



The Principles of Spiritualism

Spiritualism bows to no creeds or dogmas, its philosophy is centered on seven principles which were received direct from Spirit through the mediumship of Emma Hardinge Britten, one of the pioneers of British Spiritualism. It should be borne in mind that these are principles, not commandments and in accepting them, one is accorded complete liberty of interpretation. Let us examine them one by one.

1. The Fatherhood of God

Each of us has his or her idea of God. To some, He is an austere personality instilling fear in his believers and meting out wrathful judgment to wrong doers, seated on a throne in heaven. To others He is a benign Father, caring for His vast family of every colour and creed and personified in everything that is beautiful around us. The latter is the broad Spiritualist viewpoint as envisaging the one supreme power.

We regard Him as the author of a divine plan, the natural law through which the universe, which He created, is governed and based on love, not fear. He is the controlling force of all and “the Greatest Central Source of all life and love” as Andrew Jackson Davis, another of our pioneers so forcefully proclaimed. When we transgress these laws we are betraying a trust for which we shall have to pay, either here, or in the life hereafter. Our relationship with God is therefore determined by our obedience to these laws.

2. The Brotherhood of Man

If we accept the Fatherhood of God then it naturally follows that we are His children, brothers and sisters in one family of all race and colour. This confers upon us a dual responsibility—to our Father and to each other, which we can sum up in one word—SERVICE. The inequalities of modern society, the rich and the poor, the weak and the ignorant, provide an incentive for love and service. In our daily lives we meet those who need material help, to whom a kind word or small act may work wonders.

If we would extend this call to service beyond the confines of our family, our town, our country, out into the wide world, pain and suffering, tumult and wars

would cease and we would bring into being “that peace which passes all understanding”.

It goes farther than that. The real meaning of our existence is not only our obligation to our fellow men. Man being himself a spirit here on earth, is immortal and the brotherhood of man is extended into the spirit spheres. Spiritualism therefore gives a new and higher meaning to our mutual interdependence and to Brotherhood.

3. The Communion of Spirits the Ministry of Angels

This is the key around which our whole philosophy turns. Orthodoxy denies the reality of the communion with departed spirits, whereas for the past one hundred and twenty years we have proved conclusively that man not only survives physical death but is able, through mediums, to commune with those left behind. Not only that, they spend quite a lot of their time giving us help and guidance in various ways with our earthly problems.

There are certain persons among us who are called mediums who are so highly sensitive to “spirit vibrations” that they are able to establish contact with those who have passed over and wish to communicate with us. Each one of us has a spirit guide or helper—a “guardian angel” if you like, who uses the medium as an instrument through whom he can talk.

We are thus able to learn how our loved ones are faring in their new environment and in their new way of life. This proof of survival is of great help to those who are bereaved.

4. Continuous Existence of the Human Soul

This is a corollary of the previous principle and serves to accentuate how much our Spiritualist philosophy is so diametrically opposed to the materialist conception of life.

All the great religions of the world subscribe to some form of life after death in some nebulous heavenly existence, but because they have failed to prove it to

the satisfaction of modern realists, they have lost their hold on the people.

Spiritualism on the other hand does prove this fact in no uncertain manner and in so doing has profoundly revolutionised our lives in that our behaviour is not encompassed within the narrow limits of our earthly lives, but extends into eternity. Our mode of living here will determine our spiritual status in the life to come.

5. Personal Responsibility

This is the major doctrinal difference between Spiritualism and Orthodox religions. The basis of the Christian religion rests on the belief that Jesus died on the cross to save us from our sins. This we most strongly repudiate. Jesus was put to death by crucifixion for political reasons. This was the then normal method of execution for most offences—including robbery. The Jewish priests were afraid He would usurp their power through teaching and healing and the Romans that he might raise a rebellion against them—“He stirreth up the people”.

Spiritualism asserts that no one can save us from wrong doing but ourselves. Man through his conscience knows the difference between right and wrong and is given free will to choose which road he will take. No one, be he religious or an atheist can escape the consequences of his own mistakes. God does not sit in judgment over us, we have to be our own judges.

What the church calls sin we regard as the violation of the divine laws made by God, which Paul interpreted when he wrote “Whatsoever man soweth that he shall also reap”. Man alone has to atone for his sins and not shirk his responsibilities.

6. Compensation and Retribution hereafter for all the good and evil deeds done on Earth

This follows on what has been said above. The Orthodox Church would have us believe that on this awful “day of judgment” God will sit on his throne and cast each one of us into heaven or hell. Heaven and hell are states of mind of our own creation and not celestial localities. Our code of life on this earth will determine our spiritual status in the world of spirit.

It is equally wrong to think that because one attends church regularly, or performs evangelical or “other good works” one will automatically be given pride of place in the hereafter. It will be our everyday deeds and motive for them that will count and how well we

have carried out the precept “Do unto others...”. Neither is it true that after our passing we will become a saint. Death does not make us spiritually aware.

7. Eternal Progress Open to Every Human Soul

The idea of eternal progress may seem hard for us to understand in this world where everything has an ending, but in the world to come, where there are neither clocks nor calendars, time is immaterial. Spiritualism points to the certainty of eternal progress, but the rate of our own particular advancement will depend upon ones desire to do so, remembering that we shall have free will as we have here.

We shall by no means be idle in the spirit world, in fact, we shall be extremely busy pursuing those paths, which will lead us toward perfection—and we shall have eternity in which to do it. The transition from our earthly world to our new existence in the higher life does not alter our present make-up or character.

We shall be just the same as we were before the passing, retaining our free will to fashion our new life with the sure knowledge that we shall be given the opportunity to make spiritual progress with no limit to time or the heights we can reach. Once again, we come face to face with our personal responsibility, even on the other side.

These principals are the crux of our philosophy. They are inter-dependant and their influence has transformed man’s outlook on life.

*Taken from the Spiritualist Assn of Great Britain
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