

PATH OF SERVICE

Arjuna asked: If You consider that acquiring transcendental knowledge is better than working, then why do You want me to engage in this horrible war, O Krishna? You seem to confuse my mind by apparently conflicting words. Tell me, decisively, one thing by which I may attain the Supreme. (3.01-02)

Lord Krishna said: In this world I have stated a twofold path of spiritual discipline in the past. The path of Self-knowledge for the contemplative ones, and the path of unselfish work (Seva, Karma-yoga) for all others. (3.03)

One does not attain freedom from the bondage of Karma by merely abstaining from work. No one attains perfection by merely giving up work, because no one can remain actionless even for a moment. Everyone is driven to action $\frac{3}{4}$ helplessly indeed $\frac{3}{4}$ by the forces of Nature. (3.04-05)

Anyone, who restrains the senses but mentally dwells upon the sense objects, is called a pretender. (3.06)

WHY ONE SHOULD SERVE OTHERS?

The one who controls the senses by the trained and purified mind and intellect, and engages the organs of action to selfless service is considered superior. (3.07)

Perform your obligatory duty, because working is indeed better than sitting idle. Even the maintenance of your body would not be possible without work. (3.08)

Work other than those done as a selfless service (Seva) binds human beings. Therefore, becoming free from selfish attachment to the fruits of work, do your duty efficiently as a service to Me. (3.09)

TO HELP EACH OTHER IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF THE CREATOR

In the beginning the creator created human beings together with selfless service (Seva, sacrifice) and said: By serving each other you shall prosper and the sacrificial service shall fulfill all your desires. (3.10)

Nourish the celestial controllers with selfless service, and they will nourish you. Thus nourishing one another you shall attain the Supreme goal. (3.11)

The celestial controllers, served by selfless service, will give you all desired objects. One who enjoys the gift of celestial controllers without sharing with others is, indeed, a thief. (3.12)

The righteous who eat after feeding others are freed from all sins, but the impious who cook food only for themselves $\frac{3}{4}$ without first offering to God, or sharing with others $\frac{3}{4}$ verily eat sin. (3.13)

The living beings are born from food grains, grains are produced by sacrificial work or duty performed by farmers and other field workers. Duty is prescribed in the scriptures. Scriptures (such as the Vedas, the Holy Bible, the Holy Koran) come from the Supreme Being. Thus the all-pervading Supreme Being or God is ever present in selfless service. (3.14-15)

The one who does not help to keep the wheel of creation in motion by sacrificial duty (Seva), and rejoices sense pleasures, that sinful person lives in vain. (3.16)

The one who rejoices the Supreme Being, who is delighted with the Supreme Being, and who is content with the Supreme Being alone, for such a Self-realized person there is no duty. Such a person has no interest, whatsoever, in what is done or what is not done. A Self-realized person does not depend on anybody, except God, for anything. (3.17-18)

LEADERS SHOULD SET AN EXAMPLE

Always perform your duty efficiently and without any selfish attachment to the results, because by doing work without attachment one attains Supreme. (3.19)

King Janaka and others attained perfection of Self-realization by selfless service (Karma-yoga) alone. You should also perform your duty with a view to guide people, and for the welfare of the society. (3.20)

Because whatever noble persons do, others follow. Whatever standard they set up, the world follows. (3.21)

O Arjuna, there is nothing in the three worlds — heaven, earth, and the lower regions — that should be done by Me, nor there is anything unobtained that I should obtain, yet I engage in action. (3.22)

Because, if I do not engage in action relentlessly, O Arjuna, people would follow My path in every way. These worlds would perish if I do not work, and I shall be the cause of confusion and destruction of all these people. (3.23-24)

WHAT SHOULD THE WISE DO TO THE IGNORANT

As the ignorant work with attachment to the fruits of work, so the wise should work without attachment, for the welfare of the society. (3.25)

The wise should not unsettle the mind of the ignorant ones who are attached to the fruits of work, but the enlightened one should inspire others by performing all works efficiently without selfish attachment. (See also 3.29) (3.26)

ALL WORKS ARE THE WORKS OF NATURE

The forces of Nature do all works. But due to delusion of ignorance people assume themselves to be the doer. (See also 5.09, 13.29, and 14.19) (3.27)

The one who knows the truth about the role of the forces of Nature in getting work done does not become attached to the work. Such a person knows that it is the forces of Nature that get their work done by using our organs as their instruments. (3.28)

But those who are deluded by the illusive power (Maya) of Nature become attached to the works done by the forces of Nature. The wise should not disturb the mind of the ignorant whose knowledge is imperfect. (See also 3.26) (3.29)

Do your duty dedicating all works to God in a spiritual frame of mind free from desire, attachment, and mental grief. (3.30)

Those who always practice this teaching of Mine $\frac{3}{4}$ with faith and are free from cavil $\frac{3}{4}$ become free from the bondage of Karma. But those who carp at this teaching and do not practice it, consider them ignorant, senseless, and lost. (3.31-32)

All beings follow their nature. Even the wise act according to their own nature. What, then, is the value of sense restraint? (3.33)

TWO MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCKS ON THE PATH OF PERFECTION

Attachments and aversions for the sense objects remain in the senses. One should not come under the control of these two, because they are two major stumbling blocks, indeed, on one's path of Self-realization. (3.34)

One's inferior natural work is better than superior unnatural work. Death in carrying out one's natural work is useful. Unnatural work produces too much stress. (See also 18.47) (3.35)

LUST IS THE ORIGIN OF SIN

Arjuna said: O Krishna, what impels one to commit sin as if unwillingly and forced against one's will? (3.36)

Lord Krishna said: It is the lust born out of passion that becomes anger when unfulfilled. Lust is insatiable and is a great devil. Know this as the enemy. (3.37)

As the fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror by dust, and as an embryo by the amnion; similarly, Self-knowledge gets covered by different degrees of this insatiable lust, the eternal enemy of the wise. (3.38-39)

The senses, the mind, and the intellect are said to be the abode of lust; with these it deludes a person by veiling the Self-knowledge. (3.40)

Therefore, O Arjuna, by controlling the senses first, kill this devil of material desire that destroys Self-knowledge and Self-realization. (3.41)

HOW TO CONTROL LUST

The senses are said to be superior to the body, the mind is superior to the senses, the intellect is superior to the mind, transcendental knowledge is superior to the intellect, and the Self is superior to transcendental knowledge. (3.42)

Thus, knowing the Self to be superior to the intellect, and controlling the mind by the intellect that is purified by spiritual practices, one must kill this mighty enemy, lust, O Arjuna. (3.43)