

"The way of life should be pregnant with high morals" (Easiest Way, Showers of Divine Grace, page 65, 2006 Edition)

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The topic of the seminar forms part of the message of the Master delivered on the occasion of the celebrations of His 78th birthday at Madurai. A perusal of the message reveals that there are so many pearls of Divine wisdom scattered through the entire message. The Master says in the message, 'One who dives deep, gets the pearls.' We are indeed blessed to be connected to the great Master who is the foremost example of this very pearl of wisdom. Many utterances of the Master herein have been chosen for seminar topics by Imperience and it is our duty as serious and sincere aspirants to study the expositions on those topics, contemplate and assimilate the true import of Master's sayings in order to mould our living according to His expectations.

The message covers a wide canvas and a full commentary on it would comprise the entire system of the Natural Path. The Master starts by stressing the importance of cultivating a strong and sincere desire to reach the state of realization on the part of the seeker which will surely get him the means to take him to that goal. A burning desire for the achievement of the goal brings it nearer. He then goes on to say, 'If anybody wants that he should be benefitted, he should encourage himself to cultivate right faith, right cognition and right morals.' It is then obvious that realization of the object of life is impossible without developing the above virtues. It is to be noted that they are to be cultivated by the aspirant through assiduous practice and the indispensable assistance offered through the divine *prana* by the trainer; they are not going to be delivered on a platter. It is the paramount responsibility and duty he owes to himself that the aspirant cultivates these virtues. Another point to be observed is that the *sadhaka* has to encourage himself for developing the said virtues. I would take the word 'encourage' to mean endowing oneself with courage in what follows. We recall here another of Master's utterances, 'the background of spirituality is moral courage which rises when one is moral.'¹ in this context- This sentence has been the topic of a seminar.

Dwelling a bit more on courage, we find Master saying that it is for us to remove the nervousness even like the warrior who is never nervous on the field as he has some aim before him. He says further that courage starts when confidence is there and confidence is there when the seeker has

willed to reach the destination.² Elsewhere He says He needs such persons who may shine out like sun for the task on hand and with emphasis that one lion is better than a hundred sheep.³ Courage of the highest order is required on the part of the aspirant to shine out like the sun and expressing through his behavior the highest moral values in daily life as he travels the path towards the Ultimate Reality undeterred and undistracted while navigating through the various trials and tribulations, disappointments, enjoyments and temptations which earthly life has to offer. In fact that becomes the true austerity and penance for the seeker of the Ultimate adopting the life of an ordinary householder. The adherents of the Natural Path know and appreciate the beauty, simplicity and efficacy of the path which makes it possible for them to attain and live in tune with progressively subtler and universal planes of consciousness on the path towards Infinity while carrying out at the same time their duties as householders in the spirit of *karmayoga*. A dynamic and wholesome balance is brought into being between a life in the world and the life as a seeker after the realization of his true self for the dedicated adherent of the Natural Path through the grace of the supreme Master, that is, the infusion of the Divine *Prana* into his heart.

We saw above that development of right faith, right cognition and right morals in the aspirant have been insisted upon for him to derive the desired benefit in his divine pursuit.

We are aware that the Master has warned us about the pitfalls arising from having blind faith. It should be firmly based upon reason, that is to say, upon the practical experiences one has had by association and through the guidance received from his prospective spiritual guide.

Faith develops through stages of increasing submission to and reliance upon the guidance of his teacher till it assumes the form of an unquestioning attitude leading to total obedience to the directions of his Master under all circumstances. Right faith encompasses the faith the aspirant has in his ability to achieve the goal, in the capacity of the Master to take him to the ultimate destination and in the means he has adopted for the purpose. Faith when fully mature assumes the form of self-surrender; it is the dauntless courage which leads us on to success. The meaning of faith is that one should firmly link up his thought with the courage of his teacher.⁴ We can thus see that the aspirant who has developed the right faith would also have developed the indomitable courage and unshakeable conviction so necessary for pursuing a life pregnant with high morals.

Right cognition results when the discriminative intelligence (*viveka*) has developed to a stage of full maturity. The aspirant is in a position to discriminate between the eternal and the ephemeral, right and wrong, good and bad and so on. I wish to draw here the attention of the aspirants to the discussion on the *vijnanamaya kosa*⁶ (five *kosas*), the cognitive-intuitive sheath in this connection to get a practical bearing for the subject. *Buddhi* one of the faculties (the cognitive element) belonging to this *kosa*, has three stages of which 'the highest stage is characterized by pure intuitive discrimination. Right knowledge spontaneously appears. It is the inner voice that cuts through all *maya* or ignorance'. However for this stage to be constantly and consistently active in guiding our choices between right and wrong what is to be adopted and what is to be eschewed, the *kosa* has to be in a highly purified state. The purity of this sheath is ensured only through the purity of the three lower sheaths viz., *annamaya*, *pranamaya* and *manomaya* sheaths for which total adherence to the practice of A and B meditations and the commandments is an absolute must.

