

11. HOW TO BECOME DEAR TO THE LORD

*Anapeksah Sucirdaksa Udasino Gatavyathah
Sarvarambha Parityagi Yo Madbhaktah Same Priyah*

*He who is totally devoid of desires,
Absolutely pure,
Firm in determination,
Completely detached,
Immune to the play of Time,
And has renounced pomp and ostentation;
Such a one is dear to Me.*

GITA: (12.16)

Embodiments of Love!

God loves dearly, those who possess the qualities enumerated in this *sloka* (verse) of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The qualities needed to become dear to the Lord

Anapeksha means that the devotee is beyond *apeksha*, i.e., desires or expectations. Is it ever possible for man, bound as he is by

the body and the senses, to be without desires? Hardly. Some desire or the other will always be there. However, there must be control over the desires that one has. What sort of desires are permitted? Recall what Krishna has to say about this matter. He says that all righteous actions are divine. Thus, among the permissible desires, the best is the desire for *tyaga* or sacrifice. The yearning for *dharma* also is important. The desire for God is mandatory. Although what must truly be desired is very clear, people have widely different types of expectations and desires. While some consider being righteous as very important, others think that achieving [worldly] greatness is the best among goals. Some even try to combine these two objectives. Truly speaking, no one has the freedom or the authority to do as one likes. One must do exactly as the Lord says.

The Lord has stated very clearly that He wants you to attain the state of *anapeksha*. How does one do that? One does this by strictly confining to righteous activities alone, performing such actions exclusively for the pleasure of the Lord, and by offering all such actions in their entirety to the Lord. Actions performed in this spirit rise well above worldly desires and expectations. Thus the word *anapeksha* ought not to be interpreted in a very rigid sense. What it really means is having the irresistible urge to work only for the Lord and for His sole pleasure. However, that does not mean one can do anything and everything. Our actions must be such that they please Him and would secure His approval. If a devotee conducts himself in this fashion, he becomes dear to the Lord.

The second quality that the devotee must possess is *sucih* or

cleanliness. What sort of cleanliness does the Lord expect from us? Is it outer cleanliness or inner cleanliness? Both are required. God loves cleanliness; cleanliness is Godliness. However, one cannot confine oneself to external cleanliness alone; inner purity also is very necessary. In fact, it is of prime importance. God is omnipresent. He is present both outside as well as inside. However, we must first try to recognise the Divine Principle within.

Here is an example. There is a brass vessel, and you are using it to prepare soup. If the vessel is not tinned inside, the soup would get spoilt and even poisoned. Our heart is like the brass vessel. This vessel must be coated inside with *prema*. If this precaution is taken, the inside will be clean. Inner purity is essential for achieving external purity. What exactly is meant by external purity? It does not mean washing yourself with soap and water. It means performing selfless service to society and doing such action for the pleasure of God. It is such service alone that produces external purity. If inner purity is lacking, the service rendered would inevitably be tinged with selfishness, thereby diminishing external purity.

The third quality that the devotee must have is *daksha* or strong and unshakeable determination. What sort of determination must you have? You must say, “Come what may, I shall not rest till I accomplish this or achieve this.” This is the sort of resolve you ought to have. Swami occasionally says:

*Having resolved what ought to be done,
Hold on till you succeed.*

This is determination.

*Having desired what ought to be,
Hold on till they are fulfilled.*

This is determination.

*Having asked what ought to be,
Hold on till you get it.*

This is what is meant by determination.

*Having thought what ought to be,
Hold on till the thought is realised.*

Such is the quality of determination. In the end, what should happen?

*Out of sheer disgust, the Lord must yield to your wishes!
Persevere, be tenacious, and never give up.
It is not the characteristic of a devotee to retreat,
Abandoning his resolve.*

What is meant by determination? It means having the firm resolve: "I should definitely see God, have God, and secure His Grace." God loves dearly the devotee who has such firm determination.

Next comes *udaasina*, which means detachment. You must be totally detached with respect to whatever you are doing. You can do any kind of work; you may, for example, be engaged in service

activity. However, you should not have expectation of any type [including of the outcome], and also not seek any reward, praise, appreciation, etc., for what you are doing. Especially while working for service organisations, you should be very careful; you must not have any craving for fame and name. You must not seek praise and respect. You should not lament, “I am working so hard and doing so much but there is no mention of it whatsoever in the newspapers!” If you do your work with such cravings and expectations, then the good that you might be doing gets nullified and the sanctity of the work gets destroyed. Therefore, you must do service work sincerely, being immune to success and failure, praise as well as criticism.

