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Conscious Action

Spiritual Straight Talk

People ask me, "To seek the Divine, should one withdraw from worldly affairs?"

How can you withdraw from worldly affairs anyway? What is it that you are referring to as "worldly affairs"? Let us say, I am tending to a coconut tree, or that I am cooking my own food. Are these not worldly affairs? How can you live in the world without attending to its affairs?

Now, what kind of affairs you want to do is your choice. For example, everyone doesn't have to join politics. In society, someone is into politics, someone else is a clerk in an office, somebody else is running a whole industry, and someone is just sweeping floors. All of them are doing worldly affairs. One way or another, there is no withdrawing from it.

It is just a choice of what kind of worldly affairs you want to do and how much. And why shouldn't each person have this choice? Every person definitely has the choice. It is only those who do not know what they are doing with themselves, and are just blindly doing what everybody else is doing who are concerned about worldly affairs getting in the way of a spiritual movement. They don't know what to do by and for themselves. They have cultivated neither the intelligence nor the awareness to live their life by choice.

Such people are always complaining about spiritual people, "Oh! These people are not being responsible. They are not into worldly affairs, they are just doing their own thing." What they don't grasp is that the man who is in his own house or in his own office is also there just to take care of his own affairs. He is not interested in the well being of the world. He actually doesn't know what his real affair is, and has gotten himself into such a mess that he doesn't even know how to get out of it. Because he is unable to get out, he thinks that somebody who is able to manage his own affairs the way he wants to, and to the extent that he wants to, is on the wrong bus.

It happened like this. One day, a drunk somehow pulled himself onto a bus, stumbled around over the passengers, dislodged suitcases and briefcases, and finally landed on a seat next to a prim and proper old lady ? and fell over on her. The lady pushed him and said, "I hate to say this, but you are going straight to hell." The drunk suddenly sprang up and said, "I am on the wrong bus then," and ran to get off.

So, drunken people do not know who is on the wrong bus. The problem is not worldly affairs but the excess and corruption of it. Right now, the way the world is going, if a lot of people become over-industrious and continue to do too many things on this planet, it will not even last another ten years. Fortunately, fifty percent of the people are lazy. Almost all of the other half which is too industrious, is busy destroying the world. Probably only one percent is really spiritual. What is urgently needed is more people engaging in worldly affairs with a sound spiritual grounding.

People who are withdrawing from excessive activity are not causing any damage either to themselves, the society, the world, the environment, or the planet. It is only people who are engaged in activity in absolute unawareness who are truly destroying this world, isn't it? In total unawareness, not knowing what they are doing, simply imitating someone, they are doing more damaging activity than anyone else. They are the people who are causing tremendous damage to the planet and really threatening life on it. They are the people who are taking the whole

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of humanity toward global suicide.

So right now, the most responsible thing you can do is to withdraw from unconscious activity, but withdrawing from activity is not so simple. It takes tremendous maturity to simply sit quietly, only doing things to the extent that it is needed. This doesn't come because you are lazy or irresponsible; it comes because you are aware and conscious.

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