The help of the trainer in the movement and stabilization in the U plane and the diversion of the flow to the atman is indispensable for maintaining the purity in this sheath. Moving in the company of highly enlightened persons will be highly beneficial in this regard.

Surrendering to the Master, heart, mind and soul is the only sure means for escaping the traps of the charming intellect. If one can maintain the state of perfect yielding to the Divine Master in the heart, he will be able to get the divine guidance in the matters before him however intricate or befuddling the situation may be. Divine guidance can never be wrong, this being an axiomatic truth.

It will appear that right and wrong are relative to circumstances dictated by the age one lives in, the tradition and cultural settings, occupational group one is born into and the stage of life or *ashrama*, times of war or acute scarcity to name a few. However if one has fully determined to know and realize his real divine Self nature, has developed goal clarity and realization of that goal is his highest priority, the choice between right and wrong will be within his grasp. Here what is right becomes what is conducive to the achievement of the ultimate purpose and wrong that which is opposed to it. As Rev. KCV has put it in his article on Dharma Purushartha⁶ moral existence is a manifestation of spiritual existence and depends on it. I would interpret 'spiritual existence' as existence in and expression in

thought, feeling and action as the divine Self of all. We are convinced that morality flows from the Divine which is its source and sustenance. We hold the divine to be just and balanced the very characteristics of a truly moral person. Hence eternal and absolute morality would naturally be exhibited by those who have attained oneness with the Source, the Absolute. This is the idea behind the exhortation to follow the footsteps of the really and fully enlightened Masters. We have before us the lives of the Masters of our Order inspiring and guiding us in leading a life of spirituality pregnant with high morals.

I think it will be appropriate in this context to recall the inspiring and invigorating words of Rev. Dr. KCV from his talk, 'Eclipse of Conscience'⁵. I quote: 'The earliest stage of this conscience was the science of inward values which was secret in the heart of every human individual, to which he could turn in moments of personal distress or cosmic distress.

It was the voice of God because it came with an imperativeness and with a necessity to obey it, at the cost of one's life itself. For the value of the voice of God was paramount over every practical, economic or karmic conception. So we have the ideal of a conscience.' He rues its degradation from voice divine to *vox populi* or the voice of the people leading to its total eclipse. He shows in the article how the influx of the divine *prana* as in our system prepares us surely and silently for listening to the voice divine once again. Elsewhere in the same article he says, 'all that you are needed to do is to surrender to that supreme godly force by which your whole life may not be merely illuminated, but also guided in the most ethical sense of the term.'

We have seen above that right morals are to be cultivated by the aspirant along with right faith and right cognition. Our brief discussion on the nature of right cognition shows that if the person has created in himself the right conditions for the voice of the Divine Master to be heard in his heart he would automatically be in a position to act in consonance with right morals. Master goes on to emphasize that the basis of Yoga has always been the right morals and proper behavior. He recalls here the great emphasis laid by Rev. Lalaji saheb on this aspect and His insistence on the cultivation of principled character on the part of every spiritual aspirant on the path of Yoga. Exhorting us to ensure that the way of life is pregnant with high morals, He also warns that failing to obey the instruction would make us incapable of having the fine type of spirituality which is beyond everything

and worth having. This illustrates the noble value of the highest worth we should cherish and uphold to deserve the grace of Master. The highest purushartha, the aim, value and purpose of our life is to achieve oneness with the Absolute. Our way takes us through a transcendence of religion, spirituality, Reality and bliss as Master has put it in a nutshell. Thus the aspirant whose life is not governed by the highest moral values cannot make any real headway on the spiritual Path, rather he will have a precipitous fall from the lofty heights of spirituality the moment there is a transgression in respect of the high morals he is bound to observe in life and it can happen that even his Master may not be able to save him at that time.

I would like to cite Rev. Dr. KCV in this context, taking a few excerpts from his illuminating articles Dharma Purushartha⁶ and Religion and Dharma⁷ for our contemplation. Citing first from Ref.7 we note the following. Dr.KCV gives an axiomatic definition of dharma right in the beginning when he declares the 'soul of religion and the body of religion is dharma'. There is an organic relation between the two and dharma is the essential reality about the Good Life. Rev. KCV makes an inspiring observation when he says, 'Here I take the term Dharma (moral law) in a more elaborate sense as being available to us through the insight into the fundamental nature of Divine. The true activity, the ultimate Dharma, (as distinct from Karma the activity in the unenlightened condition as the result of mere rajas) is indeed the action that proceeds from the vision of the Divine and from the Divine who is the indwelling seer in all and in whom all find refuge and support and sustenance as the Gitacharya has stated.' Going further he says that Dharma is the right attitude that the individual has to take in respect of the total all and in respect of his participation in it. Karma is restrictive if it is directed only towards the self-preservation and self-perpetuating instincts of the lower forms and matter. On the contrary it can become liberating if it is directed towards the realization of the supreme reality and ultimate harmony. It is the transfiguration of karma into dharma. Dharmic consciousness deteriorates when even actions obeying scriptural injunctions are performed selfishly for personal joy and delight.

