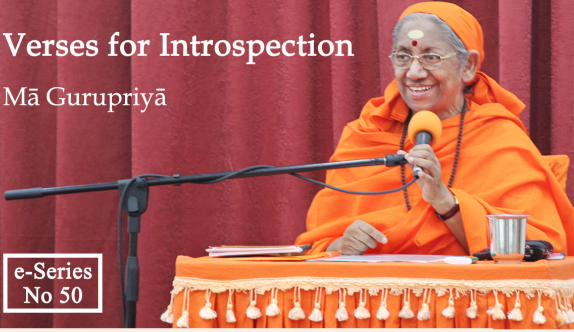


Verses for Introspection

Mā Gurupriyā

e-Series
No 50



Contentment – the Real Wealth

वयमिह परितुष्टा वल्कलैस्त्वं दुकूलैः
सम इव परितोषो निर्विशेषो विशेषः ।
स तु भवति दरिद्रो यस्य तृष्णा विशाला
मनसि च परितुष्टे कोऽर्थवान् को दरिद्रः ॥

vayam-ihā parituṣṭā valkalais-tvaṃ dukūlaiḥ
sama iva paritoṣo nirviśeṣo viśeṣaḥ ।
sa tu bhavati daridro yasya tṛṣṇā viśālā
manasi ca parituṣṭe ko'rthavān ko daridraḥ ॥

- Vairāgya-śatakam 53

We are content to wear garments made of bark of trees and you with dress made of soft material. But the contentment is alike; the difference (in attire) makes no difference. He whose desires are huge is indeed poor. If the contentment is in the mind, then who is rich and who is poor?



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

Points for Introspection

A king told his Guru, an ascetic and a sannyāsin, that he was very sad to see the Guru wearing bark of a tree which was very coarse for the skin. The king thereby requested his Guru to wear the soft and smooth silken dresses which he would humbly offer to him. This śloka is the reply of the Guru to the disciple-king.

The Guru tells the king: “O King! Just as you are happy wearing a soft silken dress, I am happy and also contented wearing the bark of a tree. Whether you wear a silken dress and I wear a bark, the happiness and contentment experienced by both of us is exactly the same. The difference in attire makes no difference in this contentment.

“Dear King! I know that since you love me and are devoted to me, you are feeling extremely sad seeing your Guru wearing a bark of a tree which is coarse and rough. You are sorrowful thinking the bark is hurting my skin. You are also greatly afflicted thinking I have been forced to wear such a garment because, I, a sannyāsin, not possessing any money, have not been able to buy something better.

“You are mistaken. I am absolutely contented wearing the bark. For me, wearing a garment is for covering the body alone. I have no other desire that it should be softer, more beautiful or costlier or that I should have a variety. I am absolutely contented and extremely grateful to God that he has given me something to cover myself.

“If thoughts of discontent arise in the mind, like, ‘Oh! this attire is not a good one; it is hurting me; I am not looking

nice in this; it is looking very cheap and not costly; it is looking old; I do not have enough money to get variety of dresses,' etc., the mind will lose its peace. Peace will be lost because the mind has got smitten with desire. Whereas one should be satisfied that he has got a covering for the body and be grateful, his mind now fosters the desire of possessing variety of costlier and better garments.

“Dear son! Just because I cannot afford silken dresses, I am not poor at all. Contentment is my wealth. One is rich and wealthy when one has the virtue of contentment.

“Poor is the one who is never satisfied with whatever he has got, and always desires for something more.

“Contentment is in the mind. A person may be happy under a tree wearing a bark and eating flattened rice. But another may not be happy remaining in a palace wearing costly dresses and eating sumptuous and delicious meals because he is not satisfied with whatever he has and desires for something more and different. The mind which has intense desire can never be contented.

“A person having no desire is ever-contented and he alone can be called ‘rich’, even if he has no material wealth. Whereas, a so called rich man having abundant wealth will be ‘poor’ if he suffers in the mind because of lack of contentment, arising from desires.

“Contentment is the real wealth of every human being. If the mind has no desire and is adorned with contentment, then every mind is rich whether one is wealthy or not.”

Whenever our mind is smitten by desire, and suffers from lack of contentment we should remember this śloka.

Word Meaning

वयम् (vayam) = we; इह (iha) = here; परितुष्टाः (parituṣṭāḥ) = satisfied, contented; वल्कलैः (valkalaiḥ) = by garments made of the bark of a tree; त्वम् (tvam) = you; दुकूलैः (dukūlaiḥ) = by garments made of a fine cloth; समः (samaḥ) = same, similar; इव (iva) = in the same manner, like; परितोषः (paritoṣaḥ) = delight; निर्विशेषः (nirviśeṣaḥ) = undiscriminating, having no difference; विशेषः (viśeṣaḥ) = distinction, characteristic difference; सः (saḥ) = he; तु (tu) = indeed; भवति (bhavati) = becomes; दरिद्रः (daridraḥ) = poor; यस्य (yasya) = whose; तृष्णा (tṛṣṇā) = desire; विशाला (viśālā) = large, extensive; मनसि (manasi) = in the mind; च (ca) = and; परितुष्टे (parituṣṭe) = contented, completely satisfied; कः (kaḥ) = who; अर्थवान् (arthavān) = wealthy, rich; कः (kaḥ) = who; दरिद्रः (daridraḥ) = poor;

अन्वयः - (Prose order)

वयं इह वल्कलैः परितुष्टाः। त्वं दुकूलैः (परितुष्टः)। सम इव परितोषः निर्विशेषः विशेषः। यस्य तृष्णा विशाला सः तु दरिद्रः भवति। मनसि च परितुष्टे कः अर्थवान् कः दरिद्रः।

vayaṃ iha valkalaiḥ parituṣṭāḥ. tvam dukūlaiḥ (parituṣṭaḥ). sama iva paritōṣaḥ nirviśeṣaḥ viśeṣaḥ. yasya tṛṣṇā viśālā saḥ tu daridraḥ bhavati. manasi ca parituṣṭe kaḥ arthavān kaḥ daridraḥ.
