



The Role Of Discipleship

Adorations and devotion to the spiritual presence of Gurudev, who is a link between us and the ancient Spirit. In this modern age Gurudev appeared as a voice from the Eternal. He came to awaken, arouse and direct us towards the fulfilment of our life's divine destiny. And he is still doing it. His spiritual presence is an awakening call, a perennial inspiration. Gurudev advocated certain practical disciplines: "Have a certain daily routine, take certain resolves and adhere to certain principles". Gurudev is the ideal modern prophet. He insisted upon discipline through: (1) Spiritual Diary, (2) Twenty Spiritual Instructions, (3) Resolve Form and (4) Daily Routine.

There are two extreme views (1) a rigid hide-bound system and pattern of sadhana and discipline and (2) "Do not bind yourself to anything. It is indoctrination to condition you. Do not enslave or condition yourself. Be free."

The second view is due to a fundamental lack of understanding. There is a time and place for everything. There is a time when you must bind yourself to discipline, otherwise you will be lost. Rules and regulations are necessary, discipline is necessary, taking certain vows and adopting certain principles for living is necessary. But that does not mean one stays there forever. One gradually evolves and goes beyond. And a time comes when they fall off by themselves. But to say that all these things are nonsense, that they enslave, that they are unnecessary right from the beginning is to demonstrate a short-sightedness of vision.

Gurudev insisted upon discipline. But, at the same time, if these became mechanical, meaningless, routine of hide-bound, he was ready to immediately say: "Give them up". He knew both the sides. He knew what was necessary and when you could transcend them. He was always very, very flexible. However, he did not like sadhaka to be lax having a 'don't care' attitude, having light-heartedness in their approach to God. He never approved of this. He said that unless you discipline yourself you cannot generate spiritual power, you cannot have *tapasya* (penance). However, he never changed his view on one point: 'Human selfishness and ego die hard, they are not easy to eradicate. Therefore, never leave egoless, motiveless, selfless service. He insisted upon the indispensable necessity of compassionate selfless service.

May God Bless You All!

■ *Swami Chidananda*