



The Spirit Of Religion

If there is one single factor upon earth, that can lead man towards happiness and peace, it is the spirit of true religion. It alone can unify mankind and make them feel the fundamental oneness of Spirit. “*Eko Devah Sarva-Bhuteshu Gudhah* - God, who is one only, is hidden in all beings.” [Sve. Up. 6.11] The Atman is one, and even as butter is hidden in milk, this Atman is hidden in all names and forms. Man is one throughout the whole earth, because in essence man is pure immortal Spirit, *Satchidananda*. The spirit of religion tends for love, unity, brotherhood and goodness and purity in man’s life. It is directly concerned with the manifestation, in and through the life and actions of man, of the great divine virtues as enumerated, for instance, in the Gita. It is the manifestation of ‘*Daivi Sampat*’ alone that will bring about peace and goodwill upon this earth, and amidst mankind.

Righteousness (*dharma*) is your great heritage. Base your entire life on dharma. There is no greater wealth than *dharma*. *Dharma* is your greatest friend. It will guarantee and assure that your secular life will not stand in the way of the attainment of Liberation. It will assure that the quality of your outer life will be such that it will become part of your steady onward progress, part of *sadhana* for *Bhagavat-sakshatkara* (God-realisation). This is life of *dharma*: compassion, kindness, goodness, purity, truth, love, wisdom, and forgiveness. *Allah* is all merciful and ever forgiving. What is God? He is the sum totality of man’s concept of forgiveness, love and compassion. Therefore, what you expect from God towards you, you project that to fellow beings and all the creatures. Let your life and actions be pervaded by everything that is auspicious, everything that is blessed, and everything that is in harmony with the divine Goal. Adhere to *dharma*. This earth life will not become an obstacle of bondage. On the contrary, it will become a support, a supplement to your inner aspiration, your inner ascent towards the coveted goal of Liberation. “*Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitaha* - Dharma protects him who protects it.”

Be helpful. Desire to serve the Society, nation, all creatures, even plants and insects. “*Paropakaram Artham Idam Shareeram* - The body has been given to us in order to benefit others.” The body is given for doing good to others. God is in our heart. The human body is a temple of God. All beings are visible and moving temples of a living God. Therefore, have the desire to serve God through all living creatures. Let your life be filled with this ideal of doing good to others.

May God Bless You All!

■ *Swami Chidananda*