

# BHAKTI YOGA - PART 20

SWĀMI DAYATMANANDA

Class begins with the chanting of the following Shanti mantra:

ॐ सह नावतु ।  
सह नौ भुनक्तु ।  
सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।  
तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ।  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Saha Naav Avatu |  
Saha Nau Bhunaktu |  
Saha Viiryam Karavaavahai |  
Tejasvi Naav Adhiitam Asthu Maa Vidvissaavahai: |  
Om Shantih Shantih Shantih: ||

Meaning:-

Om May Brahman protect us both |  
May Brahman bestow upon us both, the fruit of knowledge |  
May we both obtain the energy to acquire knowledge |  
May what we both study reveal the truth  
May we cherish no ill-feeling toward each other |  
Om Peace Peace Peace be unto all ||

We had dealt with the preparatory stages of the *Bhakti-yogā*. *Swāmi Vivekānanda* divided this *Bhakti-yogā* or the path of devotion – the *Yogā* of Devotion – into two parts. The preparatory and the final! We had dealt in detail, greater detail, with the preparatory stages of devotion.

One of the interesting features is that what makes life a very pleasant experience, even if one be in this world, is the factor of love. Where this is absent, any amount of rituals, or traditional ways of interacting with each other... I am mentioning this because nowadays a great lot of training is given how to interact with people, especially customers, office colleagues; improve your relationships, including marriage counsellors are there. They give you the techniques of how to keep up the marriage. But if there is no love, that marriage is only just a dry sort of relationship.

These are the preparations. Certain rituals are there, certain preparations are there, and certain sacrifices have to be made. If these are made, then life in this world also will be a most pleasant experience.

**Love as we have defined many times is knowledge. Emotion is only an outcome.** But most of us these days look for love in the form of emotion. And that is why we suffer severe disappointments. Emotion is alright, it is necessary, but that is not the primary part of love at all.

So to briefly re-collect, what we had discussed or what *Swāmi Vivekānanda* wanted us to understand.

**First of all He defined what is *Bhakti*,** what is devotion. And his definition is the most marvellous definition – the highest, the most intensest form of love towards the highest. It has two parts – what best we can do on our part. The intensest way we can express our whole being, but towards the highest, which is God, or which is reality, that is called *bhakti*. We do not lack *bhakti*. We already have it, but as I mentioned there are two problems with that –

- 1) One, it is scattered, divided towards an infinite number of things.
- 2) And second it is directed only towards worldly objects.

So if we can collect all this love and direct it towards God and that is called devotion. In fact in Sanskrit we use a special terminology. All that we call love in the English language L O V E, we do not use in Sanskrit. It is called lust, *Kāma*.

Love or *Prema*, that is the correct word, can be used only when we love God. Any love that is directed other than to God falls under the category of lust, *Kāma*. This is the first thing *Swāmi Vivekānanda* said, defined what is *bhakti*.

Then he defined, *bhakti* towards the highest means towards God. And **what is the nature of this God, *Ishwara*.** We have many many wrong understanding about God. Most often we only use Him as a machine, milking machine, to fulfil all our desires. Of course, as children we have a right to do it. But as adults we must know better than that. So He is what you call our innermost reality.

( 05:36 mins )

So the question, why we should love God; Can I not live without loving God, becomes meaningless when we understand that God is our innermost reality. When we love God we are not loving anyone else. We are loving, in fact, our own selves. But our true selves not the false self.

**Then in each of the paths that lead one to God there must be a teacher.** *Vedānta* doesn't accept that self taught path. Will not help us. We have to approach someone who knows what the person is talking about. A person who knows, who has realised, the truth. In this case one who loved God with all his being.

We have shining examples of *Sri Rāmakrishna*, *Holy Mother*, *Swāmi Vivekānanda*. So, when we can approach such a person, then we learn. Even in worldly affairs too, it is not possible to learn anything, unless we approach a person who has knowledge of what we want to learn. Having approached such a person we must have a specific type of attitude.

The most important thing in any relationship, do you know what it is? The attitude! It is not how we behave. You can behave very roughly, very harshly, but if your attitude is alright, the other person also understands it alright. Otherwise however wonderful words, sweet words, you can use, but if there is no right attitude then it is all in vain.