After this, *gathavyathaha*; this means being impervious to the ups and downs brought about by time. Acquisition of this particular virtue also calls for strong determination. You should neither brood over the past nor worry about the future. Why all this pointless contemplation? No matter how much you think, reflect, and brood, the miseries of the past cannot be corrected nor set right. As regards the future, no one can say anything definite about it since it is so very uncertain. You are keen about achieving something tomorrow; is there any guarantee you would be alive then? Are you sure you would be alive? No one can speak with certainty on such matters. Therefore, what is the point in worrying about the future? The future is hidden in the womb of time; no one can see it. So, why spend time imagining all sorts of future scenarios? As for the past, it is gone and lies buried in the sands of time. The past cannot be revived, recovered, or resurrected. The future belongs to time. Why therefore waste time reflecting about both the past as well as the future? If you do want to think,

then do so about the present. Man cannot live without thinking. Waves of thought constantly assail you. Channelise your thought so the present. Why? Because both the past and the future are contained in the present. The present is a seed that came from a tree called the past. This seed also contains the tree called the future. Thus the present is very important, being the embodiment of both the past and the future; therefore, go by it.

*He who speaks and conducts himself,
Judging properly the situation and circumstance,
And without wounding or hurting others; And without himself
being hurt in the process
Such a one is wise and blessed.*

Don't worry about the future, but concentrate on the present. If you take proper care of the present, the future is bound to be bright; of that you can be sure.

Lastly, *sarvarambha parithyagi* – this implies total renunciation. Who is a true renunciate? He who remains perfectly calm at all times and under all circumstances is the one who merits such a description. Such a one is beyond pomp and ostentation. God distances Himself from the ostentatious type. In fact, exhibitionism is the first thing that one must renounce. Pomp is a sure sign of *rajo guna* (tendency to be pushing and aggressive). The craving for ostentation is the starting point for all desires. Seeking publicity is a reflection of worldly desires. Do not go after worldly goals for they represent the temporary and the evanescent. Shun pomp, show, and publicity. Krishna declared that it was such a recluse

that was dear to Him.

Today, everywhere it is a case of show and publicity. The person may spend just five rupees on charity, but he is prepared to invest five hundred rupees on publicising his act in the newspapers. Is this not show? It is only the one who seeks fame that needs publicity; on the other hand, the one truly interested in service has no need for it. Never hanker after publicity. As long as you are after pomp, you would never be able to experience Atmic Bliss. How can one who is ignorant of the Self ever earn God's Love? While seeking God's Grace, one must be very patient in everything and in every aspect. Then alone can it be said that one is treading the spiritual path; then alone would one become eligible for God's attention.

Selfless service alone begets God's Love

Embodiments of Love! If you wish to become eligible for God's love, then your actions must be consistent with love. It is impossible to secure God's love without appropriate and sacred actions. Can the one who is always hankering after rewards be ever truly happy? The only compensation you ought to seek is the pleasure and joy of doing your duty properly. The joy of service is the true reward. If you go against the command of God, then everything is bound to go wrong.

Yad bhavam tad bhavati.

As is the feeling, so is the result. If you desire God's love, then your actions must match and be compatible with your desire. If

you do not want God's Love, then you are at liberty to do as you please. However, if God's Love is what you want, then you must act in an appropriate manner. In this world, you first have to pay the price before you acquire the authority to possess what you desire. You go to a shop to buy a towel. The shopkeeper quotes a price of twenty rupees. When you pay twenty rupees cash, the shopkeeper packs the towel and gives it to you. No cash, no towel! God also follows a similar 'transaction' procedure. What kind of 'business' does God do? Divine business! If you lovingly obey God's command, then you are sure to receive Love. God's Love has no limitations or stipulations. Only one condition: you give and then you receive. As Swami said earlier:

*Offer selfless service,
And receive Love.*

Without offering selfless service, how can you expect to receive God's love? To receive God's love, you must be totally free from worldly desires and constantly engage in selfless service. The service must be of a pleasing nature. All actions must be performed exclusively for God's pleasure. For this, you do not have to give up anything. Just keep on doing your normal duty in the manner ordained by Destiny. You wish to study; by all means do so. But in what manner should you study? You should do it for God's pleasure. You are employed in some place. How should you do your work? Do it as if you are trying to please God. Tell yourself, "I am doing this job as an offering to Him". Install this feeling in your heart and do whatever you want to or have to. However, before rushing to adopt this course, pause, reflect, and make sure that God would really be pleased with what you are

trying to do and offer to Him! You cannot do all sorts of silly and stupid things, claiming that you are doing it for God's pleasure. If you act just according to your fancies, do you think that God will accept your actions as an offering? Every action of yours must have the stamp of quality that is acceptable to God. Without that stamp, your action would be a counterfeit. God should acknowledge that your action is good. When you affix the proper postage stamp, your letter can go to far off places. But if there is only address on the envelope and no stamp, it is of no use. An unstamped letter dropped into the mailbox would end up only in the dead-letter office. Therefore, if you really want your offering to reach God, then you must affix the stamp of *prema*. It is only when *prema* saturates every action of yours that God will shower His Grace. He will do so in many forms too.

