

THE MISSION AND THE MISSIONARIES

Written by:
Krishan Lal

Edited by:
Joginder Singh
Des Raj Ahu

PRELIMINARIES

The purpose of life is to search and realise the Ultimate Reality, the base of things, and not merely to 'eat, drink and be merry', the same weary round. The universe takes its root not in matter, but in All-pervading Spirit. The Infinite is neither a matter of philosophical jargon nor a speculative philosophy, but a stark reality. All else might be false, but God alone is true. However, the world today is engulfed in a whirlpool of materialism, pushing the Ultimate Reality beyond the range of human comprehension.

True concept of God, as the creator and sustainer of the universe is eclipsed by different philosophical systems, which do not truly reflect God's supreme entity. Some evens deny His very existence. Those, who subscribe to the infamous concept of God-denial, are guilty of the worst sin.

Morbidity, torturing perplexities and corrupt practices have clogged human spirit. Moral degeneration and spiritual breakdown of the society coupled with theological artistry, have created moral and religious chaos wherein doubts and delusions have occupied a predominant place. This is the consequence of casting off the restraining influence of reverential fear of the omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient God Formless-*Nirankar*. Man needs to anchor God, who is formless, featureless, self-existent, eternal, boundless, imperishable, unparalleled reality and the only true benefactor and saviour of mankind.

Hence, there is an imperative need for a band of missionaries, of course, the right type of missionaries, for truthful preaching of the true concept of God with the spirit of devotion and dedication, love and humility, sacrifice and service. It becomes their bounden duty to dispel the mist of ignorance, cleanse the human mind of superstitions and misconceptions, perverse thinking and blurred vision and thereby awaken, enlighten and bring round the oblivious, ignorant and self-centered ones to acknowledge and endear the only infinite, infallible and unsurpassable Truth of all times and climes, guide the misguided to follow the path of righteousness with a sense of resignation to the Divine will, emotional and spiritual awareness and vulcanize the human spirit with abiding love and faith in the Divine, the source and summit of evolution, so as to contain the spreading influence and incidence of evil, and thus restore peace, harmony and order in the society.

Anyone who has read a few books, memorised scriptures and sayings of saints and seers, has the knack of delivering discourses and sermons with play and pun on words, spells out borrowed illustrations, anecdotes and folklores, quotes parables, half-truths and references in support of philosophical ideas with a bit of fluency, can safely venture to don the robes and wear the looks of an impressive preacher. Mechanical recitation, outpour of paraphrased theories and explanations with coined glossy phrases and proverbs, preferred howsoever much magnificently with the skill of an orator, surely, lack the solid base of Divine Knowledge. He, who himself is not enlightened and groomed by the True Master, can hardly be expected to educate and impart true knowledge to others. And, more often than not, the motive of such a person is just to exploit the innocent and maintain his hold in the guise of a missionary. Such ulterior motives rather do disservice to the society by creating perplexing situations and obscuring the vision of the seekers to perceive the Truth. Appearances are often deceptive, and things are not what they seem. No wonder, if with eloquent tongue, he is able to hoodwink and entice the simple-minded and manage to rally round him a circle of admirers who, taking him at

face value, acclaim him as a spiritual stalwart! It will, however, be a folly to acknowledge such a person as a true missionary:

"Outwardly, there is not much difference between man and man. A hypocrite may have a better saintly look than a true saint, but the real test is whether his mind is fixed on God or things worldly."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

