

Service is Man's Opportunity

*How the Busy and Cooperative Bee Can Point
a Moral to Mankind.*

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These observations on service as Man's opportunity are extracted from the May 1939 article titled above.

Enjoy!

Can we not see from the wonderful spirit of cooperation which prevails in the hive that the existence of the honeybee as a single unit or through individual effort is impossible? The motivating impulse pervading the colony is apparently to insure the perpetuation of the species rather than that of the individual. So too does that unquenchable divine spark within us desire that we think only in terms of human service. Our aspirations must be above the petty aims and ambitions of men. Our work must be performed in the spirit of duty, love and service without regard for fame, fortune or reward, unconcerned as to whether it

leads to unknown glory or to crucifixion. We must toil on unceasingly, with indefatigable *en ergy*, determination and earnestness of purpose, believing fervently that there is much-needed cooperative work to do in the world.

Do the Lord's Will

With an inherent faith in our ultimate victory over whatever obstacles impede our evolutionary progress, we must go on. It matters not how difficult the task, how cluttered and roughshod the path, we must venture forth poised, fearlessly, wholeheartedly and unselfishly dedicating ourselves to the task of helping humanity to the extent of our ability. For the reward which life holds out for work is not idleness, nor rest, nor immunity from work, but increased capacity, greater difficulties and more work. We must stand firm as a rock amid the turmoil, unrelenting in the

battle save to do the bidding of the Lord within. Devoted to the well-being of all creatures, the disciple must perform his duties with a heart unattached to the result. He must be satisfied to do that which is deemed the will of the Supreme Spirit, for no other reason than that it ought to be done.

Significance of Duty

True wisdom and strength is to be gained only through doing one's duty, whatever it may be, without fear, without conceit, without caring whether it is difficult or easy, or whether recognized by others or not. The shirking of one's duty comes from fear of evil and from lack of faith in the power of good. Sham excuses and procrastinations until a supposedly more favorable time spring from our desires and passions, and not from the higher nature. Our real enemies, Krishna tells Arjuna in the holy *Bhagavad Gita*, are our hidden desires to find an easy road to gain fortune, glory and knowledge without work and without wounds. Our hardest temptations are our secret likes and dislikes, our own inner tendencies and habits.

Duty is not what others think we should do; it is not something irksome to be performed under duress and therefore to be avoided. It is the sacred fulfillment of the work of our natural calling under karmic destiny. The working out and elimination of defects, in all vicissitudes of human endeavor through many incarnations, bring us to earth, life after life, under

the conditions in which we find ourselves and which we should recognize as the very opportunities needed for our further progress, service and discipline.

If we could but understand that the Lord within is leading us through all experience that we may recognize the unity of all, then we would cease to act contrary to that solidarity and reciprocity in nature. Otherwise, without our will, through much suffering and many defeats, we will be obliged to pass through many weary treadmills of lives on earth, until step by step the proper seeds of mental action are sown from which the crop of right discrimination may be gathered.

When Arjuna says to Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*: "I will not fight," such a determination proves itself in vain. Being similarly bound by all past karma to our natural duties, we are compelled to do involuntarily from necessity that which by folly we sought to abandon or evade.

Aptitude For Larger Work

It is by working with painstaking effort and persevering energy that we develop an aptitude for larger work. The faithful discharge of today's duties is the best preparation for tomorrow's trials. Life is chiefly made up, not of great sacrifices and wonderful achievements, but of little things. It is through our failure to endure these tests that come to us in little things that wrong habits are created and characters are misshapen;

when the great tests come, we find ourselves unable to stand firm and faithful in more dangerous and difficult situations.

We frequently feel stirring within ourselves tremendous impulses to rise to great heights in responsibility and accomplishments. Yet the door has been closed by our own persistent evasions of duty because of dread of annoyances. Then we wonder why our environment is uncongenial, our work commonplace and our efforts unappreciated.

Service of the Masters

The masters give no stinted service; they do not measure their work by hours. Their time, heart, soul and strength are given to labor for the benefit of humanity. Jesus carried the awful weight of responsibility for the salvation of men. Like a blazing mighty mountain, out of the night of darkness and ignorance he shed light that we might find our own way. His gift of mercy and love was as boundless and unconfined as the sea or the air.

Masters come to earth with the hoarded love of eternity; they walk in humility. They seek only to plant into the hearts and minds of men the seeds of truth, toiling with an all-consuming zeal for the good of all. Our lives too should reflect the true goodness of unselfish deeds. Buddha is reputed as saying that "sorrow's ceasing comes with perfect service rendered, with duties done in charity, with soft speech and stainless days, for these are riches that will not fade away nor die with the death of the body."