirvakalpa* and the last one the *Samadhi* stage. There are various types of yoga. Yoga should not be performed for yoga sake. But yoga should be performed to physically, mentally, emotional and spiritual discipline oneself and one's self. In the parable "Those Worthless Things" (*TP* 31) Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa talks about a man who performs the *Hartha yoga*. This type of yoga does not aim at the realization of God. They perform exercises like washing the intestines, drinking milk through tubes which will not lead the human soul anywhere. Yoga, then becomes, another form of physical exercise.

Yoga must lead a man to higher state of consciousness. Like a snake that sheds off its scales, the man loses his old self and becomes a new being. In the state of acquisition of the new self, there is no question of even being aware of the old self. A goldsmith one day had his tongue struck up to palate
and he reached the *Samadhi* stage. He was in that position for several years and people came to worship him. Suddenly one day the tongue came to its normal position and he became conscious. So he returned to his work.

People may perform *yoga* but still they love woman and gold. The necessity of *yoga* is to bring spirituality in the life of man. *Yoga* becomes worthless if a *yogi* continues to live in the same way giving his heart to wealth, woman and gold. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa narrates the tale of a man who knew eighty-two postures and still he was a slave to woman and gold. There is every possibility for a *yogi* to drift away from *yoga* if he pays attention to worldly things. This truth he points out in the parable “Why a Yogi Slips from his Yoga”.

The parable about the yogi is basically about the tendency in every human person to slip from his *yoga* or the yogic discipline. And in this parable Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa narrates an incident from reality.

A Kammaphukar seen the mongoose living in its hole up in the wall. It feels safe there. Sometimes people tie a brick to its tail, then the pull of the brick makes it come out of its hole. Every time the mongoose tries to be comfortable inside the hole, it has to come out because of the pull of the brick. Such is the effect
of brooding on worldly objects that it makes the yogi slip from the path (TP 29).

Concentration is necessary for a yogi and this is beautifully illustrated in the parable “None will Follow Thee After Death”. To awaken the readers to the depth of concentration Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa narrates the story of an angler who was catching fish. When enquired by an Avadhita (TP 214) about the way to reach a place, the angler, since he was wholly concentrating on fishing, failed to reply. But after the Avadhita left the place, the angler called him and asked what he enquired about. Such should be the concentration of a yogi which will help in reaching the samadhi stage. Yoga is essential for a man to be completely detached from the pleasures of the world and to unite himself with God. Only when our fleshly desires are destroyed we can reach heaven.

4.2.9. Maya

The role of Maya\(^3\) is another important aspect of the spiritual growth according to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. In the parable “How is Maya”, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa explains the nature and substance of Maya. A

\(^3\) The parables “If All is Really Unreal” (TP 35), “How is Maya” (TP 48), “Such indeed is Maya” (TP 49), “The Maya Vanishes the Moment it is Known” (TP 51), “Its Nothing Its Nothing” (TP 54) and “The Prolonged Dream that We Call Life” (TP 92) portray the Divine play of Maya in the life of a human person.
Sadhu was living in solitude in a room without conversing, spending his whole time in meditation. One day all of a sudden a cloud darkened the sky and shortly afterwards a huge wind blew away the cloud. The holy man came out of the room and began to laugh and dance in the veranda in front of the concert room. When Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa asked him the reason for his sudden change he replied, “such is Maya that envelops the life” (TP 48).

Maya vanishes the moment it is known. In the parable “The Maya Vanishes the Moment It is known”, a Pandit one day asked a cobbler to become his servant. He regretted because he was of a lower caste. But the Pandit appointed him advising him not to divulge the fact that he was a cobbler. One day a Brahmin visited him. The priest commanded the cobbler to fetch his shoes repeatedly three times. Yet the cobbler remained silent. The Brahmin lost his temper and asked, “Are you indeed a cobbler?” The cobbler flew away from the priest. In the same way when Maya is recognized she flees away. Thus Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa vividly illustrates the power of Maya in man and how man overcomes Maya.

4.2.10. Occult Powers

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has both severely conditional praise and outrightly devastating contempt for occult powers. Occult power, the master constantly reminds us, must always be looked upon as God’s gift for helping
the hapless victims of life’s burdens and worries and problems. Occult powers is not a pearl thrown before the swine. It is the never-failing fountain in the heart of a city that quenches the thirst of many a tired, fatigued and wearisome traveller, to whom it comes as God’s boon. If, therefore, anyone views occult powers as his mortal achievement, he as well as his occult powers is more a hindrance than a help to attain God’s vision.

In the parable, “Occult Powers are More a Hindrance Than a Help to God Vision” (TP 57), Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa describes a Sadhu who with his great occult powers could kill an elephant and then bring it back to life. But ironically he was not able to discipline his life at all. The occult powers in him does not help him to realize his own self. Such an occult power, devoid of humility and the realisation of God’s purpose in one’s life, is more the work of the demonic forces than the manifestation of God’s gifts.

The question Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa asked about occult power is, “What has that done for you?” “Do you feel uplifted by it?” (TP 59) It is entirely true that man does not gain anything by performing such miracles. He is not elevated spiritually but instead the evil force of pride, that is the Vikaras, takes possession of him and leads him to his ultimate ruin. Occult powers must, therefore, be practised with care and with the realization that in exercising the occult powers one is, after all, performing the will of God or the divine purpose not for self-glory but for the well-being of the entire mankind.
4.2.11. Yearning

Yearning means the longing in an individual to see the divine force and is not satisfied with the knowledge that he has got of Brahman. He must yearn more and more like the deer that longs for water to satisfy its thirst. The thirst of God can never be quenched. One must love God like a child and must have his yearning for the love of God. The love of God manifests itself in the love of all creations. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa also yearned like a child crying bitterly to see the Divine Mother, Kali. At last he was filled with the vision of his holy mother.

