

19. Cultivate love through two methods

So how is love to be cultivated? Through two methods:

1. Always consider the faults of others, however big, to be insignificant and negligible. Always consider your own faults, however insignificant and negligible, to be big, and feel sad and repentant. By these means, you avoid developing bigger faults and defects and acquire the qualities of brotherliness and forbearance.
2. Whatever you do, with yourself or with others, do it remembering that God is omnipresent. He sees and hears and knows everything. Whatever you speak, remember that God hears every word; discriminate between the true and the false and speak only the truth. Whatever you do, discriminate between right and wrong and do only the right. Endeavour every moment to be aware of the omnipotence of God.

The body is the temple of the individual (*jiva*), so whatever happens in that temple is the concern of the individual. So too, the world is the body of the Lord, and all that happens in it, good or bad, is His concern. From the observed fact of the individual and the body, know the truth of the unobservable fact of the Lord and the world.

The relationship of the individual (*jiva*) and the Lord, the kinship between the two, can be grasped by everyone who acquires three chief instruments: (1) a mind unsullied by attachment and hatred, (2) a speech unsullied by falsehood and (3) a body unsullied by violence.

Joy and peace do not inhere in external objects; they are in you yourself. But in your foolishness, you search for them outside yourself in a world from which, today or tomorrow, you are bound to depart. Therefore, awake soon. Try to know the essence of everything, the eternal truth. Try to experience the love that is God (*Paramatma*) itself. Discriminate at every turn, accepting what is true and discarding the rest. As long as you have worldly desires in view, you cannot escape sorrow.

20. See the macrocosm in the microcosm

Many people slander image worship, but its basis is really one's capacity to see the macrocosm in the microcosm. The value of image worship is testified by experience; it doesn't depend on one's imaginative faculty. What is found in the form of the Lord (*Virat-swarupa*) is also found, undiminished and unalloyed, in the image form (*swarupa*). Images serve the same purpose as metaphors and similes in poetry. They illustrate, amplify, and clarify.

Joy comes not through the shape of things but through the relationship established. Not any child but her child makes the mother happy. So also with each one and with all things. With each and every thing in the universe, if one establishes that kinship, that Godly love (*Iswara prema*), then truly an overpowering joy can be experienced! Only those who have felt it can understand.