

The Danger of Comfort Levels

We bring to our seeking our background. This is inevitable. No matter how new to us the spiritual life may be, we are bound to approach it with what we know and how we generally approach life. The difficulty we need to recognize is that fundamentally success in the world and success in the spiritual life require two different approaches because they are basically different.

In the world we are trying to attain something that we don't presently have. Whether it is an education, a job or a new car, we are prepared to work hard to attain something new. Whereas in the spiritual life we are told to work hard to discover what we already have but are not aware of. It means that our task is to rid ourselves of accretions that are blocking our natural understanding of the truth.

Aside from that fundamental difference in approach, which is vital for us to understand, there are many similarities, the most basic one being that if we want to be successful we have to aspire for it. We have to hunger and thirst for it, in the words of Jesus.

There is another factor that both lives have in common that we should be aware of. Perhaps the greatest detriment to success in either life is the human tendency to reach a comfort level. To be successful requires struggle. The *tamas* in us gets tired of struggle. It never did like it, but the determination in us overcomes it for awhile.

However, when we have achieved certain goals and our life has improved, there is a tendency to relax. We have reached a comfort level. In the world this may not be all wrong. Those that we are working for may wish we didn't feel a comfort level and would keep striving, but from a personal point of view perhaps it is better to be happy where we are.

That does not apply to the spiritual life. Gurudev never wanted us to rest until we had reached the final goal. The final goal is always beyond us until we reach it. Therefore, steadily but surely we must keep plodding along. We must also know that we don't know what is best for us. We must ever be sensitive to our present situation and the surprising way that God may be leading us. In the final analysis the less we think we know, the closer we are to God.