The parables "See Advaita Everywhere or Nowhere" (TP 231), "God Beyond Knowledge and Ignorance" (TP 9), "To Have Genuine Yearning for God is to Attain Him" (TP 127), "That Divine Yearning" (TP 128), "If You are Earnest" (TP 129), "How a Disciple Taught his Guru to See God" (TP 130) and "They Wander into Many Disguises" (TP 197) express the yearning of a man for God’s love. A Sadhu, when he was hungry, looked like a mad man; but he still fed the dog with the food that he got by begging. Since God dwells in all beings, it is Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s teaching that man should love all whether low or high, animate or inanimate. He says that

* A woman deity with dark complexion. An epithet of Parvathi, Siva’s wife; an epithet of Durga; also the name of Sathiarathi, mother of Vyasa.
nothing is unholy, even the excretion of man is holy. A man in the divine state sees no difference. When he realizes that he starts loving everyone alike, he may be said to be in the divine state.

In the parable “If You are Earnest” (TP 129), Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa explains that a man may not know the right path, but it is enough if he has bhakthi and the desire to know God. Then he will find God, through the forces of sheer bhakthi. Once a sincere devotee set out on a pilgrimage to the temple of Jagannath in Puri. He did not know the way. He went west instead of south. He, no doubt, strayed from the way, but the pilgrims on the way and the way-farers gave him the right directions saying, “This is Not the Path Follow that One” (TP 129). At last the devotee was able to go to Puri and worship the deity.

Similarly the parable, “How a Guru Taught his Disciple” (TP 130) reveals the deep yearning for God. A disciple asked his teacher, “Come Sir, Please tell me how I can see God” “Come with me” said the guru “and I shall show you” (TP 130). He took the disciple to a lake. Both of them got into the water. Suddenly the teacher pressed the disciple’s head under water. A few moments later he released him and the disciple raised his head and stood up. The guru asked him, “How do you feel?” The disciple said, “Oh I thought I should die, I was panting for breath”. The teacher said, “When you feel
like that for God, then you will know you haven't long to wait for His vision” (TP 130).

Thus Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa in his parables conveys that yearning is a very important prelude to have the experience of God. Without yearning a believer cannot come closer to God. If we have the mind to taste a food then only we will taste and know how it is. Otherwise we will be able to see the food before us; but will not know its taste. Similarly if one has the real desire or yearning to seek God, then one can enjoy that eternal happiness. One gets the feeling of being united with God.

4.2.12. Unity of Religion

The main thrust of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s teaching is on a supracultural spirituality, transcultural and transcendental faith, universal brotherhood, love for mankind, graceful tolerance and peaceful coexistence, in short, for the unity of religions. “Different Paths Lead to the Same Goal” (TP 32), as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa puts it, is the common basis of all religions to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. “God alone is the proprietor of the universe. He alone is the proprietor of me, the proprietor of you, recognizing this and giving up all to him” (TP 117).
It is not religion or geo-continental boundaries that prevent man from experiencing the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute, but it is the ‘ego’ which is the main obstacle that lies in the path of attaining Brahman. “All ideas of ‘I’, ‘me’ and ‘mine’ is Satanic says” Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. “Nothing belongs to me. All is thine O Lord. This is true wisdom. All is satanic, All is thine is of God” (TP 51).

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa beautifully brings home the point how he abhorred quarrelling in the name of religion. The parable “How They Quarrel” (TP 11) illustrates how God is far above and far beyond religion. It is not good to say that what we ourselves think of God is the only truth and what others think is false. We think of God as formless and, therefore, he is formless and cannot have any form. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa narrates this parable to explain the bickering that exists between the Vaishnavas and the Saivas. The message of Vedanta is a good Jew, a good Christian, a good Muslim and a good Hindu are all the same, for they are full faithful servants of the Lord. Whatever country they may live in they are all equally God’s servants. The same idea is reinforced in the Bhagavad Gita, which says:

*Whosoever seeks me by whatever method, of him do I make the faith first and unvouching. Howsoever do men resort to me, even so do I serve them my dear son, knew that all path have been marked by me* (qtd. in Swami Ghananada 20).
In the words of Swami Prabhavananda, he (Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa) followed the religions taught by Christ, Mohamed and by following each one of these religions he came to the realization of the Ultimate Reality. The sole objective of human existence is to attain spirituality. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa repeatedly makes it abundantly clear that by *Samadhi* alone one attains spirituality and reaches the ideal. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa himself often entered into the *Samadhi* state, a state in which, not one’s religion or religious practices count, but the ever preparedness of the human soul, in all its yearning, is in peaceful communion with its creator, the Lord God.

In Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa’s parables there is a spiritual integration of mission, so inextricability interwoven displaying divine mysteries about God as experienced by him. He has achieved that state of spiritual maturity, a spiritual experience that transcends all man-made differences and is universal and catholic in character. In fact, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is a true Hindu, a true Christian and a true Muslim without any doctrine distinction.