The missionary is an uncommon being, a worthy disciple, having deep-rooted and committed faith in the sanctified Word of Light bestowed by the Spiritual Master. He is a trusted messenger of his Master who has been assigned the sacred task of unravelling the secret of Eternal Truth on his behalf. He is pledged to hold aloft and keep the torch of Divine Light glowing, inculcate in human soul the likeness of the Divinity, impart Enlightenment to the seekers in quest of Divine Knowledge and spread his Master's holy message of love and humility, service and compassion, tolerance and forgiveness, fortitude and non-violence, mutual trust, good-will and respect, equality and peace with good conscience as a sacred duty. He is duty-bound to inspire people around him to lead a virtuous life by his own personal example of high moral and temperate existence of purity and piety. He should be ever vigilant and alert that he does not allow cracks and fissures to appear to mar and shatter his spiritual and moral soundness. He should bear in mind that his having been chosen as a missionary is a rare and priceless opportunity given by the Master, and is his life's paramount interest, foremost duty and the biggest challenge. No other consideration equals in importance to his sacred duty as a missionary, and no worldly riches can in the least stand in comparison with this spiritual affluence. As such, he is duty-bound to represent his Mentor truly and faithfully, interpret and expound his teachings accurately, communicate his message of truth, love, humility and service honestly and thus acquit himself creditably.

Although there is a band of dedicated missionaries entrusted with the sacred duty of preaching the lofty tenets of the Mission and sacred teachings of the Master, yet in quite a significant way, each and every devotee of the Mission is potentially a missionary by virtue of the truth and enlightenment bestowed upon him by the benevolent Master, which he is ever eager to share with others. With his sweet disposition and humble words of wisdom, spirit of selfless service and accent on love for one and all, fair dealings and upright conduct, he arouses in those, who come in his contact as also those who watch him with admiration, an inquisitive feeling and an ardent desire to know and understand the real spiritual force behind. He inspires them to come closer to experience the Truth just at the expense of a voluntary reverential bow at the lotus feet of the Master, which relieves them of their ego and pride to become humble and noble. Naturally, he paves the way for spiritual enlightenment of those around him.

It must be conceded that the image he projects goes a long way to influence and inspire the seekers. The spadework done by him is of paramount importance, being the prelude to the crucial moment when the authorised missionary, with the benevolent blessings of the True Master, reveals the Eternal Truth, and impresses upon the recipient the need and way to pious and tidy existence.

The Mission of the Master is in the care of the humble, enlightened and trusted missionaries with spiritual maturity, insight and intellectual honesty. They must come up to the expectations of the Master and measure up to the solemn confidence, from the human to the divine, they have to shoulder the onerous responsibility conscientiously,

diligently and fearlessly, and with dedication to the fundamental cause of all causes. They have to work resolutely for the uplift of the spiritually retarded in particular and for the amelioration of the society as a whole. It is for them to lift the ignorant out of the morass of crass superstitions, delusions, doubts and blind faith, and put them on the right track to identify and reach the right goal through right means. They have got to be very careful that they dispense the Divine knowledge with simplicity and sincerity of purpose, without any consideration and glamour of priesthood. They have to exhort the recipient that God Formless (Nirankar) ever dwelleth and abideth with man, who should have irrevocable allegiance to Him only, worship Him alone and none else. In unequivocal terms, they have to lay utmost emphasis on the essence of spirituality and explain the futility of rituals and external appearances. But all expositions or exhortations will simply remain an exercise in futility unless the recipient is made to understand and realise the practical significance of upholding and living up to the time-tested spiritual and moral values in every walk of life. So, the missionary should be a mighty hope to the hapless for spiritual regeneration as is expected of him.

Success of the missionary in his mission depends upon his personal calibre and capability, soundness of character, integrity and, of course, his gumption, love, devotion and sincerity, which give impetus and maintain the momentum to carry on the job ceaselessly. This spirit of selfless service and dedication is what wings are to a bird, without which it cannot soar higher and higher. This has to be kept ever ablaze. It is the quality of faith and the real substance, which matter and work wonder. His capability and the manner in which he convincingly presents his illuminating experience will be judged and measured by the impact he leaves on the minds of his listeners and, above all, the response he elicits:

"Mere discourses and sermons will do us no good. Books cannot give us enlightened life, although they can give us knowledge. A true saint moulds our very life into a particular pattern."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

