



Study Circle - Loving God Series

Love for Others and Love for God

Objective

To understand how by loving everyone around we can learn to love God.

Quote

Divine love is cultivated through two methods:

- a. Always consider the faults of others, however big, to be insignificant and negligible. Always consider your own faults, however insignificant and negligible, to be big, and feel sad and repentant. By these means you avoid developing the bigger faults and defects, and you acquire the qualities of brotherliness and forbearance.
- b. Whatever you do, by yourself or with others, do it remembering that God is omnipresent. He sees and hears and knows everything. Whenever you speak, remember that God hears every word. Discriminate between the true and the false, and speak only the truth. Whatever you do, discriminate between the right and wrong, and do only the right. Endeavor every moment to be aware of the omnipotence of God. —Sanathana Sarathi, 3/81.

Story

A third grade teacher had her class play a game. The teacher told each child to bring along a plastic bag containing a few potatoes. Every potato will be given a name of a person that the child dislikes, so the number of potatoes that a child will put in his/her plastic bag will depend on the number of people he/she dislikes. So when the day came, every child brought some potatoes with the name of the people he/she hated. Some had 2 potatoes; some 3, while some others brought up to 5 potatoes. The teacher then told the children to carry with them the potatoes in the plastic bag wherever they go (even to the playground) for 1 week. Days after days passed by, and the children started to complain due to the unpleasant smell coming out by the rotten potatoes. Besides, those having 5 potatoes also had to carry heavier bags. After 1 week, the children were relieved, because the game had finally ended....The teacher asked: "How did you feel while carrying the potatoes with you for 1 week?" The children let out their frustrations and started complaining of the trouble that they had to go through, having to carry the heavy and smelly potatoes wherever they go. Then the teacher told them the hidden meaning behind the game. The teacher said: "This is exactly the situation when you carry your negative emotions for somebody inside your heart. The stench of those negative emotions will contaminate your heart and you will have to carry it with you wherever you go. If you cannot tolerate the smell of rotten potatoes for just 1 week, why would you want to have the stench of hatred in your heart for your lifetime?"

Suggested Questions

1. In your personal experience, what methods are most effective to perceive big faults that may have been committed against you as SMALL or insignificant?
2. How does it help to consider one's own small defects as BIG?



3. How does awareness of God's omnipresence help in developing love for God?
4. Of the two methods mentioned above would either one alone suffice in cultivating divine love? Explain.
5. In the story, what do the weight and rotten smell of the potatoes symbolize?

Life Application

This week, forgive the mistakes others make and pay particular attention to the mistakes you make. Keep in mind specific instances to share next week at the study circle.

Affirmation

I love everyone knowing that God is in them.