



## God's Grace And Self-Effort

Radiant immortal Atman! Beloved *sadhakas* and seekers! You have had the good fortune and blessedness of entering into that path, which gradually leads beyond sorrow, liberates you from bondage, grants infinite joy, eternal bliss and bestows upon you the divine perfection, the perennial and inexhaustible Experience of transcendental Satchidananda Divine-consciousness. You have entered into that path that puts an end forever to darkness. You will go straight to the supreme Goal through earnestness, sincerity and sustained exertion flying straight as an arrow swiftly towards the target. That is your duty.

Divine grace must be matched by human endeavour and effort. God's grace and human effort bring about Divine Experience. It is bilateral process. One cannot sit idle thinking that Divine grace will do everything. Nor should one commit the blunder of saying, "By human effort alone I can achieve everything." Divine grace and human effort are the twin factors that produce the ultimate Experience.

God is always everywhere. God is within you. Yet, God is Bliss, man goes about weeping. God is peace, man is restless. Due to some reason or other, the ever-present Reality is not realised; something is coming in the way, to get rid of which self-effort is needed. In a great festival, a thousand people are enjoying themselves. One person has fallen deep asleep. So far as that person is concerned all these things are not going on. That does not mean the outer scene does not exist. But something is coming in the way – his sleep, his slumber.

The great enemy of man is indifference, lethargy, laziness. And it is *purushartha* – regular persistent effort – and *abhyasa* are the ultimate force that overcomes this great enemy. *Sadhana* must become your second nature. *Purushartha* is undertaken fully realising the magnitude of God's compassionate grace, the magnitude of God's love and blessedness, and with a feeling of constant gratefulness. One should resolutely undertake *purushartha* without a false sense of *kartritva abhiman* (pride of doer-ship) recognising that all is a gift of God.

*Purushartha*, *Sadhana* and *abhyasa* are all one. They are the great need. In the Gita Lord Krishna plainly states that that which is seemingly impossible can be attained by sustained *abhyasa*. If you have a dripping faucet, the drip, drip, drip.... will gradually wear a hole in the slab underneath. This is the power of persistent process. May God bless you all, Hari Om Tat Sat.

God Bless You!

■ Swami Chidananda