Nothing comes without perseverance

Slowly but surely, you must develop all the qualities enumerated in the *Gita Sloka*. Do not ever doubt that the acquisition of these virtues is impossible.

*Go on rubbing two pieces of wood,
Fire is sure to emerge.
Go on churning curd,
Butter is sure to be formed.
Engage constantly in enquiry,
Wisdom would certainly blossom.*

Sparks of fire are produced when two pieces of wood are rubbed

hard together. Butter is formed when curd is churned in a sustained manner. Similarly, in spirituality, sustained enquiry leads one to Wisdom and Divinity. You realise the truth: *Tat Twam Asi* – That thou art. Is it possible to get fire without rubbing and butter without churning? The fire is latent in the wood and is not visible. You have to rub hard to make the fire emerge. Butter is latent in the curd, and you have to churn hard to make it come out. In the same way, if you want God's love, you must constantly do good work, do it solely for God's pleasure, and also offer it all to God. It is only when you work with such a spirit of surrender that you become eligible for God's love. Surrender does not mean that you are vanquished and that the other one has emerged victorious. In spirituality it means that the two merge into one – there is nothing like giving or receiving. Recognise the Cosmic Unity that pervades everywhere. Recognise that this substratum of Unity is nothing but God. You will then automatically experience God.

Students! All this may sound very difficult to practise. Know the truth that happiness comes only after hard effort. Without difficulty, there cannot be joy.

Na sukhat labhyate sukham.

Happiness does not beget happiness; happiness is born only out of difficulties. If there are no difficulties to start with, how can you enjoy the sweetness of pleasure? So, you must struggle to some extent and face difficulties. Without darkness, does brightness have any value? Without hunger, does food have value? Similarly, you must discover the true taste and value of

happiness. In what way must you do this? Discover first the Love within you, and then use it to receive God's Love. Once you tap the pure and unpolluted Love within you, you will become the recipient of God's Love. God would even overlook and forgive your mistakes. However, do not take this for granted and commit mistakes endlessly! You have to safeguard all the treasures God has deposited in you.

God is everywhere but you must make an effort to recognise Him

The *gopikas* (cowherd maids) constantly worshipped Krishna. They became very depressed when Krishna went away to Mathura. They were so absorbed in the thought of Krishna that they constantly called out His Name, no matter what task they were engaged in. Once, a *gopika* was carrying on her head pots containing milk, curd, and butter. She was heading for the bazaar, and her intention was to sell the dairy products there. Normally the village vendor calls out loudly, "Milk! Butter! Curd!" etc., to announce the products available for sale. But this particular *gopika* was so absorbed in the contemplation of Krishna that she completely forgot to call out the name of the products she had brought to sell. Instead, she wandered up and down the bazaar street crying out, "Govinda, Krishna, Madhava,...." etc. She went on repeating the Lord's Name. She completely forgot everything about vending and returned home without selling anything. Such was the intensity of devotion in those days.

A *gopika* once told Krishna, "O Krishna, in what way am I to see You? How am I to recognise You? It is not possible! You are in

everything and yet, You are invisible! When we declare You to be invisible, then You suddenly manifest Yourself. And when we say You are present, you suddenly vanish!”

O Krishna, can we ever know You?

Subtler than an atom,

Bigger than biggest,

You are in every one of the eighty-four lakh species,

And You dwell in each and every living being of every species.

Can we ever know such a One as You?

People in those days believed that there were 84 lakh living species. God is present as the Indweller in every living being belonging to each of these very large number of species. How come? Because He is the One that became many. When the forms of God are so numerous, in what particular form should we worship God? By what Name should we call Him? Forms are the result of our physical perception, and Names are what we have given to these various forms. By Himself, God is just Truth.

Here is a flower, a pad, and a cloth [Swami points out to various objects on the table before Him]. To the eye, they all appear quite different. The flower is a flower, the cloth is cloth, and the pad is a pad. Despite the varying names and forms, there is common underlying factor – they all exist. This existence is the basic Truth. It is the unifying substratum behind the different names and forms. IT IS! It is the same with God.