Somehow we have become machines. Dealing with too many machines, we have developed a mechanical attitude. If somebody comes and says, 'O, how wonderful you are'. Even though we ourselves know that we are not wonderful, we want to hear from others. And we don't believe them. Even when we do, when others say that also, we don't really believe them. Even though we don't believe, we still expect them to tell those words to us. You know, just how...

An American had put it so beautifully, about women, so I am warning you don't get offended. You see even though the wardrobe is full of clothes the women complain that they have nothing to wear. Even though they have nothing to wear, they manage to dress up beautifully. Even though they manage to dress up beautifully, they still complain that they are looking ugly. And even though they say they are looking ugly, they still expect them to compliment. And even when we compliment them, they don't believe us.

So this is an age when you know everything is... We are trained to be machines in work, in love, at home. And they tell you that if you behave like this everything will be alright. No! Mechanical behaviour only makes a thing more machine-like, more efficient. Wonderful but it is lifeless. It doesn't bring any joy.

How do we know that there is life? Because wherever there is life there is tremendous joy. You can immediately understand. If there is no joy that is one sure sign there is no life in it. Apply this test to any activity you want to apply. You are reading a book, is there any life in you? Or any life in the book? If there is, there will be joy. Are you eating food? If there is any life in you and the food, there will be joy. Talk to somebody, is there any joy, then there is life in both of you. Apply this test. Wherever there is life there is joy.  
( 10:12 mins )

You know, Sanskrit is a wonderful language. **The name for God is Sat-Chit-Ānanda.** Wherever there is *Sat* there is *Ānanda*. Wherever there is existence, life, there is *Ānanda*.

So, the point *Swāmiji* makes is only a person who knows how to love, and when we approach such a person, then only we understand what is love.

Just imagine as an example, that supposing somebody is brought up with machines. No mother is there, no father is there, no brother, no sister to love them. The person will be kept alive, but he will be lifeless practically. He becomes a machine.

We learn how to love from our mother especially, then father, our nearest and dearest. They bestow all that affection and how much sacrifice is involved there.

How much sacrifice parents make to bring up their children. We never understand, we do not know. We take it for granted. 'This is our divine right'. When we become parents, we know how much sacrifice the parents make. The point is that these parents, they show their love by their sacrifice. Sometimes they may not be even happy with us. They can get angry, they can get annoyed. But that anger, that annoyance is also an expression of their love towards us. After all, they want us to be better people, that's all.

So when an earnest aspirant, and he wants to reach God, to love God, he has to learn it from a loving person. And who is more loving than one's own *Guru*?

You know this very peculiar concept we have, practically in every religion we have this, that the *Guru* is not merely a teacher. You pay him something and then he will give you something in return. **The most important lesson we have to learn from the *Guru* is how to love.** But again don't expect an emotional response. As soon as you approach his face blooms like a 1000 petaled lotus. Not necessarily. He may even feel annoyed at your presence. But there is a deep love.

Every *Guru* wants his disciples to progress in every way, Not only in spiritual way, even in material way, in every way he wants the disciples to grow. Somehow this beautiful law operates in the relationship of the *Guru* and the disciple, like the mother and the child. There is no other way we can learn.

From the *Guru* we learn how to love God. And the *Guru* is supposedly one who knows how to love God.

And here is the beautiful psychological factor. If a person loves God what do you think he will do, he or she, will do when others approach him? When you approach a fragrant flower, suppose there is a fragrant flower, and when you approach a

fragrant flower what do you think it will give you.? Fragrance! When we approach a loving person, what do you think that loving person gives us? Love! It simply comes.

But as I said, as I caution again and again, do not read emotional signs as an expression of love. It differs from person to person. Some persons are very grave. You go there and you greet them, they will just greet you, they won't talk much to you. Some of them are very effused in their expression. We only understand how to read these signs of emotion, but we don't really understand how deep is their love.

I mentioned briefly in my talks the incident of *Swāmi Brahmānanda*, who sent away His beloved disciple to a far-off place, as an expression of His love. Briefly I will mention, you know, the last part of the story.