A word of caution: The missionary's task is not a forced labour or a compulsive activity. It is all gratis labour of love, spontaneous volition of conscience, voluntary flow of an urging soul to act in submission to his Master, whom he owes his own spiritual elevation and luster. He should not expect any compensation or reward. His only gain is the rare blessing and pleasure of his Master, and no worldly acquisition stands in comparison to it. He has always to bear in mind that he is never to become proud of the good and noble work he is doing. Again, he must ensure that he is not swayed by the fantastic sense of glory that he is an apple of the Master's eye. Assumed vain feeling will make him status-conscious and puffed up with an air of superiority, breeding the menacing evil of ego, the root-cause of human degradation, downfall and suffering. He should remain content to consider himself singularly fortunate with a deep sense of gratitude to the Master for assigning him the sacred task to serve humanity and should deem it as his rare privilege. He should, however, ensure that no one points an accusing finger at him on any count.

PREREQUISITES

Certain basic tenets and fundamental truths constitute the framework of true spiritual knowledge. The missionary should, therefore, equip himself with thorough knowledge and clear understanding of the core and content of the written and unwritten teachings, principles and ideals for which the Mission stands. He must strive to have an in-depth study and educate himself with the spiritual logic and averments for his efficient contribution as a preacher. Only then, with seasoned understanding, he can be an efficient and impressive exponent of Truth, capable of interpreting and explaining the concepts lucidly and with mature mind and sound reasoning, removing misgivings, if any, with confidence and conviction, answering and satisfying the inquisitive mind and thus earning a gratifying response. Remember, anything that comes from the mouth of the missionary, will be taken and understood to represent the Master and his Mission.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

It may be reiterated that mere theoretical learning does not serve the objective. No doubt, theory is a necessary basic beginning to explicate practice, at the same time, practice if not more, is equally important to bear testimony and corroborate the theory. As such, the missionary has to assimilate and imbibe the theoretical knowledge and, above all, implement it in his day-to-day living. He has to translate his literal understanding into practical wisdom. There ought not to be any gap between his word and deed. If his conduct belies him, his utterances will be scornfully taken with a grain of salt. His sermons, howsoever intelligently and emphatically delivered, will be devoid of practical utility and shall remain ineffective and infructuous. If his preachings are not supported by his own truthful living, he will present a sorry picture of self-contradiction. His flourishing of words will be tantamount to a farcical display of spirituality. Instead of inducting faith, he will be doing great disservice by spoiling and lowering the image of the Mission. The purposes will thus not only stand defeated, but also reversed.

CONDITION PRECEDENT

For any spiritual gain, it is a condition precedent that the missionary does not feel proud of his own learning and intelligence. Only in that case, he will be in a position to submit and surrender himself to be a true and worthy devotee. He should not nurse the notion that he is well-read or claim himself to be wiser. On the contrary, his intellectual assets should make him all the more humble, as Baba Gurbachan Singh said:

"A saint always says that he knows nothing."

The missionary should erase and efface all preconceived impressions and notions, taboos and inhibitions, so that the present edifying experience is not in any manner tainted or conditioned by the feeling of sailing in two boats, lending a tinge of duplicity and double-mindedness. He has, therefore, to align and identify himself completely with the Divine Knowledge that he has come to acquire and possess.

RIGHT CONCEPT, RIGHT WORSHIP

The highest truth is the divine truth and the highest reality is God Himself. Knowledge of God is, therefore, the foundation of true education and true service. Before anything else, it is this knowledge which can make one God-like in nature and character. It is the real safeguard against mundane temptations. This is the knowledge needed for the spiritual upliftment, selfless service and adherence to human and spiritual values. God-knowledge is, therefore, the essential prerequisite for a virtuous and spiritual life. Thus,