*God there certainly IS,
And visible also He is!*

God IS, IS, IS! He exists!! You should have complete and total faith in His existence. If you have this faith, you can see Him everywhere. How is it that you have faith in your mother? Do you ever doubt whether she is your mother or not? Never! How come you have faith in your father? Do you ever have doubts about his being your father? You prefer to believe in all worldly things but are unwilling to accept spiritual truths. This is the biggest mistake and the weakness of modern man.

Bhrama - Brahma

The warden [of the Brindavan Campus, who spoke earlier] referred to the *Ramayana*. Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Shatrughna, representing the four *Vedas*, took birth as Emperor Dasaratha's sons. Rama was the embodiment of the *Rig Veda*, Lakshmana represented the *Sama Veda*, Bharata stood for the *Yajur Veda*, and Shatrughna represented the *Atharvana Veda*. Thus, the four *Vedas* manifested as four Royal Princes. Sage Viswamitra was performing a *yaga* [Vedic ritual]. He knew very well that only Rama, Himself the embodiment of the *Vedas*, could protect the ritual he wished to perform. So, Viswamitra went to the palace of Dasaratha to seek the assistance of Rama. The Emperor was very pleased to see the Revered Sage and said, "O sage, what brought you here?" Viswamitra replied by asking a question, "Will you do what I ask you to do?" Without taking even a second to think about it, Dasaratha replied, "Of course, without fail". Dasaratha

thus committed himself and became bound to his word.

*One's action must match one's capacity,
Must be pre-determined,
Taking all aspects into account,
Both good and bad,
Must never be in haste,
And also be consistent with the goal.
Otherwise, it can prove deathly and dangerous.*

Before you give your word, you must think carefully. You should not glibly or blindly give your word and then regret as well as retract. Dasaratha gave a promise because of his immense faith in sage Viswamitra. The sage said, "O King, I want you to send your son Rama with me to the forest in order to protect the *yaga* I am performing there." Dasaratha was stunned. He thought, "This son Rama was born to me after countless prayers, after observing so many austerities, and after performing so many *yajnas*. Is it possible to send such a dear and tender son to the forest to fight demons and protect the *yaga*? Rama is so young. He has never seen a demon. He may be frightened by those terrible creatures." Dasaratha's love for Rama produced in him a surge of such thoughts. Viswamitra sensed Dasaratha's misgivings and severely reprimanded the Emperor, "You have no idea who your son is. He is the very incarnation of God. Do not consider Him to be your tender son! It is your attachment that is blinding you to the Absolute Reality that Rama is. Give up this bodily attachment and replace it with devotion." Viswamitra sent for sage Vasishtha [Dasaratha's resident preceptor]. Vasishtha said, "O Dasaratha, do

you know why I am serving as a priest in your royal household? I am not here because I am enamoured by your wealth, fame, and power. I knew that God was going to take birth here in human form. I wanted to sanctify my life by having the *darshan* of that divine boy, spending time with Him, and experiencing bliss. That is the reason why I am here, and not for any worldly gains. Why do you entertain doubts about Rama? Send Him immediately with Sage Viswamitra to the forest.” With great reluctance, Dasaratha yielded to Vasishta’s command.

Viswamitra was no ordinary Sage. As his name implies, he was a friend to the whole world. How did he achieve this status? By giving humanity the priceless gift of the *Gayatri Mantra*. This great Viswamitra, widely reputed for his intense penance, who possessed extraordinary spiritual powers, and who was the *guru* of so many, was now taking the young Royal Princes Rama and Lakshmana to the forest. The party penetrated deep into the jungle and approached the river Sarayu. It was evening time, and the sage told the Princes, “Offer your evening prayers now.” After Rama and Lakshmana did so, Viswamitra pointed across the river and said, “We are going over there. That is where I shall be performing the *taga*. It is becoming dark, and You will see terrible demons there. To ensure that You do not get frightened, I shall teach You two *mantras*: *Bala* and *Athibala*. Come and sit near me and receive the instruction.” The sage taught the two *mantras*. You see how illusion blankets clear thinking! Here is the great sage who, in the Court of Dasaratha, emphatically declared and hailed Rama as God Incarnate. But now in the forest, that feeling has gone. He is imagining Rama to be a tender young prince, likely to be frightened by demons. This shows that no matter

how evolved, when one has bodily relations, doubts can and do arise about Incarnations. Such doubts are the result of delusion. *Bhrama* (delusion) can eclipse Brahman (God)! Delusion is born of tendencies accumulated over many births. Divine feelings and the ability to recognise God in human form, on the other hand, is the result of sacred actions performed. What an ocean of difference separates *bhrama* and Brahman! Even a great sage like Viswamitra could come under the grip of *bhrama*!