*Swāmi Brahmānanda*, He went to Madras, in those days it was Madras, and He sent for this disciple, whom He sent away. And from morning every 5 minutes the *Swāmi* was asking, 'Has he come? Has he arrived?' Even though He was being told again and again that the disciple would be arriving only at about noon time.  
(15:10 mins )

And at last the disciple arrived. As soon as this news was conveyed to him, *Swāmi Brahmānanda* went and sat in His easy chair, grave, like this. And the disciple came, prostrated, and *Swāmi* asked, 'How are you doing my child?' He said, 'Fine'. And the disciple also asked 'How are you doing *Mahārāj*?' He said, 'I am fine. I am fine, you are also fine. Out!' That was the end of the matter. And this was the *Swāmi*, from morning He was restless to see His disciple.

The attendant who was watching this drama, he was surprised. And later on he asked, *Mahārāj*, why is it you didn't talk with your disciple for a long time? And He said, 'If I show my love to this person he will burst. Instead of becoming free, he will become more attached to me.'

I found a wonderful light in this statement. Because you see, if we express our emotions, it will bring on only more trouble. Because, you know, you will come, again and again. At midnight also, my *Guru* is waiting to hear my beautiful words!

It is not the emotion. Deep inside, the prayer is going on, 'Let all the devotees be happy in every way!' Of course, we pray for the welfare of everybody. We do not want anybody to suffer. Not even non-human beings . But, especially, we have special prayers for the devotees. We want them to go towards God. It is a joy to go to God all of us together.

But emotional expressions differ from person to person. So, that is why I am telling again and again. From the *Guru*, somehow the idea comes, that my *Guru* knows how to

love me. Even if the whole world abandons me, my *Guru* knows how to love me. He is there for me all the time. And this is the truth.

So, what are the characteristics or qualifications of a *Guru*? What are the qualifications of the disciple – that was discussed.

Then *Swāmiji* discusses a very important point. Which is, the *Guru* imparts a *Mantra* to the disciple. And the *mantra* is like a chain which takes the disciple gradually to where God is. It acts like a chain. Every repetition of the *mantra* is like holding on to a link of the chain, and slowly going forward.

What is the significance of this *mantra*? And in *Vedantā* literature the syllable *Om* ( ॐ ) is the very essence of all *mantras*. It is the essence of all *Vedantā*. It is the essence of every *mantra* in the whole world. And why is it so? Is it just a superstition? Is it a hyperbole? Or is there any fact behind it?

And *Swāmiji* explains, It is a fact! Because the most generic syllable which covers all the ideas in this world is *Om*. And to just briefly recollect for those who have not heard it, and for those who heard it but forgotten about it.

You see, all our ideas, deepest ideas, smallest ideas, biggest ideas, they are all in our mind. When we want to express our ideas we use certain words. These words are conveyed by certain sounds.

For example, here is a table. This object called table is an idea in our minds. We all know what a table is but if I want to convey that idea – so there is something on the table. Then I have to say table. I have to utter the word table. That is a sound that goes into your ears. And it vibrates, and it brings about, connects, that sound connects to your idea exactly.

You have many ideas – here is a flower, here is a chair, here is man, here is an animal, here is a table. But this word, as soon as you hear that word table, that sound connects itself, hooks itself, as it were, with the idea table. Instantaneously the table comes foremost to your mind. See the point?

( 20:03 mins )

So every idea has a word, specific name. And every name has a specific sound. So in this world for the same object we have an infinite number, almost infinite number of names. In my language table is, the name of table is one, in your language the name of the table is another. In Russian language it is another. Every language, it is a different name. So, how many names you can convey?

But is there any generic Word which conveys all these sounds? Yes! There is one which is *Om*! Why is it generic? Because any sound that we utter has to vibrate from this voice-box. You know there is a voice-box here. So that particular syllable which takes advantage of the whole of this voice-box, that would be the generalisation of all the sounds in this world. And all the sounds in this world will cover all the names in this world. And all the names in this world cover all the ideas in this world, past as well as future.

So, what is that word which conveys the whole of this sound system? That is ॐ ( A U and M )! Just as an experiment, here you see whenever we utter some sound this voice-box vibrates. Have you noticed it? It vibrates. So, you see, you put your finger here and say A. Say A. Wherefrom the A is coming? From the bottom of the voice-box. And U, where is this U? It is exactly in the middle. And the last syllable is M. M, you see, the lips touch.

So right from the beginning of the voice-box till the end of the voice-box, that word which covers the whole of the voice-box at the same time, that is the only word that we can say is *Om*.