the most important subject is the understanding of God Himself: this is the real thing the missionary should know and own. Unfortunately, there are many who first think about their own theories and then frame an idea of God that fits in their format. Having created their image, the theologians find no difficulty in ascribing to Him various attributes of their own making. This results in divergent views concerning the universe, man, soul, salvation, etc. Unless we first begin with the right concept of God, who is the first and last of everything, there is bound to be chaos and confusion. Hence, it is mandatory that the missionary, who has identified Almighty rightly, understands and realizes his attributes correctly, worship Him alone and none else and has the irrefragable belief in the eternal gospel of indivisible unity and oneness of God. It, automatically, implies that duality and diversity of worship is neither permissible nor admissible. Idolatry or worship of elements, images and the like is apparently undesirable. The missionary has to remain ever vigilant and ensure that he does not succumb to such forms in any form. It is but proper to add here that pure religion is one, and all men are equal. God-knowledge is an imperative prerequisite and is the top secret of a missionary's Mission. God madness (indeed, it is a kind of madness) is the most charming madness. To love God, one has to think of Him; to remember God, one has to recall His sweet Name, sing His glories and keep the company of the saintly and the godly. Let us see God in everything and everyone, and nothing be prized higher than God. Nothing values equally with God. So, live in God and all shall be well; make others live in God and all shall be one; believe in God and the world will be happier.

THE MISSIONARY AND THE MASTER

Divine Knowledge of Gian removes the opacity of the ignorant and his vision widens out in regions that have so far remained hidden from perception. It is through the Master's door and in his sanctuary that one is blessed with the inner eye. If one washes his 'vessel' with the Master's wisdom, it sparkles clean. The nectar of blissful knowledge emanates and spontaneously flows from the consecrated word, the fount of divine light and wisdom, so graciously bestowed by the Master. The missionary is never to forget Master's benevolence; he is to remain even grateful to him for his love, generosity and kindness:

"God was already with me, in and around me, but it was through the blessing of my Master that I realized Him and considered Him as my own."

-Saint Kabir

A true missionary derives his authenticity, reliability and strength from his unflinching faith in the enlightenment bestowed upon him by the Master and the imprint of his spirit. Any wavering and laxity in his faith is bound to deprive him of his veracity and eliminate him from the world of spirituality. Strict adherence to the teachings and compliance of the directives of the Master, is the keynote of his life. To selflessly serve one and all as a matter of duty, in obedience to the solemn call of the Master, is his watchword. He has simply been authorized and deputed by the Master to act on his behalf: he is only a medium through whom the Master is getting his mission fulfilled. He should, therefore, bear in mind that by himself, he is nothing and is not contributing anything in his personal capacity. He is not to claim any credit for the noble task entrusted to him or for the service rendered by him.

No one claim to be missionary as a matter of right. It is the Master's condescension to oblige and patronize him. He, therefore, is not to gloat over his choice, be puffed up or

assume an air of superiority. His continuing as a missionary is simply at the pleasure and will of the Master.

His assignment as a missionary does not entitle him to a special consideration. He should not entertain any illusion that as a missionary, he has come closer and nearer to the Master and, so he can claim or expect special attention or preferential treatment. The Master looks upon all the devotees alike and treats everybody with equal love.

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE MISSION

RELIGION AND ITS PURPOSE

Religion is not a mere ritual or a collection of dogmas, doctrines and intellectual thoughts, howsoever beautiful they may be. In its right perspective, it is co-extensive with life. It embraces in its domain the totality of life and encompasses the whole being of man. Its functioning generates and promotes values which are expected to be reflected in the life of those who affirm committed belief in and loyalty to God. It means values and ethos, which govern man's day-to-day living. If truly held and emulated, it is bound to affect the social life of man of God for upright existence in this action-packed world. In essence, it is being, becoming and realizing.

To identify and realize the existence of the Divine and to palpably feel His presence in and around round-the-clock, is the honest aim of the true religion. It establishes relationship of man with God and helps to actively sustain it alive in head and heart. It lifts the veil of ignorance, clears the blurring mist and demolishes the barriers of false sense of separateness from the paramount Power.

The greatest security that religion provides, lies in more and more becoming conscious of God and in depending on His grace in all eventualities.

