

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION:

Q. 301, WHERE WE MISUNDERSTOOD?

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh, episode 301 welcomes you.

Q. 301: Where we misunderstood?

There's no reason to think that a man who does no wrong will automatically do what is right. The reality is that a man who wants to do wrong things and cannot do so because of the inner and outer barriers, which are both social arrangements, that man tries to find ways to do what he wants to do, from some other angle. If he is not allowed to open one door he tries to open a back door. He finds a way from here or there and commits wrong. We find that this is what happens most of the time.

Of course the manifestation or appearance of wrong may change. The mode or the name for it may change. But when a man is forced to repress his desire for doing wrong, then that desire for doing wrong keeps on looking for a way to somehow explode somewhere else. At some point it gathers like poison and surfaces like a boil. This is why deep down, all of humanity has become sick and neurotic. This must have become very clear to all of us

The immoral person suffers because the society punishes him. And if the society fails to punish him, then his own conscience which the society has created in him, becomes full of self-condemnation, self-contempt, guilt and inferiority. That too is a punishment. But the man who we call moral, who somehow manages to avoid doing wrong and is thus able to avoid the law, the courts and the self-condemnation, that man becomes the victim of so many neuroses or complexes.

Sigmund Freud, the greatest psychiatrist of the century and perhaps of all humanity has said that there will be no way to avoid neurosis or complexes as long as society goes on trying to make man moral. This is a frightening statement indeed! It is! Yes! But it is a statement from the man who knows, a man who has come to this conclusion after seeing, studying, analysing and treating thousands of patients.

As long as the efforts to make man moral continue, there seems to be no way for man to be free of psychological diseases. Because when you suppress the wrong from one side, it comes out from another side, from another direction, in some other form and in a more perverted way because its natural route has been cut off. Many times it happens that you suppress one disease and then that same disease comes back in the form of ten other diseases. It is just as if you have blocked the passage of a water-fall which then becomes ten streams

People used to ask Freud, "Then what is the way out? Should the effort to make a man moral be abandoned?" Freud would answer that if you stop trying to make a man moral, the whole civilization and culture will eventually be destroyed. If you really want to keep civilization and culture you'll have to teach morality. What is the consequence of this? The consequence is that man will go on becoming a

psychological victim. So the more civilised the society is, the more psychological diseases there will be. The proportion will rise with the rise of civilization or human advancement.

Freud's conclusion is that if civilization is to be saved, then this will be the inevitable consequence and we'll just have to suffer with it. But this is tragic and it fills the heart with sadness. Neither of the two alternatives seem to be worth choosing. For man to become uncivilized, uncultured and animal-like does not appeal to the mind. Also, the thought of the earth becoming one big madhouse where slowly people will be full of so many psychological diseases, is also not appealing. However, this is what is happening today.

Today, in the highly civilized countries there is a greater demand for psychiatrists than for regular doctors. Many physical diseases have become common and easy to treat. They have become curable because medicines have been discovered for them.

But psychological diseases are becoming extraordinarily complex and their treatment seems to be becoming more and more difficult. As doctors try to treat them and to find cures for them, the complexities which are found are alarming.

One outcome of research done by psychologists in the past twenty-five years says that if an insane person is to be treated, then the whole family has to be treated. Earlier, they used to treat just the man himself. Now they say that you can cure the man only if they can treat the whole family because his insanity is related to his family.

Now psychologists are also saying that even if you treat his family, what will be achieved by it? Because the family itself is a part of a larger group. This whole collective is full of some kind of madness, and this is why a family gathers or attracts insanity.

So earlier, the mad people or insane persons were treated individually. Later people thought the family had to be treated. Now the time has come that the larger group has got to be treated also, as the family is a part of that larger group.

The most interesting thing that they say is that in a group of say twenty families, the most sensitive and most sincere family will go mad first. And also the most sensitive and sincere person in that family will go mad first. An insincere person finds a way not to go mad. He says one thing and does something else so that he does not go mad. But if a person is very sincere and does what he says, he will get into trouble. So now, this is the difficulty.

Morality says that your thoughts and actions should be the same. But we won't find many people whose thoughts and actions are the same. And there are no scientific ways to check it. Otherwise, we would find that even people who we think are honest, are not.

If a man is really honest and he listens to his social conscience, he will go mad. If he does not go mad, it is only because he is managing to find a way out. Somewhere in

his life, he must have some back door through which he can escape and release his madness.

This social consciousness is not the true conscience. This social conscience is not the conscience which is meant by Vedanta. This is the first thing. The conscience that we usually speak about, the real conscience is what is left when you look within yourself, after you have put social conscience aside.

In other words, we have to put social conscience aside in order to get glimpses of the real conscience. You must remove all the layers given to you by society and you must put society aside in every possible way. You must put aside all that society has forced upon you, imposed upon you and all the conditioning it has created in you. Then, even if a shadow of the false conscience falls on you, if you look within yourself, you will know the conscience which belongs to you, in the same way that you know your eyes and your heart and your brain belong to you.

This conscience is an essential part of your life. Once the purity of it comes to your notice and you have discovered the art of listening to it, then there will be no difference between thought and action in your life. Then, a man will never say, "I feel one thing to be right but I do something else." Then he will only do what he feels to be right.

Socrates said that understanding is action, the understanding that comes from the true conscience is action. Then there will be no difference between your understanding and your doing. And if there is, know well that the conscience that you are talking about is not your own. The experience of the authentic inner conscience is like the experience you have of fire burning. You don't put your hand into the fire because you know that it burns. You never say, 'I know that fire burns but I am helpless. I'll put my hand into the fire.' Do you say that?

A man follows the voice of his own conscience in the same way that a man who wants to leave a building walks through the door. He never says, "I know where the door is but I am helpless. It is my weakness that I still try to walk out through the wall and get my skull broken, but I know where the door is!"

No man of authentic conscience can ever say, 'I know what is right but still I do wrong!' I repeat once again. No man of authentic conscience can ever say, 'I know what is right but I still do wrong!'

So, if you are aware of your true conscience, you will never commit wrong and you will never say that you are helpless. In this state of authentic conscience, understanding and action are synonymous. In this state of authentic conscience, a person does not say that he knows anger is bad, but anger just comes out! Or that he knows that swearing and cursing are bad. He knows it but he continues to do it! It means he has no control over it!

Your potentiality is deeper than this! Yes, you can do the one thing that people with a pseudo-conscience have to do constantly, and that is to repent. First, you will get angry and then you will repent. The interesting thing is that no matter how much you repent, it will not transform your actions. During the day you are angry and in the

evening you repent. Tomorrow morning you'll again become angry and by the evening you'll again repent. So in fact, repentance is just an integral part of your anger.

Sai Ram