That is why *Om* - It represents all the ideas in the world. That means all the intelligence in the world. That means *Chit*, it represents *Chit*, God, which is God, pure consciousness.

So that is why *Swāmiji* explained what is the special sacredness of this particular word called *Om*. That is why He said it is the essence of all *mantras*.

Then He also had explained **what is the place of rituals**. There are rituals, every great religion or any religion that produced the greatest number of saints, realised souls, that religion, those saints were produced through rituals.

**Rituals are an essential part of every religion**. And that religion which is dry, in the name of spirituality it doesn't encourage rituals, it also doesn't produce any kind of good result. It has produced limited amount of result. Means limited number of spiritual blossoming has come.

*Sri Rāmakrishna* had a beautiful way of expression. A cow which picks and chooses and eats, yields very little milk. But the cow which eats anything and everything that comes on its way, it just yields milk in torrents. Meaning to say that a person who enjoys these rituals etc, there is a likelihood of producing the greatest number of saints.

What do the rituals do? *Pūjās*, Rituals and all those things – they prepare the ground. They till the ground. Suppose there is soil, if it is not tilled, you cannot cultivate

anything there. So, rituals by themselves they don't produce holiness. But rituals prepare the ground. It is like a well tilled ground. After that you sow the seeds and then beautiful trees will come, flowers, fruits, and blossoms, and leaves, everything will come.

And all these things fall under preparatory devotion only!  
( 25:02 mins )

But **the most important preparation is how to make the mind pure and one pointed.** And this is to be done through seven means. Seven doesn't mean exactly seven. But Swāmi Vivekānanda had taken the cue from a great South Indian teacher called Rāmānuja. These are called :-

- 1) विवेक ( Viveka )
- 2) विमोक ( Vimoka )
- 3) अभ्यास ( Abhyāsa )
- 4) क्रिया ( Kriyā )
- 5) कल्याण ( Kalyāna )
- 6) अनुधर्ष ( Anudharsha )
- 7) अनवसाद ( Anavasāda )

These are the seven things.

**The first thing is Viveka.** Viveka means discrimination. What is discrimination? If you want to go to London, every moment, you find the direction. 'I am going towards the east, I am not going towards any other direction.' Whatever prevents us from going towards God, and whatever holds us down, delays our journey, that thing we have to be aware, however pleasant it be.

The problem with Viveka or discrimination is that sometimes the fight is not between right and wrong, but between that which is good and that which is pleasant.

I illustrate this in the form of, you know, Winter season - early morning you want to get up and do meditation. There is a terrible fight between God and the quilt. Not between you and... God says 'Come'. The quilt says, 'No! Don't go.' And strangely often it is the quilt which wins. Because it doesn't tell you not to go. It tells us 'Where is the hurry? Take another... you know it is nice, it is cold outside, just five minutes you take rest. This is what it has been telling for the last six hours. And you listen, only five minutes, and then by the time you get up it is past the time. This is Viveka!

Food! Food means whatever type of thing, information, going into us - through the eyes, through the ears, through the nose etc. This is discrimination.

**Then we have to control our passions.**



**Then we have to practice again and again, and again.** Until it becomes a habit. Habit is a most wonderful thing.

Then we are obligated, by our very birth to 5 things.

- 1) To our ancestors.
- 2) To the sages.
- 3) To Gods.
- 4) To fellow human beings.
- 5) And to everything else in this world.

**By our very birth, by our very existence. We are indebted. So, we have to repay this debt. That is called, according to *Rāmānujā*, *Kriyā*.**

**Then we have to do whatever good we can to the world in the form of serving human beings.** Because how do we practice love towards God? Loving is knowledge no doubt, but an expression is needed.

If a mother says to the baby, 'I love you baby very much.' But doesn't feed, doesn't bathe, doesn't take care of the baby, do you think the baby will understand that kind of love? So we have to express in some way, good way, that is called love.

And not necessarily always in a positive way. Love also can be expressed in a negative way. That negative way is really a positive way. And sometimes what we call positive expression may be a terribly negative expression. What do I mean?

Supposing a mother loves the baby. And the baby says that I want to eat only chips and Coca-Cola. So what should be the positive expression of the mother's love? Okay go ahead. Then the mother takes away all the things and says no you will eat only spinach. You know human psychology is very strange. We love spinach only in our old age. When young we never want to, even to look at spinach. But they say it is very health producing. Who cares about health when we are young. We want to enjoy our lives. Let us worry about health in our old age.

