

Let's Stop Begging

Suppose a beggar, who has never seen anything more valuable than currency notes, gets a priceless jewel as alms. Unaware of its value, he puts it aside and keeps begging.

Tragic, isn't it?

From the Vedic viewpoint, most modern humans are like this beggar. All of us are souls transmigrating in various human and subhuman species. All species crave for material pleasures, a craving that makes them wretched like a beggar. Let's see how.

A beggar's life has three characteristics:

1. What he wants is not in his control to get; he cannot force people to give alms.
2. Most of the time, he doesn't get what he wants; people generally neglect beggars.
3. Even when he gets what he wants, he never gets it as much as he wants. No beggar becomes a millionaire by begging.



Similarly,

1. The sensual pleasures we want depend on many conditions beyond our control. For example, we can enjoy food only when our body is healthy, our mind is peaceful, the cook is an expert and the server is polite.
2. Most of the time, we don't get the pleasures we crave for. For example, how many people can afford all the jazzily-advertised food products that they desire to eat?
3. Even when we get sensual pleasures, they are never as much as we want, because the body inescapably limits our enjoyment. For example, even if a glutton is allowed to eat free in a five-star hotel, can he enjoy eating continuously lifelong? Obviously not. All bodily pleasures are short-lived, whereas our craving is long-lasting and is never fulfilled by bodily pleasures.

Thus, material desires make all living beings like beggars.

Fortunately, we humans have a way out of this poverty of the heart. We have been enriched with human bodies, which are like priceless jewels. Why are human bodies considered so precious?


As souls, beloved children of the supreme millionaire, God, Krishna, we are entitled to unlimited happiness. We are eternal and so is God. Consequently when we direct our love to Him, we eternally rejoice in divine love. Only in human bodies do we souls get the intelligence to choose to love God instead of material objects. Just as a jewel, when offered to a jeweler, yields immense wealth, similarly the human body when intelligently offered in devotional service to God, yields everlasting happiness. And the most easy and effective form of devotional service is chanting the holy names. Therefore, just by diligently chanting the names of God, we can encash our wealth.

Unfortunately, most of us currently know no happiness other than material. Consequently, we unwittingly put our advanced human intelligence aside and continue seeking animalistic sensual pleasures, as we have been doing in all our past lives. However this pursuit is permanently frustrated; no matter how much wealth we acquire, our material desires will keep us like beggars.

Being the most loving father, Krishna doesn't want us, His beloved children, to suffer this needless frustration. That's why He comes from His abode (our original home) to this material world to deliver His message of love, the Bhagavad-gita, and to thus invite us back. And that's why He sends great sages like Srila Prabhupada to exhort us to give up begging for sensual pleasures and get reinstated in our spiritual status.

When Krishna is inviting us to reclaim our spiritual glory, why should we keep begging for



material pleasures? 

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