Study Circle – 03/01/2020

Sathya Sai Speaks (1968), Vol. 8(37).

Excerpt taken from “Meaning of Mendicancy”

**Contentment is the most precious treasure**

The King smiled for who could be poorer than he, he thought. He asked him, "But, where can I find a poor man?" The yogi asked him, where he was going and why. He said, "I am going into the realm of my enemy so that I can add his kingdom to my own." The yogi it was who smiled now. He said, "If you are not satisfied with the kingdom you have and if you are prepared to sacrifice your life and the lives of these thousands to get a few more square miles of land, certainly you are much poorer than I. So, offer the clothes to yourself. You need them more than I do." At this the King was greatly ashamed; he realized the futility of fame and fortune; he returned to his own capital, thanking the yogi for opening his eyes to his innate poverty. Contentment is the most precious treasure, he realized. Great men spread the light of their wisdom through every word and deed of theirs. Of course, one must use his own discretion and higher reasoning in order to discriminate the real from the unreal.

There was an old merchant who used to attend all religious discourses in the town, especially when they were musical as well. For thirty years, he never missed a single one and people wondered at his steadiness and faith. One day, he took with him his son also, a boy of sixteen. That day, the Pandith spoke of the sacred cow and of her being the Fourth Mother of man after the Scripture Mother, Earth Mother and one's own Mother. He exhorted the listeners to revere the cow and refrain from the slightest ill-treatment, in spite of the strongest provocation.

**Constant practice alone is rewarded by Grace**

The next day, the merchant had to go to another village on some urgent work and so, he posted his son in the shop and left. By noon, a cow entered the shop and started eating large mouthfuls of grain, jaggery and other articles, delicious to her taste, from the open containers ranged round the stool where the boy sat. He did not stir a finger, because it was the Sacred Cow. By evening, the father came back and beholding the damage, he reprimanded his son severely. "You should not take those discourses to heart; when you come away from the place, while shaking off the dust from the carpet on which you sat, you must shake off from your brain any idea that might have stuck therein from the discourse of the Pandith. If I had not done so every day during these thirty years, you and I and all of us would have died of starvation." Detachment is a plant of slow growth; if you pluck the tender plant to look for the pods, you will be disappointed. So, too, long and constant practice alone is rewarded by the peace that Grace offers. Grace is acquired by surrender, as Krishna has declared in the Geetha. When the Geetha directs you to give up all dharma (set codes of morality), it does not ask you also to give up all karma (activity), that is to say, you have to do karma, and, when you do it for God, through God and by God, the dharma of it does not matter; it has to be acceptable and it is bound to benefit you. The statement is not an invitation to licentiousness, or complete inactivity; it is a call for dedication and surrender to the highest in Man, viz., God.

**God is pleased only by genuine endeavor**

There was once a wicked commentator who said that this direction removes the need to discriminate between right and wrong! He must have been the same person who said, "The Lord says in the Geetha that He will be pleased even if a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or a little water is offered to Him; well, this hookah contains all four' the tobacco leaf, the red flower denoted by the cinders; the shell of the coconut fruit and water through which the smoke bubble bubbles!" Impertinence and irrelevance cannot hide irreverence from the eyes of God. The Lord will not be moved by strict scholarly commentary. He is pleased only by actual practice; by genuine endeavor; by honest sincere effort; by the tireless striving to cleanse the mind. The striving must be alert and active, until the goal is reached. Some one asked Ramana Maharishi, "How long am I to engage myself in dhyaana?" The Maharishi replied, "Until you lose all awareness of the experience of dhyaana." In the play 'Dhruva' which these boys enacted, the boy who was Dhruva sat straight and tense, giving us the impression that he was lost in dhyaana; but, such histrionics cannot claim consideration. In real dhyaana, you soon get over the consciousness that 'you are doing dhyaana. It fact every moment in life must be a moment utilized for dhyaana. That is the best way to live. When you sweep your rooms clean, tell yourselves that your hearts too have to be swept likewise; when you cut vegetables feel that lust and greed too have to be cut into pieces; when you press chapaathis wider and wider, desire in addition that your love may take in wider and wider circles, and expand even into the regions of strangers and foes. This is the means by which you can make your home a hermitage, and the routine of living into a route to Liberation.

**Personal Affirmation:**

I keep my mind focused on God.

**Questions:**

1. What can be learned from the parable of the King and the yogi?
2. In the second parable, the child allows the cow to enter the family shop and does not stop it from eating the grain. Because the cow eats valuable merchandise, the father admonishes the child. Explain whether or not the child is wrong for practicing the teachings he learned from the Pandith?
3. The third story gives us methods for practicing cleansing the mind. What are some methods that we can integrate into our daily processes?

**Life Application Skill:**

Have the ladies and gentlemen come up with a life application skill to practice for the week.