Anyways, the point is, is that a positive expression or a negative expression when the mother doesn't grant the wishes of the child? Say let the child say to its mother, 'I don't want to go to school.' Then what should the mother do? If necessary catch hold of the ears and pull. Be careful, you know, the social workers will catch hold of your ears. This country is terrible.

So, sometimes you know the mother says, 'Okay go ahead'. If that is the response, and if it is harmful for the future of the child, that is a negative expression of love. But sometimes it's a painful thing for the baby, but it is a very good thing for the future of the child. That is a positive expression of love, though it is expressed in an unpleasant way to the child.

( 30:35 mins )

With this example we can also approach God. Sometimes God's ways are mysterious. You know, here we are praying to God, and those who pray to God, sometimes they suffer more. There are many people who are puzzled by this. 'You want us to believe in God, you want us to pray to God, and the result is, the person who doesn't pray, who doesn't care for God, that person is enjoying life more. And whereas I am suffering.' It is not true!

Because we are very very short sighted people. How much after all do we see? Only one human life! It may be 60 years, 70 years. What went on before, what is going to come in the future, do we know anything about it? Can we see after 2-3 lives what is going to happen to us? We can't see beyond our nose, and we judge God.

God loves us. He wants us to go to Him. He wants us to be happier. But He wants us to come to Him. If we do not listen to Him, and most of the time we do not. We want Him to listen to us, for a change. No! God says that, 'For a change, my child, you listen to Me. I have been listening to you all the time.

So, sometimes they are painful. That's why you read the life of any Saint, you will not find one single example where life went on very smoothly, very happily, very beautifully. From the birth till death he had desert, he ate desert to his heart's content, then laid himself down on the bed. Next moment he was out. That's a very rare kind of... There are people, but it's a rare kind of thing.

Most of the time devotees suffer a lot. For many reasons. One reason is that that is the way the person can really reach God. The other way is to show that if everything is pleasant... You know, like we meet in a party, and how pleasant we are to each other. It is only when we live together the real problems start. Yeah that is why somebody had, some quack had said, you know, that the happiest day of one's married life is the day before the actual marriage. Yeah!

So, this expression of our love in the form of service to the Lord.

Then *Swāmiji* - strength - ***anavasāda* means tremendous strength is necessary.**  
नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ( nāyamātmā balahīnena labhyaha )

God cannot be realised by the weak-minded people, only by the very strongest type of person. To love God one needs a tremendous amount of strength. You see, to satisfy a child you don't need many things. Just even a chocolate satisfies. To satisfy an adult it takes a great lot. And how much, you know? Suppose you want to love God, do you

know how many chocolates He requires? God is Infinite, so he will not be satisfied with anything less than Infinity.

Meaning to say **strength is that which never forgets God**. Never forgets to love God, even under the greatest trials.

**Then comes, one should never become, what is called, depressed.** Religion has nothing to do with depression. Many people think... You can be serious, but you cannot be depressed. Because depression is a sign of the lack of love.

If you are having love you cannot feel depressed. You love anything, you love even a flower, you love a book, you love music. There is no time for you to be depressed. The moment you feel that you want to be joyful, you put on a song, or watch a flower, watch the sunset, listen to the song of the bird. Anything can make you very happy, even a blade of grass can make you happy. Do you know that? Even a blade of grass?  
( 35:09 mins )

Okay, there was a great painter called Van Gogh. Have you heard about him? He was one of the greatest painters in the world, though very tragic life. This Dutchman, from early in the morning, he used to go into the fields and go on painting. Do you know what he was painting? Haystacks! When you look at a haystack what do you see? A dried, that's not even a green blade of grass, it's a dried blade of grass.

But he used to see something different. From morning till evening. Somebody asked him, 'Why do you do that?' He said, you know, 'Every few minutes the colour of the haystack changes.' But you go on staring at it for the whole day, you don't see the slightest change at all.

Where is the change? I have sometimes doubts, where is the change? Is the change occurring in the haystack, or is the change occurring in the person who is watching it? It's both. The person loves to paint. He is observing what changes nature is bringing about. Every second is a wonderful, marvellous change. So that is what he used to do.

