



## **SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**

### **Leading a correct worldly life**

Extract from 17/2/03 Satsang

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There is a portrait of a great Saint of modern India - Swami Sharnanandji who died in 1974. Some of his words are written on the portrait. It came to my mind that I can translate each line and then try to explain it to you.

*'Whoever lives a correct worldly life to him alone God experience happens'*

Therefore, those who want to have God in life have to have a correct worldly life. But what is a correct worldly life? In all the religions of the world, the rules for a correct worldly life are almost the same. We should not steal. We should be loyal, sincere and hard working. We should not be greedy. We should banish lust and anger from our life. We should strive for the positive and avoid the negative. We should be considerate, loving and helpful to others. In brief, this is what we mean by *'leading a correct worldly life.'*

Since the teachings by great men are largely concerned with defining what our correct life-style should be, we should start asking ourselves the same question. If we do this, then we should examine all aspects of our lives, including our habits and attitudes to food, sleep, rest, work, dress and money. What, how much, for what reason and in what way do we eat? When and for how long do you sleep? When do you get up? What is the relationship between your sleep, your food, your rest and your work? It should be a discipline of the whole of life.

How much, in what way and why do you earn money? When you have earned money honestly do you consider that you are the sole owner of it? Are you greedy and selfish with money and not ready to give it to those who need it more than you? All these questions will come and are relevant to the correct way of living. I am simply giving some examples.

The quality of our relationships with others is one of the most important aspects of life. What sort of relationships do we have with our parents, our husband or wife, our friends and our colleagues? Having smooth relationships with others becomes a great test of our evolution. One has to have very great training for it since there come many questions.

A person may say: "I am ready to have good relations with my father or mother, but my problem is that they get irritated in my presence or when I go to them they do not treat me with kindness." However, this is a lame excuse for a spiritual person. The Saint would reply that everyone would be happy if treated with kindness but a spiritual seeker is one who remains happy even when abused or not treated with kindness.

The test for you comes when you do not receive the kindness and civility that you expect from another person, be it your father, mother, husband or wife. Everyone would be happy with the way they were treated, if all the people around them treated them with love and respect and praised them to the heavens. However, the problem is that the world is not like this and most people you come across are very quick to find faults with you. You yourself are happy to hear people praise you but are not ready to hear any criticism. The spiritual seeker has to develop himself or herself to the extent that he/she keeps cool and calm even when other people do not treat him/her favourably. One must be full of consideration for others in

the knowledge that all other human beings have limitations, and this attitude becomes training for spiritual development. Why should one react violently? The Saint has said that they alone will find God who are able to lead the right way of life in the world. God already exists in every one of us but the problem preventing the experience (of God) is only the accumulation of so many impressions in our subtle body through various lives. Instead of acting positively in worldly circumstances, most of us have the habit of reacting. We react whenever an external occurrence comes about. The chain of action and reaction goes on and we are unable to realise our true existence - the Self - Divinity inside us.

If we are married, we should be loyal to our husband or wife. It is not good to keep on changing partners. If after marriage, we get involved in another sexual relationship, this is totally incorrect. If we are entrusted with some money by the owner of the company, where we are employed, we should be honest, and the money should be used only for the assigned work. In every way we should try to live a correct way of life. Before experiencing God, let us become good citizens and good human beings. It is a prerequisite for experiencing God.

Next is a very interesting statement made by the Saint:

*'if such a person has no free time then God himself meets him'*

Such a person may be very active leading a correct worldly life. He may not have free time to meet God – then God will find time to meet him. Leading life correctly can be summarised in one sentence - Leading a life of performance of duty honestly. Duty applies everywhere. It may be towards your wife, your child, your parents or people in your office. So if a person leads a correct worldly life and is so busy that there is no time to remember God, then someday God may say: “Oh listen, I have been waiting for you such a long time. Can you not give some time to me?”

There is a temple named Bithoa's Temple. The story goes that a boy was so dutiful towards the parents that he served them the whole day and at night he would not go to bed until they had fallen asleep. He was always doing them service. Lord un-manifest can become manifest at any time. Manifest or un-manifest – these words are for us human beings. The Lord can be without form or can assume any form. The Lord is Lord, and all powerful. He stood behind the boy by the door, waiting: “*I have come.*” The boy did not pay attention, although somehow inside his heart he must have felt it. The story is that the Lord said: “*I have been here waiting for quite some time now, standing at the door. Can you pay attention to me.*” The boy said: “*I have no time. I am very busy in the service of my father and mother, so you can wait.*” The boy was sitting on three or four bricks. He brought one of the bricks out from underneath him and pushed it towards him: “*You can sit there and wait while I am doing my work.*” ‘Bithoa’ or ‘Bithur’ means ‘where the Lord sat down’. He was waiting: “*All right, whenever you are free, give me your attention.*”

The Lord is never far away from us. He is always within and with us, but only the curtain of worldly desires creates an illusion of separation from Him. If such a person is so busy doing things correctly in the world and always involved in his duties, then if such a person does not have time, God finds time to meet such a person.

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