



God Help Those Who Help Themselves

Blessed Atman! Devotees of the divine life and followers of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj! It would be worthwhile to see if we can adopt Gurudev's Twenty Important Spiritual Instructions. We cannot afford to print these instructions in thousands upon thousands in innumerable languages giving them to the whole world, and then have the queer notion that we are exceptions to them, we need not practise them and apply them to our own life. This is called Maya! This is what Maya is: To bypass Guru's instructions with smug assurance that our seva makes us privileged with exemption from his instructions. This type of notion is a disaster to you only, not for Gurudev. He has nothing to lose. He gave up everything and became possessionless and desireless. He is established in a changeless state of total perfection, supreme blessedness, immeasurable peace and indescribable Bliss.

He gave his golden teachings, his divine admonitions, his loving spiritual instructions with great goodwill and a desire that we should all rise to great heights of spiritual Experience and blessedness. If we were to follow them, then they will clear up all obstacles between us and God, between us and the Guru's grace. We will open a wide channel through which grace rushes towards us, inundates us, fills us and lifts us to sublime heights.

It is wise that we make use of this life for our highest welfare. No one else can work for our welfare. There is a saying: "God helps those who help themselves." The great scripture *Yoga Vasishtha* explains to us that this world is a mere appearance, a figment of imagination, a creation of mind, it is less real than a dream. It ends by saying 'exert, you must exert to attain that experience.' No gains without pains. Be up and doing. Exert, exert, do *purushartha*; purushartha is the ultimate message. Have *sad-vichara*, *satsanga*, *sadhana*. Therefore, from today onwards you exert in one specific way namely, Gurudev's Twenty Important Spiritual Instructions.

Even the richest cloth sometimes become soiled, you may have to have it washed. Even a diamond may need a little scrubbing and cleaning if it becomes overlaid with dirt and grime. This is inevitable. Do it to the best of your ability. God expects that each one of us tries our level best, to do the best we can.

May God Bless You All!

■ *Swami Chidananda*