

Seeing It from God's Point of View

One time, a number of years ago, in the presence of Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī, one of the senior people of the ashram spoke in a somewhat negative manner. The next morning, following meditation, Pūjya Swāmījī gave a very animated talk. He almost thundered, “There is no room for negativity in Vedānta. Vedānta is always positive.”

In the Gītā, Lord Kṛṣṇa does not want us to be concerned with the fruits of our actions, but He doesn't want us to avoid actions. Sometimes people ask, “How can I work, if I am not striving for success?” From a human point of view that question seems quite reasonable, but it misunderstands the way Pūjya Swāmījī wants us to function and the way Lord Kṛṣṇa wants us to function.

One time there was an ashramite who was not well. Gurudev pulled out all stops to save him; he turned the ashram upside down, so to speak, to get him all help. Unfortunately, his efforts were not successful; the man passed away. Swami Venkatesanandaji who was present said that if you looked at Gurudev's face afterwards it was if nothing had happened. He had done his best and then absolute peace. No regrets, no complaints, just peace.

This is perhaps one of the hardest lessons that we need to learn. If we make effort, we want results. However, we are supposed to make maximum effort to do our duty, but then to let go of the fruits. That's easy to say, but in practice just try working and working and working and then, with no complaints, just letting the results go. The theory is great. We think we can do it, but when it comes right down to the crunch, we don't let it go. We are usually elated when we succeed and dismayed when we fail.

That means, of course, that we are seeing action from our point of view, not from God's point of view. When Lord Kṛṣṇa was telling Arjuna to make all effort, but leave the results to God, He was speaking from His point of view, from God's point of view. When Arjuna became depressed and didn't want to do his duty, Arjuna was seeing it from his point of view. The whole of the Gītā was to convert Arjuna from his point of view to the Lord's point of view. The Lord's point of view meant that Arjuna would remember the truth and do his duty.

Therefore, in the final analysis there is no *sādhana* that is more real than striving with everything within us to do our duty, but at all times seeing it from the Lord's point of view—that success and failure are in His hands, and that He knows what is best for His universe, which includes us.