

Bhaktyaloka

Essay 7

Utsāha- Enthusiasm

The cause of indifference (or) lack of enthusiasm is:

Perceiving that work to be not meant for him (or) not beneficial for him.



When one feels himself qualified for a process or activity, one will actively practice it...

1. Qualification for jnana yoga : detachment achieved from purification of heart through the practice of Niskama karma yoga

2. Qualification for karma yoga: not disgusted with material life and have many desires to fulfill to enjoy in the material world

3. Qualification for bhakti yoga: sraddha (faith in pure devotional service) attained through ajnata sukriti

Classic symptoms of a sadhaka

SB 11.20.27-28

1. jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu - Has awakened faith in the process of bhakti
2. nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu - Disgusted with varnasrama prescribed duties
3. veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān - Understands that sense gratification leads to misery
4. parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ - Still unable to give up sense gratification
4. juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan - Unable to give up sense gratification, he sincerely repents for engaging in such acts

Krishna's instruction for such a sadhaka

tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhālur dṛḍha-nīścayaḥ :

prītaḥ: enthusiasm

Remain enthusiastic and worship Me with great faith and determination

Someone may say, I have more enthusiasm for sense gratification than engaging in bhakti. So how am I qualified for bhakti?

But that enthusiasm for sense gratification is coming from our conditioning. And how do we ultimately feel after engaging in that sense gratification?

For a sadhaka

1. Enthusiasm for his bhakti comes from his faith
2. Whereas enthusiasm for sense gratification comes from his conditioning

Therefore, when a devotee gets big success in his sense gratification endeavours, at the end he feels regret.

Whereas if the devotee gets even little success in his bhakti endeavours, he feels satisfied.

Enthusiasm comes by understanding our qualification. So when we understand that we are qualified for bhakti, we can enthusiastically practice bhakti.

What is the nature of pure devotional faith?

yadṛcchayā mat-kathādau
jāta-śraddhas tu yaḥ pumān
na nirviṇṇo nāti-sakto
bhakti-yogo 'sya siddhi-daḥ

ŚB 11.20.8

na nirviṇṇaḥ — not falsely detached

na ati-saktaḥ : not very much attached to
material existence

A bhakti yogi is not detached like a jnana yogi and also does not have the goal to enjoy in this material world.

They accept some material activities as a support for their spiritual awakening, but they have no attachment for such activities (ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam).

He accepts without attachment only those activities that are favorable for increasing his faith in the Lord.

Should we feel guilty if we have enthusiasm for maintaining our material body and doing our occupational duties?

Without the material body one cannot cultivate devotional service.

So there is no benefit if one renounces the activities that are needed to maintain the physical body, thinking them to be the source of misery and lust.

The fruits of those activities, which are the source of misery for others, are therefore enjoyed by the devotees.

By taking care of the body properly, one will have a healthy body by which a devotee can serve Krishna nicely - this brings devotee great joy!

Whereas others keeps their bodies healthy so that they can engage more and more in sense gratification which brings them more misery in the end.

Devotees get to enjoy the fruits of their bhakti

By the practice of bhakti, one gets prema in the end.

But even at the anartha nivrtti stage, one experiences some benefits due to their practice of bhakti.

First two benefits of practicing bhakti (Based on Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu)

1. Klesagni - destruction of suffering
2. Subhada - bestowal of auspiciousness

Subhada is of 4 types:

- 1) bestowal of happiness

Devotees do bare minimum to keep their bodies healthy and enthusiastically engage in devotional service

For a karmi, there is affection for material enjoyment.

For a devotee, he has affection for Krishna but due to conditioning he may succumb to material enjoyment.

Devotees accept whatever is favourable for their devotional service.

They do whatever is needed to keep their body and soul together and enthusiastically practice bhakti.

Process of advancement for a sadhaka

When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshipping me through bhakti, all material desires within the heart are destroyed .

ŚB
11.20.29

Ahaṅkāra is cut and all doubts are destroyed. All karma vasanas are destroyed.

ŚB
11.20.30

Real bhakti: Uttama bhakti

1. nirāśiṣaḥ: The devotee practices bhakti only for the pleasure of Krishna. (anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyaṁ)

ŚB
11.20.35

2. nirapekṣasya : that bhakti does not depend on other processes like karma or jnana. (jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam)

The purport is this:

It is useless trying independently to destroy ignorance and lust in the heart.

Separate enthusiastic endeavour for anartha nivṛtti through jnana, vairagya, yoga, etc is not at all needed.

Have full enthusiasm for bhakti

Ignorance, lust, fruitive activities, all doubts, and material bondage are destroyed by the mercy of the Lord in the course of cultivating devotional service.

Therefore, enthusiasm should be there only for devotional service.

One should have no enthusiasm for the goals of karma, jnana and yoga - bhukti, mukti and siddhi.

In the very beginning of devotional service the sādḥaka must have faith with full enthusiasm.

How would a sadhaka have full enthusiasm at the beginning stage of bhakti?

Full enthusiasm means whatever enthusiasm one has, it is only for bhakti (not for any other process).

Someone may have low enthusiasm but low enthusiasm only in bhakti.

One does not think that one needs to practice any other process along with bhakti.

Purity of faith/ enthusiasm

vs

Strength of faith/enthusiasm

So full enthusiasm means pure faith/ enthusiasm - enthusiasm only for bhakti.

One with pure faith and full enthusiasm might have weak faith and low enthusiasm - but that is because of his conditionings and impure heart.

Don't lose enthusiasm during the 6 stages of unsteady devotional service

Unsteady devotional service - stage of bhajana kriya

Anartha nivrtti

steady devotional service - stage of nistha

6 stages of unsteady devotional service

1. Utsaha - mayi: false confidence or one may be puffed up with enthusiasm.
2. Ghana - tarala: Sporadic endeavour; being sometimes diligent and other times negligent.
3. Vyudha - vikalpa: indecision(extensive speculation); the mind spends time pondering on whether to renounce or take to household life.
4. Visaya - sangara: struggle with the senses or the inability to give up sense enjoyment.
5. Niyamaksama: inability to uphold vows which results in the inability to improve in ones devotional service.
6. Taranga - rangini: enjoying the facilities offered by bhakti i.e material gain, worship, and position. These are weeds around the creeper of bhakti. Seeking pleasure (ranga) in the weed like facilities which are small waves (taranga) in the ocean of bhakti.

Inattentiveness is a sign of lack of enthusiasm

In order to progress, there should be no inattentiveness.

One should consciously try to overcome the 3 types of inattentiveness to enthusiastically practice devotional service.

Address inattentiveness to really become enthusiastic.