



## The Essence Of Dharma

What is it that distinguishes man? The ability to be compassionate, the ability to feel for the joys and sufferings of others, to wish to ameliorate the sorrows and troubles of others. Instinct-bound and instinct-propelled animals live for themselves. Man is the unique creature, who can think of others, who can try to live for others. The greatest *dharma* of man is *paropakara* (doing good to others). If, while you are living for yourself, you also start living for others, make others happy, and then only you become human, because this is the essence of humanness. Understanding that what is unpleasant and painful to you is unpleasant and painful to other also; live in such a way that you do not give such experience to others. Knowing also, that the things, which give you joy, happiness and satisfaction, must similarly give joy and happiness to others, engage yourself in doing such things that bring about these similar experiences to others. And where God-Consciousness is aroused, man feels: "I must have the same attitude towards others as I have towards myself. I must try to bring all the best for other." Try to cultivate love, compassion, kindness, peace, knowledge, harmony, unity – these are all the constituents of the spiritual nature of man.

This constitutes the essence of *dharma* and the essence of life. Life in the true sense of the term constitutes an ascent towards divinity. And it is when this conscious and purposeful ascent towards divinity is present in the life of the man, he lives. Otherwise, it is merely an anomaly of living. Life has not started. Life is that where spiritually man has begun to become active, and has developed awareness that I must make use of this phenomenon called life to bring about the development of my spiritual self.

The transformation of human consciousness into divine consciousness is God's plan for man, and is called evolution. God's plan for us is to bring about the fullest unfoldment and expression of that divinity so that ultimately a stage is reached when man's consciousness becomes totally transformed and he becomes fully aware of Him. The process of evolution commences from the moment you reach the human status. Raise the level of contemporary social life; enrich the social life stream. It is when this is rectified that man begins to lead a life where spiritual *sadhana* is an indispensable part of living. Everyday, he dwells upon his own nature and begins to awaken the inner spiritual consciousness.

May God Bless You All!

■ *Swami Chidananda*