Religion is an essential factor of human progress. If rightly put into practice, it makes life sweet and noble. As a guide, we will find it a sincere friend, a joy in prosperity, comfort in adversity, peace to conscience and endless blessedness. The true religion makes one humble, do good to all, render service to all and gives illumination for good temper, behaviour, speech, justice and peace. With solemn committed affirmation in the supreme Divine and His worship alone, and by practising the virtues that the religion embodies, the self-conscious (Man-mukh) is transformed into a God-conscious person (Gur-mukh).

The basic essential truths of all the religions are the same. Linguistic differences have given them different denominations. Call God by any name, in any language, He is the same indivisible One, the creator of the universe who ever abideth everywhere and in every being. We all are His children, bound together by the common Divine thread, irrespective of caste, colour, culture, creed, region, race or nationality.

No religion preaches dishonesty, hatred, ill-will, bigotry, tyranny, confrontation, persecution and divides between man and man. The misguided have perverted the meaning and significance of religion with their admixtures. Vested interests have diluted and eroded the pious aim and object of religion and have adopted it as an instrument for furthering their selfish ends. Evil is perpetrated in the name of religion for ignominious ends, spreading suffering, misery all around.

All religions preach universal love and brotherhood. They unreservedly and emphatically advocate good-will and peace for all. In actual practice, there is, however, a broad repudiation of all the good that a true religion stands for:

"The quintessential of all religions are the same. In every religion there is the essential truth and the non-essential casket. To discern the ground of unity among religion, one must not look to the forms, symbols, mythologies, rituals but the sacred purpose which underlies them."

- Swami Vivekananda

"A religion of humanity means the growing realization that there is a secret spirit, a Divine Reality in which we all are one; that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth; that human race and human beings are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here."

- Sri Aurobindo

"The names do not indicate individuality and the little man has tried in his humble way to describe mighty God by giving attributes. Living faith in God means equal respect for all religions. Religion is outraged when an outrage is perpetrated in the name of religion."

- Mahatma Gandhi

"Religion does not teach jealousy or hatred, rather it teaches love, compassion and fellow - felling"

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

"The basic reason behind the prevailing violence in the country is our narrow mindedness and short-sightedness. All this can be ended if we imbibe the true essence and meaning of religion in our day-to-day living. One must understand that the purpose of religion is to unite, not divide. None of the prophets and messengers had taught hatred and ill-will towards others. God is one and all human beings are His children, and, thus, we are a vast human brotherhood. It is only by imbibing such feelings in our practical life that we can get rid of disturbances and upheavals , which have bedeviled our daily life. No problem can be solved on narrow grounds. It is all the more true these days. A broad world-oriented approach alone will yield lasting solution, as it will enable all to shed their narrow viewpoints and sublimate their thanking in the context of universal ideals."

- Baba Hardev Singh

MISSION, NOT NEW RELIGION

The missionary should be very clear in his mind that the Mission has neither founded nor is trying to establish a new religion. Its undiluted, unequivocal and simple message - easy to understand and grasp - is just a revival and continuity of the original ancient Truth since Adam and Eve, which has now been overlaid with theoretical and theological ambiguities:

"He (Baba Gurbachan Singh) is quite emphatic about one thing that he is not trying to convert people to embrace new religion. People can realize (God) through him and return to their own scriptures and read them with a fresh vision."

- Najimal Husan, correspondent, *The Hindustan Times*, on his talk with Baba Gurbachan Singh, quoted in *Understanding the Nirankari Mission* by D.S. Shauq.

UNIVERSAL PERCEPTION

The Mission is wedded to the universally recognized fundamental cause of all causes, God, undeniably acceptable to the whole world. It believes in the underlying unity and respect for the human spirit. Consequently, the Mission has a cosmic outlook and approach. It implies that here we have no divides of regions, races, nationalities and the like. We take the whole world as one family and the whole humanity as one race, having one and the same ancient religion that has come down to us since eternity - seeking and identifying God Formless. We firmly believe that we all are children of one and the same Supreme Patriarch; we all have the same divine origin:

"We are all one, no matter by what name we are designate, as children of the same God."

