



Faith, Hope And Charity

Radiant Divinities! “Alone thou art, alone thou comest, alone thou goest.” In this lone journey, seemingly we have companions. But each one is intensely preoccupied with himself. For each one, the most important person in the universe is oneself. This is the truth about each individual. This involvement of oneself – one’s own concern, preoccupation and constant thought of oneself – is called one’s subjective life.

We are also pushed into relationship with others. Because one lives in communities, one keeps up these relationships primarily for oneself, perhaps later on for others. And thirdly, we have a relationship with that Being who ultimately is our only resort. Before we came here, we were related to Him only and no one else; and after we go we shall have Him only to fall back upon and no one else.

We must have some norms to govern this triple relationship, which constitutes life. In so far as our relationship with God is concerned, Jesus said that one who wishes to attain the Father, must have absolute unshaking faith in the supreme Being. “Towards Him”, said Jesus, “have absolute faith”. Shankracharya listed *shraddha*, faith in God, in his list of prime virtues. Lord Krishna, “*Shraddhaavaan Labhate Jnanam* – The wisdom that releases from the darkness of *ajnana* and grants Liberation is for him who has faith”. [Gita 4.39]

The second dimension of relationship is our relationship to other beings and things. Be considerate. Be charitable. Do not sit in judgement. Do not condemn. Exercise charity all the days of your life, every moment. Think, how you would feel if you were being condemned. Therefore, bear, forbear, tolerate, exercise charity.

How you relate yourself to yourself? Are you a good companion to yourself? When you are alone, is it a self-condemnation, a mass of negative attitude inside? Or is it serene positivity? “*Santushtah Satatam Yogee* – a yogi is always contented.” [Gita 12.14] Be full of good cheer. Have hope, have faith in you also. Never despair. Face the life. When you have reposed faith in Him, all well be well. Always be positive. Rely on yourself, be confident. The cardinal virtues of Christian religion are faith, hope and charity. In the Indian context, we have *shraddha* (faith), *atma-vishvas*, faith in yourself, self-reliance, ever a hopeful attitude, ever an optimistic view of life, and *daya* (compassion). May you ponder these cardinal points of your life’s journey so that you may become like Him and you can attain Him!

May God Bless You All! May Gurudev Bless You All!

■ *Swami Chidananda*