

On Social Service and Compassion

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Today the subject of social service is very much emphasised by various individuals. Even profit earning organisations like the banks and even corporates, etc. allot substantial sums for social service like free eye treatment, feeding the poor, sponsoring education, etc. A question arises as to how this will help us in our progress to moksha especially when considered for each individual? As already told earlier, whenever you enter into a project, it will become cumbersome and complicated as any other project for any other worldly purposes. There will be a trust where there will be so many office bearers each of whom with his ego will be fighting against the others and the project will go on getting delayed or sometimes fall by itself. I have seen myself many institutions established by great mahatmas wherein researches in our culture are being conducted practically without any properly

qualified staff and the top brass of the research association never visiting the office even for days together. We become entangled in this phenomenal world with jealousy, competition, anger, etc. and thus our prospects of liberation recede far away. Before a person undertakes a project, should he not analyse his own status in this life, the source from which he has come after inheriting all the assets from that source and thus assess our own competence for taking up such a social service project. Hence, it is important that we should do Self enquiry and know to some extent as to who we are and after knowing our infinite capacity to do many more magnificent works of even social service. A volunteer going to the battle field may bandage the wounded soldiers at the rate of two hundred persons per day. A man who is liberated, if only he wills in his super consciousness, he will be able to sit at one place and treat and bandage some millions of persons at great distances away in a trice. Let us first take up the project of Self enquiry and recognise all the heritage we possess before taking up a project for social service to the world. This does not mean that we should stop all social services immediately. My idea is how this social service can be done to cover the majority of the people at the shortest of time with the best efficiency possible and effortlessly. The social service which we do at present does help us in cleansing our mind when done individually instead of collectively.

In connection with social service, more often it is the compassion which is the mother of inducement to social service. It is told that a Jivanmukta is neither arrogant nor compassionate. When there is only one true entity, whom we may call God, who has taken different roles in his cosmic dream drama, where is the question of any other person to whom he has to be compassionate. It is better you first have compassion on yourself and know 'who you are' by constant Self-enquiry rather than have compassion on others.

Even granting that compassion towards the so called distressed and the needy, is an excellent quality to be developed, one should know where and when to stop compassion. A compassion exercised beyond a minimum limit will only entangle us more and more into the world. Spiritually there will be a retrograde action. To illustrate it with an anecdote it is detailed below.

There was a very good Swamiji living alone in a cottage facing the Ganges. One day, he saw a young lady sitting very near the waters of the Ganges from noon onwards. He suspected that the lady was contemplating suicide. So he was keeping a watch on her all through. Just when the dusk was setting in, the lady got up and walked inside

the waters and suddenly got drowned. The Swamiji ran to the spot, swam and brought the lady to the banks. He pumped out the water from her body and she recovered. He walked a little distance where an autorikshaw was available and seated himself along with her and took her to her parents' house giving advice to her all the way as to how suicide was extremely reprehensible. When he reached the parents' house, there was ovation on seeing their daughter who was missing from the morning. They thanked the Swamiji profusely and the latter went home. Every two days, he began to go to their house to enquire about their welfare and one day the lady wanted to read two books of scriptures Lalita Sahasranamam and Srimad Bhagavatam. The Swamiji asked her to come every morning at 8am to his cottage. Within six months they got married. Within one year, they got divorced legally from each other and the Swamiji again went and married for a second time. This is because the Swamiji did not know where to stop the compassion. In times of dire emergency, where there is nobody else on the spot, we should try to do our best to help that person in danger but to the extent just required and not to get entangled further.

****Hari Om ****

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