If there is love there is not one single dull moment. Every moment is suffused, surfeit of joy. Where there is no joy, you can conclude there is no love. Where there is love, there is always joy. It may not be expressed, but there is always joy is there.

So these are the seven types of preparations.

**Now we enter into the second part of love. It is called *Parā Bhakti* – Supreme Devotion!**

So what is the difference between preparatory love and supreme love? Before entering into *Swāmi Vivekānanda's* discussion itself, which is poetic, I found the expression,

especially of this *Bhakti-yogā*, it is just pure poetry flowing in the form of prose. You read Swami Vivekānanda's *Bhakti-yogā*, you will understand what I am talking about.

So what is the difference? The difference is this. All these preparations are meant to purify that faculty called love, and that faculty called knowledge. So what is the test of this faculty called love? How do we know that we have reached, that we have gone beyond the stage of preparation. We have reached the, entered into, the stage where we are into the supreme devotional path.

How do we know? There is a very beautiful, but a very simple way of understanding this. One of the greatest teachers of devotion, he tells that when a devotee feels, simply this, God is my own. **God is my own. That is the surest proof that he has entered into the highest path of love.** God is my own. Nobody else's.

Now what do we say – my husband is my own, and my wife is my own. Nowadays don't be too sure about it. These are all temporary arrangements. Children, of course, are there. Nobody can cut off the relationship between parents and children. So, friends, world, house, this, that so many things. My own, my own, my own. No! Nothing is your own.

Here comes the idea of renunciation. *Swāmiji* starts, **the biggest preparation for the supremest devotion is renunciation.** We will go into details slightly later. But the point I am trying to make is, how do we know that we have done with these preparations? Because we feel that God is our own! And not only God is our own, We are God's! That's all. I belong to God, God belongs to me. This marvellous feeling of knowledge that's enough.

The smallest expression of this is, you observe in a baby. You go to see babies, you know, your neighbour has given birth to a baby. And imagine that the baby is 3-4 months old. Because only then it knows what it is doing. The moment it sees a stranger immediately it turns to withdraw. Have you noticed that? The moment it is in the hands of the mother, it closes its eyes and goes to sleep. Have you noticed that? Because the baby knows that this is my mother. And I am safe in her hands. This is the smallest expression of the supreme love.

( 40:13 mins )

But strangely, this is the expression which we are all seeking throughout our life in everything.

Is it food? How do we know that this is the food? That food which doesn't disturb our body, doesn't disturb our mind, that is our own. We belong to that food.

That particular person, friend, in whose presence we don't need to think a hundred times what shall I say, how shall I say it? Shall I Congratulate her, do this, do that. We completely feel free. We feel at home. That is our friend.

That book which gives you the greatest joy, by which you feel elevated, that is our own. Anything.

That Dress in which you feel at home, that is the dress.

You know, how much people spend, so much of money, high-heeled shoes for example. My God, the way the ladies walk. I am apprehensive any moment that they may topple there and then fall down. Yeah, they twist their limbs. You know, this *Yogā* has become very popular nowadays. *Yogā* means twisting the body. There is no need for twisting the body because these ladies are practising this *yogā* all the time. The way with these high-heeled shoes.

Anything that makes us completely forgetful. Tension is removed. We become our own selves. We remain our own selves. We feel at home. That is the word – at home. That is the expression. That is what we have to love. That is what belongs to us.

The rest, anything that makes you uncomfortable, and you have to give a thought and say why am I acting? Have you given thought to this?

Suppose you are in the presence of some people. For some reason, intellectually, you may be thinking, I should be in the presence of these people. But if you are feeling uncomfortable all the time then give it up. Because that's not meant for you. You will not be happy, neither they will be happy. Superficially you may be saying, 'O, how nice, you sit here, have a cup of tea, coffee.' This won't work for a long time. Do you feel comfortable? That is the thing. That's the first sign.

Second sign is, if it is my own I will do any amount of sacrifice. You don't need to make effort. It automatically comes to you. A mother doesn't... If it sees a child has fallen, or a dog is about to attack the child, the mother doesn't, 'Shall I go to the rescue of my baby?' Instantaneous reaction. Instinctive reaction is to run and then save the baby by hook or crook. And even if that person is killed also it doesn't matter really. That comes only when we feel this is my own. And that is the surest test that we have entered.