This is precisely what the Master has stated¹, 'With the overemphasis of 'self' morality decays. But it is the part to be played by the preceptors alone that self be turned to Divinity.' As has been well discussed in the seminar on background of spirituality, the task cited is accomplished through the diversion of the flow to the upper heart and to the Atman. Hence the way

for evolution in the divine nature which ipso facto is the ideal perfected moral nature is to exercise consciousness in the direction of true selflessness. Every karma to become dharma is to be transformed into a kankarya or service or obedience to the divine.

Acting thus keeping in view the happiness and harmony of every sentient being and without upsetting the delicate balance in the material environment at the same time in a spirit of dedication of the fruits to the Supreme Lord (as a *karmayogi*) he paves the way for his liberation in this very life and stages beyond with the grace and assistance of a Master of caliber. He becomes at the same time a supremely contented and happy person.

We arrive at a dynamic concept of dharma (duty as ordained) when we view dharma as one's relationship to God and the exercise of such a relationship characterized by part-whole, body-soul and divine-soul interdependency (knot 2 characteristics). Dharma can then be seen to comprise the sum total flowing out of one's true self-nature as a related being to others, God, parents, society, creatures, nature elements and so on taken individually and collectively. It is something which flows out of his place, station and nature and thus constitutes *svadharma*. A very interesting observation is made by Dr.KCV regarding the aim of all devoted practice of dharma which is to gain the audition of the inner voice divine, the awakening of and empowering conscience discussed earlier.⁶

Svadharma when viewed from the point of view of a spiritual seeker after realization would be to realize and live according his true divine self-nature. Master has called it to be man's foremost duty. This is the crux of the 5th commandment, 'Be truthful'. *Svadharma* in its highest and noblest expression for a human being is to realize his oneness with the Ultimate Oneness or Nothingness and work and live assimilating that supreme realization. His ethical behavior during such a life will reflect and display automatically the high morals referred to by Master for the fellow beings to emulate.

The *aachara* conduct of such enlightened individuals exemplified by the Masters of our Order becomes the code of conduct *sadaachara* (*yad yad acharate sreshtah tadtadaacharate itare janaah-Gita*) as Dr.KCV would put it. Such conduct would include automatically in its scope all righteous conduct coming under the purview of the traditional notions regarding what constitutes dharma and ameliorative action *loka samgraha*.

Lastly we will examine briefly what may comprise the high morals in the light of the Natural Path and how they may be practiced in the light of the Natural Path. Master has defined morality in the true sense as that which obtains when all the faculties may come into proper use¹. We may say that the faculties have come in harmony for proper use when they enable the seeker to choose and act in such ways which are conducive to his progress on the path and at the same time capable of promoting harmony and happiness of all. Most importantly the faculties can be deemed to have been put to proper use when they are yoked to the service of Master. We may note here without further elaboration that as a person is able to perfect his adherence to the 4th commandment his faculties would be used properly to the same degree of perfection. We may say that we can reflect and express the real moral law in action only when the faculties come into real harmony and are in a state of balance and total moderation as they were when man assumed his form in the beginning. The Real Man our goal and who is an epitome of perfect moderation and balance is such an expression of the divine moral law. Our great Master has shown through His life on earth what it is to live and work as a Real Man for us to follow. Love and piety are high order moral values which are to be cultivated by us. The 9th commandment exhorts us to live in such a way as to rouse the feeling of love and piety in others. It counsels moderation in all phases of our living and activities. We are asked to copy the uniformity in nature in our dealings with our fellow beings-*vyavahara* according to the just needs and fair rights of every one. In the 4th commandment we have been directed to be plain and identical with nature. Unless we cultivate the virtues of moderation, balance and equanimity in us we cannot become identical with nature.

We can conclude by saying total obedience to the ten commandments in day to day life would ensure that our life is pregnant with high morals. In addition active and willing participation in Master's work for the transformation and divinization of man in tune with the divine intention would add another significant higher order moral dimension to it. Regular offering of the 9 PM prayer would be an instance of it.

Master has mentioned about principled character. The principles on which the follower of the Natural Path has to build his character are enshrined in the commentary on the ten commandments. Character is a consistent display of a behavior trait by the person upholding a moral value or values

such as generosity, tolerance, equanimity, endurance, fortitude, sacrifice and so on irrespective of the nature of circumstances he may be placed in from time to time. The values such as *satya*, *ahimsa*, *asteya*, *aparigraha* and *brahmacharya* when upheld enables one to stabilize in the U plane characterized by *parahita* consciousness. Further growth in universal consciousness engenders in one divine attributes of sharing, service and sacrifice.

I end this article with a prayer that all of us here and elsewhere grow into real suns of spirituality leading lives pregnant with high morals by His munificent and benevolent grace thus fulfilling His expectations.

References:

1. Showers of Divine Grace pg 53
2. Showers of Divine Grace pg 38;
3. Showers of Divine Grace pg 164
4. Sruti p 198
5. Complete works of Dr. K.C.Varadachari. V1 p 413
6. Complete works of Dr. K.C.Varadachari.V3 p96-100
7. Complete works of Dr. K.C.Varadachari.V3 p125-30