

55. Perform all actions in dedication to God

For delusion-constituted (*maya*-constituted) human beings, there are two gates of illusion: the appetite for sex and the appetite of the tongue. These two have to be conquered by everyone; as long as they persist, they cause sorrow. All worldly desires are comprehended by these two, so only those who have mastered these two can be said to have successfully waded through the world. These two are the causes of all sins, and sin is the manure on which illusion (*maya*) thrives.

Really speaking, this world has to serve only the purpose of sustaining the body. Those aspiring for liberation have to subdue the senses. “Food for guarding the body, dress to ward off the cold,” says the later (*uttara*) *Gita*. However, if one gets immersed in these pursuits, one will forget the purpose for which one has come and the goal of all activity and holy endeavour. Instead, whatever activity a person may be engaged in, the person must, as automatically as breathing, be contemplating on and always aware of this: “I am born to serve God and to realise my true self.” All acts—wearing, eating, walking, studying, serving, moving—should be performed in the belief that they take one into the Presence. Everything should be done in a spirit of dedication to the Lord.

A farmer clears and levels the land, removes the stones and thorns, ploughs and prepares the field, manures and strengthens the soil, waters and fertilises it. Then, after sowing, transplanting, weeding, spraying, and waiting, he reaps the crop. After winnowing and threshing, he stacks the corn. All these various processes are for the sake of the stomach. So, too, one must feel that all hunger and thirst, joy and sorrow, grief and loss, suffering and anger, food and appetite are but impulses helping us toward attaining the presence of the Lord. When one has this attitude, sin will never tarnish these activities. The appetites will also vanish, without a vestige of name or form.

On the other hand, if the appetites are treated as important, one can earn only sorrow, not joy. It will be impossible to acquire peace. Mastery of the sensory desires can't be learned at schools where the arts of sustaining the body are taught systematically.