When we feel God is our own, you don't need any rituals, you don't need any images, you don't need any formalities, you don't need any *Mantras*.

This is illustrated by *Sri Rāmakrishna*. If you read or rather study the life of *Sri Rāmakrishna*, especially when He undertook the worship of the Divine Mother in the temple. You know, I will just give you a few examples.

His... every aspirant is supposed to worship, those who are following the path of devotion should worship his or her chosen Deity. *Sri Rāmakrishna* had accepted the priesthood and He was a lover of the Divine Mother. Divine! I won't say Divine Mother. I will say divine in any form. But, especially He had the attitude of a child. *Sri Rāmakrishna's* predominant attitude in life is that of a child.

Interestingly, you study your personality, and you study other people's personality. You will find that some of us, our predominant characteristic of our personality is, we want to be children.

And this is especially true of the husbands in the middle age. When they come home from the office they want their wives not to be wives, they want their wives to be adoring mothers. And they go on telling all the greatest things they have been doing in the office, such as scratching the pencil. And you have to act with, you know, admiring eyes, 'O my darling you have done it. How wonderful you are'. They will never leave you.

Some of us have the dominant personalities of a child. And many of us, we have that. But if we violate that and try to be somebody else we will be in trouble.  
( 45:10 mins )

Somebody has a Motherly Attitude. They want to protect others, they want to look after others. Sometimes even when we don't want them also, they want to mother us. That's when I call them, you are not a mother, you are a smother. Some want to be, what is called, indifferent. These are some of the different characteristics.

The trouble comes when we do not understand each other. And then I expect somebody to be my mother. And that person expects me to be a mother, then there is a problem. If I expect somebody to be a mother, and if that person expects me to be a child, the relationship would be just fine. Otherwise there is going to be friction. Anyway that's apart.

*Sri Rāmakrishna's* dominant personality is, He was a child all the time, throughout His life. So, naturally, He thought 'This is my Mother.' And within a few months of His starting worship He transcended all formalities.

He took up some flowers for example. And the ritual is to offer it at the feet of The Mother. Instead of being able to offer the flowers, the flowers automatically went and fell on His own head. Why did They fall? Because He said, 'This is My Mother. I am nothing. Everything is my Mother. This also is My Mother.' He was not worshipping

Himself. He was not a megalomaniac. He totally merged His will in the will of the Divine Mother.

Food offering time, He said, 'Mother...' You know, Hindus have a way of doing *Pujā*. First we utter some *Mantras*, 'This is the food I am offering to God, let God graciously accept'. So the Mother was... started taking food even before He offered. He was telling, 'Mother, Mother, I have not yet uttered the *mantra*. Please wait until I utter the *mantra*.'

Another day a cat entered, 'Mother, You want to accept worship in this form today. Please accept.' Ultimately a day came He said, 'When I went to pluck flowers, then what do I see? I saw that all the flower trees have already offered everything to the Divine Lord.' To the *Virāt*. *Virāt* means the universal aspect of God. 'Who am I to pluck those flowers?' He said, 'With that realisation my ritual *Sādhana*, spiritual practice, has come to an end. I couldn't sit anymore.'

Because the purpose of all these preparations are – what for? To feel that God is my own. I am God's. So I am seeing God, wherever I go, God is there. Wherever God is there, I am also there. When He attained to that realisation everything had fallen away.

So, that is how we understand such a person, who feels God as his own. Like a small baby feels this is my mother. Such a person doesn't need anything because wherever he is, in whatever condition, that person knows, 'My mother is here with me. My God is here with me. Because I am a child of God and He will look after me.'

But when a person enters that state he has already reached God. There is no more... forget about visions and other things, such a person may not have a vision of God. It doesn't matter, it is not needed. But his entire behaviour changes. How do we know that such a person has really attained to that state? Does he go on uttering, that I attained to that state. I feel that God is my own.

There are certain definite characteristics are there. It is not easy to attain to that state. There is still one more concept to be understood properly. And that concept is called renunciation. This word frightens many of us because we do not understand the implications, real meaning and implications of this world renunciation . We will discuss about this in our next class.

ॐ शान्ति शान्ति शान्ति: ॥

*Om Shānti Shānti Shāntihi* ॥

( 49:39 mins )