

16. Mind'irs, not *mandhirs*

EACH one of you is designated a District President; you have to guide and help the *Bhajana Mandalis* (Spiritual Singing Groups), *Mahila Vibhaags*, *Baala Vihaars* (Women and Children Sections), Study Circles, *Seva Samithis*, *Seva Dhaals* (Service Groups and Centres), that are established with your approval and watch whether they are working smoothly, with the ideals laid down in Swaami's Messages always in view, and within the limitations, rules and regulations laid down by the conferences under Swaami's guidance and with Swaami's blessings. Of course, you have to watch over yourselves and see whether you yourself are having those ideals in view and whether you yourself are following the rules and regulations and disciplinary limitations laid down from year to year, in the conferences.

There are many who come forward when there is a call for social service; but, most of them crave for publicity, seeking cameramen whenever they help others and very disappointed when they are not mentioned in newspapers! Such men push themselves forward, and climb into positions of authority, just to parade their importance before the public. They forget that service is worship, that each act of service is a flower placed at the feet of the Lord, and that, if the act is tainted with ego, it is as if the flower is infested with slimy insect pests! Who will contaminate the feet with such foul offering? Have no egotism while you serve the people of your district. Be guides in their spiritual struggle. Nourish faith in God in the area; upon that faith, you can build any type of spiritual organisation. Trees that grow by the side of canals will flourish, thick with foliage and fruits. So too, *Bhajana Mandalis* and other units of this Organisation will flourish, when faith in the Divine feeds the roots.

Do not indulge in exhibitionistic display

Emphasise simplicity and sincerity, more than pomp and show. Make the mind, the shrine. Have *mind'irs*, not *mandhirs*! Discourage the building of *mandhirs* and halls; try to utilise the temples and halls that already exist. Let the temples that are fast being depleted of pilgrims become once again centres of spiritual vibration. Decorations and detonations tend to draw the mind away from the essential; people indulge in these things more to show themselves off and impress their importance on the public. During the festivals and celebrations, or even in daily life, people should not indulge in exhibitionistic display. If money comes into the picture, it becomes ugly and low.

You must insist on the observance of the rules of the Organisation, for, they are laid down out of love, not to tyrannise. They are bunds erected on the river banks in order to direct the flood waters safe to the sea. Guide the devotees, taking it as a divine duty. Stir well the sugar of God in the tasteless water of worldly affairs, and it becomes drinkable. Have faith that it is adoration of Swaami that you are doing, through the work allotted to you; then, it becomes *saadhana* (spiritual practice) through which you can win Grace.

There is a Telugu proverb which characterises elders thus: '*Peddhalu kaadhu; gaddhalu*'--- "*They have no culture; they are vultures.*" They soar highly, only to espy carrion. If only elders are genuinely anxious to serve people, (instead of merely talking about service) the world would have entered the Golden Age long ago.

The daily activity of dedicated service

One practical way in which the spirit of service can be inculcated is this! Tell this to the *Mandalis* in your districts. Every day, when the lady of the house measures the rice for preparing lunch or dinner, let her place a handful in a separate pot, kept for the purpose, with the words, 'For God;' at the end of the week, let her cook that rice separately and give it to as many poor people as the quantity justifies. That will be a daily act of dedicatory service.

Pay special attention to *Baalavihaar* children and the classes being held for them. It is very valuable work, since it supplements the school and gives them what they don't get from the curriculum. It is the *Baalavihaar* that shapes them into the children of *Bhaaratha Maatha*. The heritage of India has to be handed over to the children by the mothers of the land. Discipline and the exercise of authority must be there, but, modified by love. Without a certain amount of restraint and some use of authority (to press good things on unwilling minds), no progress can be made. The child has to be persuaded much against its will to eat rice and curry, when it has to be familiarised with them. The sick man has to be reprimanded, if he refuses the drug that can cure him. Why, you, too, have to impose on your own selves a rather rigorous routine of discipline, so far as *saadhana* is concerned.

You must have noticed that, in Prashaanthi Nilayam, you find during festivals and special occasions, the same faces appearing again and again. First they came with a bag of prayers for worldly advancement. When they listened to My discourses and conversation year after year, they have come out of the coils of material desires and have now only one desire: to win mental peace, through a course of strict *saadhana*! So, they come again and again, to draw inspiration and win instruction for spiritual success.

Let Me tell you what the first steps in *saadhana* are: Practise silence. Then, you can more easily recognise the galloping of the mind behind worldly happiness. Restrain its movements; turn it inside, into the calm lake of bliss that lies deep in the heart! Get over fear, by establishing your mind in the One, for, fear can arise only when there is another. An inquirer from the United States asked Me recently, 'How can faith become firm?' I answered, 'When the Truth is known, faith is rendered firm.' When the truth is known that it is a rope, faith in its harmlessness is made firm, and fear that it is a snake disappears.

Let people know the Truth'; they will then grow in faith and the faith will endow them with great energy and enthusiasm. The rest will follow, and *Dharma* (righteousness) can flourish in this land' as well as in the world.

Brindhaavan, 8-3-1971