God can be bound only with Love

You too occasionally have such delusory experiences. Questions arise like, “What is Divine? How should one relate to Divinity? Who is human? What is a demon? What is an animal?” and so on. The answers to these are simple. Divinity is Pure Love. He who follows the path of righteousness is a human. Cruelty reflects demonic nature. And the presence of animal qualities in a person brings that one down to the level of an animal. Divinity can be fully experienced only through love and no other way. God cannot be bought with money, as many foolishly imagine.

You all know the story of Sathyabhama [one of the consorts of Krishna]. She wanted Krishna all for herself and did not want Him to go anywhere. She asked Sage Narada how she could achieve this. Narada is the one who offers instruction in spiritual knowledge. Recognising that Sathyabhama’s ego was responsible for her unreasonable desire, he decided to teach her a lesson. For this purpose he devised a plan, and asked Sathyabhama, “Do you have the wealth that can match the weight of Krishna?” She replied, “I have with me the magical Syamanthaka jewel. I can

create wealth, and any amount of it. Therefore, do not entertain any doubts about my affluence. I will certainly be able to match Krishna's weight with gold, precious stones, and jewels." Narada then called for a large balance and sent word to Krishna to join him. When Krishna came, Narada asked the Lord to sit on one of the pans. He then asked Sathyabhama to pile her gold, etc., in the other pan. No matter how much gold was placed, the pan carrying Krishna remained down; it did not show any tendency to go up even a tiny bit. Sathyabhama became scared. She ordered all her wealth to be placed on the other pan; no effect. Finally, she placed even the treasured and magical Syamanthaka jewel. Even then the balance remained stuck. She ran to Rukmini [the other consort], calling out loudly, "Sister! Sister!" Up to this time, she never cared for Rukmini or bother to look at her face. It was Rukmini's birthday, but the jealous Sathyabhama had prevented Krishna from visiting Rukmini even on that day. Rukmini is a compassionate one. She asked Sathyabhama, "Sister, why are you so agitated? What happened?" Sathyabhama narrated all that transpired and then said, "It is all the work of that Narada!" Rukmini went worshipfully around the tulsi plant in her garden, plucked a leaf, kept it in her palm, and came with Sathyabhama to where Krishna was. Narada was waiting for the two with a broad smile on his face. Krishna too was full of smiles. He said, "I am ready to offer Myself for sale, to whosoever is prepared to buy Me." Rukmini then said, "Narada, Krishna can be matched only by His Glorious Name and not by material wealth. I am therefore simply going to chant "Krishna!". Narada replied, "How can one balance the One with Form with a word that is formless? I cannot accept this kind of balancing. You must place some object on the

empty pan and try to tilt the balance. Sathyabhama tried putting all her wealth but it was of no use. What are you going to place on the pan?” Rukmini then sang,

*O God Who is worshipped with leaf, flowers, fruits, and water,
If it be true that You submit Yourself
When You are offered Pure Love instead of all these,
I pray that You be balanced by Your Name,
And then tilt the scale with this Tulsi leaf.*

So saying, she chanted the Name Krishna and then placed the tulsi leaf on the empty pan. The balance immediately tilted, with the pan carrying Krishna going up. Krishna had been more than matched! Narada observed, “The Name Krishna made the scale even and thereafter, the tulsi leaf was enough to tilt the balance.”

God yields only to love. Anything you offer to Him, no matter how inconsequential it might be in a material sense, is acceptable to Him if the offering is accompanied by pure love. Even a single tulsi leaf is enough. God cannot be secured with wealth but only with love. There is in fact no wealth greater than love. So, offer love to God. If you offer Him pure love, then God will be very pleased and will always be with you. If you want to be worthy of God’s love and the recipient of His Grace, then you must obey His command. What does He say?

Anapeksah sucirdaksa udasino gatavyathah
Sarvarambha parityagi yo madbhaktah same Priyah

He says, “If you have all these qualities, then you become dear to Me.” God would readily claim you if you do what He says. You must understand fully what God wants of you and conduct yourself accordingly.

Embodiments of Love! How to grasp God’s teachings? How to develop and sustain faith in Him? Swami will speak to you on these topics tomorrow.

Bhagavan concluded the discourse by singing the *bhajan*, *Bhavabhaya Harana....*

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