

## SERVICE AND SADHANA

Living in this land of Bharat with its rich rewarding culture but yet not absorbing its broad all-inclusive insight, not delving into the secrets of its survival and freshness, how can any one achieve progress and ensure the peace and prosperity of the world? Uttering the voice of peace while shattering by deeds all hopes of establishing it can only be termed as deceiving oneself. World progress is not an abstract ideal; it means series of concrete achievements in the community of nations, the diversity of societies and the entities of individuals. Each of these has to march forward to the same goal, in concord and with cooperative effort. In spite of the amazing victories that man has won over the forces of nature, man has yet to win peace and joy, for himself and his fellowmen. For, these can be gained only by the mastery of the inner impulses and the sublimation of the inner emotions. Lions have as their motto, *"Together, we serve better."* This togetherness inspires mutual help and service. It must inspire those who serve and those who are served and bring both into the bond of Love.

### **Man Is No More The Master, But The Slave Of Habits**

The path of Love and Service is not smooth: it abounds in struggle and disappointments. Life itself is a pendulum between sighs and smiles. But, every obstacle is an invitation to your intelligence. *"Life is a challenge; meet it! Life is a dream; realise it."* Mankind is terrified by a crowd of problems at the present time – scientific, technological, economic and moral. These cannot be solved by material means alone. Mental transformation too must happen. The ideals laid down by the seers who moulded our cultural tradition have to be honoured and practised. They hold before the eyes the means to fulfil the years of life, not through the multiplication of material comforts, but through serenity and simplicity. Bigger mansions, swell cars, rare luxuries are eagerly sought after. Man is no more the master; he is the slave of the habits, the pleasures and the riches he runs after. He counts the number of years he has grown; he forgets that each year, his life-period is being shortened. Erudition sans humility, expertise sans discrimination, work sans wisdom, life sans love, music sans melody can never receive honour in the community. *When virtues are few and studies are huge What is the gain, what is their worth? When desert land one has acres ten, What is the gain? What their worth? A patch is a treasure if fertile it be.* Character is the measure of man. Character insists on keeping vice and wickedness at a distance. It reminds man of obligations and responsibilities, of the high ideals and goal of human life. Life not sanctified by character is a home without lamps, a coin that is counterfeit.

### **Money Makes Many Things And Wrongs Too**

Many a time, the game ends even before one recognises the Master. So, while life is on, one should devote it for some sacred activity – the most sacred being Seva (Service). It ensures fellowship and kinship among all men. It discloses the unity inherent in all the Divinity. In India, people have clubbed together in the name of

Seva or service as Lions Club, Rotary Club, Cosmopolitan Club, etc. Their ideals are really sacred and the projects too are commendable. They revere all men as a single family. Many worthy persons perform devoted service as members of these Clubs. It is indeed a fortunate chance for them, for there can be no good work, higher than this. They say, "*Money makes many things*" but it is more correct to say "*Money makes many wrongs.*" Not all, of course, are ruined by affluence. They can help such organisations to do more and better service. They can supply medicines to those who render health service to the poor. They can visit slums and offer help in various ways to the dwellers. These are all laudable. But, collecting money and paying others to do the service is not enough; we must assess what services we ourselves are offering directly. And, we must not be content – the doctors, lawyers, the rich, the educated—with spurts of service, off and on. It must be a continuous process, according to a settled time table undertaken every week. Doctors must proceed to slums and villages and help the dwellers. There is urgent need for this type of Seva. Lawyers must take up the cases in which wrongs are committed on the poor through their ignorance and plead on their behalf for justice. They could devote time for at least two or three such cases per week. Their pleadings on behalf of the poor should not be cursory and casual. They must be as earnest and as effective as the rest.

### **Love Is Selflessness, While Self Is Lovelessness**

Embodiments of Love! Members of the Lions Club have high ideals and are urged by sacred feelings. They have frequent meetings in order that they can come close to each other. Some Clubs meet in five star hotels and spend huge sums. At home, we can feel happy with a full meal on five rupees but in hotels, even fifty rupees won't suffice. We lose forty five rupees each, whenever we have a meeting. The amount gained by discontinuing this practice can be spent on helping the poor. Our aim should be the work, the practical solution and not publicity only. Even from our personal point of view, we should so manage our affairs that money is not wasted. What is most important at this juncture is the consideration of the problems facing Bharat. These problems require the promotion of Love and Service. Love is selflessness, while Self is Lovelessness! I wish the citizens of Bombay to stand shoulder to shoulder with you and ensure the success of all your efforts on their behalf. They must co-operate with all their hearts, all their resources and with all their skills. We waste heaps of money but we do not feel they are best utilised in service projects such as you have planned. This day is really a day of joy. I am happy I am amidst persons dedicated to service. It is essential that members of such Clubs pay attention to our spiritual advancement also, for that ensures our attainment of the goal of Life. The worldly and the spiritual are like the two wings of a bird, the two wheels of the vehicle, equally essential and equally important. By means of spiritual *Sadhana*, earn spiritual wealth and share it with those whom you serve.

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