

Reform Yourself First

(Excerpts from Satsang of Pujya Sant Shri Asaramji Bapu)

Time is fleeting. You never know what awaits you in the next moment. The physical body that we consider as 'I' is also destined to perish sooner or later. Therefore do not waste your precious time and exert all efforts in accumulating the wealth of japa of the divine name. The scriptures also exhort us:

'Leave aside a hundred chores to eat at the right time. Ignoring a thousand tasks take a bath. Put aside a lakh duties to perform charity and abandon a crore of tasks to devote yourself completely to the Supreme task of God-realization.'

People think, 'Once I get my daughter married ' If my son were to get a good job' Let this task be over or that responsibility be finished' then I will wholeheartedly engage myself in spiritual pursuits.'

Swami Madhavatirtha Maharaj started his career as an audit officer in the railways. He was known as Madhubhai in those days. He wanted to lead the life of an ascetic but was extremely concerned about his daughter's marriage. He decided to take up sanyasa after the marriage of his daughter.

Once, on the April Fools' Day, someone played a practical joke on him and published a news item stating that he had already become a Sanyasi. While he was on his way to Mumbai in connection with an audit assignment, he saw this piece of news in the paper. His immediate reaction was that it was God's way of inspiring him to take up sanyasa. As soon as he reached Mumbai, he submitted his resignation and became a Sanyasi. And once he took the plunge and became a Sadhu, his daughter was easily married into a mill owner's family. Had he tried his hardest, it would have still been almost impossible for him to find such a worthy groom for his daughter. Earlier, he was constantly worried about his daughter's marriage but once he became a Sanyasi all his pending tasks were accomplished without any problem. Madhavatirtha Maharaj is no more with us but Lalaji Maharaj, who did sadhana under the tutelage of Madhavatirtha Maharaj and regards him as his Guru, is still alive and well known to me.

I too used to think, 'Once my brother gives up vices like smoking, watching movies, drinking tea, etc. and things are set right at home, I will renounce the world.' My brother would order me to fetch him a cigarette and I had no choice but to do his bidding. But once I renounced home and took shelter under Gurudev's benign tutelage, I did not need to tell him anything anymore; he stopped smoking, watching movies and would even queue up for having my darshan on his own.

The mistake we all commit is that we try to reform others. Those who don't want to reform themselves start reforming others and end up losing their own peace of mind.

First become strong yourself. Perfect yourself first and the reformation of others will automatically ensue. And for that all you need is just engage yourself in the pursuit of God-realization.