-Mahatama Gandhi

The missionary has, therefore, got to see beyond the horizon and should be ever ready to treat and serve one and all with good conscience. He should expand his scope, broaden his perception, enlarge the periphery of his vision to cover and care for the uplift of one and all. The ignorant man being the object of his operation and ignorance not being the heritage of a particular tribe, it is his foremost duty to help retrieve the victim of ignorance, whoever and wherever on. may be. It should be his honest and earnest effort to transcend all barriers, social or geographical, with higher awareness of universal approach for a universal cause with the spirit of service and duty. He belongs to the whole world, and the whole humanity falls within the ambit of his activity. In other words, the whole universe is the field of his operation. The missionary should, thus, give an effective demonstration of his conviction embodied in the precious maxim: "Fatherhood of God is the Brotherhood of Man". He should corroborate it with sincere attitude of love and service without discrimination, or else the valuable gospel would remain a mere myth.

NEITHER SECTARIAN, NOR COMMUNAL

Belonging to any religious sect is permissible, but to be sectarian is questionable. Every person does belong to one community or another, but communal outlook is undesirable. To think in terms of community is alright, but what is to be avoided is the communal and sectarian thinking, which means the welfare of one's own community only at the cost of others like the blind man who serves his own kith and kin, time and again. The welfare of all - *Sarbat Da Bhala* - is the ideal goal.

Beyond any doubt, is Mission is not at all sectarian, sectional or communal in any respect. Human integration, unity and solidarity constitute the hard core of its faith, despite the diversity and differences of belief, language, diet and dress. God has made man, not sect or community. It is man himself who has labeled men with different denominations. God is one, and untouchable is none. The missionary has to take care that his activity does not give any impression of narrow-mindedness or short-sighted thinking, confined to the interests of a limited number of a particular community or his camp followers. Narrow-mindedness and short-sightedness coupled with sectarianism, lead to bigotry, fanaticism and factionalism, resulting in antagonism, violence and reprisals, giving rise to a class of die-hards who believe in persecution and fly at each other's throat:

"No one is a stranger, and no one is our enemy. We live happily with everybody."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

The missionary should be understanding and should rise above pettiness of life, be large-hearted, broad-minded and liberal without bounds and barricades. He is a man of God: he is above communal and sectarian outlook. His faith is a One God Formless - Nirankar - with whom he is bound by the unbreakable bond of spiritual union.

NO DISCRIMINATION

The Mission does not discriminate between the high and the low, the rich and the poor, and is against the narrow distinctions of caste, colour and creed, which breed hatred, prejudice and bias. Discrimination swallows equality. The Master has shown the same Divine Light equally to all the recipients. Then, why discriminate between man and man on any ground or in any form whatsoever?

"Let us never think about anybody as inferior to us; we should hold everyone in esteem. These holy men of the Mission never entangle themselves nor do they enter into arguments about the caste, colour and creed. They consider the whole humanity as one family."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

"To affirm that I am proud to be a member of human race, to recognize that, regardless of colour, caste, creed, man's destiny is my destiny and as we learn to live together, we move forward together."

- Wilfred A. Peterson

The missionary is not expected to lay down new or compromise with, the existing yardsticks, based on worldly values of status, position, etc., relegating the spiritual consideration to the background.

NON RITUALISTIC

The Mission is totally non-ritualistic. The missionary should take care that he does not acquiesce, tacitly or otherwise, in rites, rituals and ceremonies which are of little consequence, rather are a source of confusion and illusion, impeding the process of enlightenment. It is his duty to awaken people to the spirit behind these, so that they should free themselves from the shackles of exasperating and extravagant ordeals, advocated and performed by the priesthood just to exploit the innocent and the simpleminded.

By his own example, the missionary has to illustrate that he has been emancipated from the clutches of rites and rituals, taboos and superstitions, inhibitions and social evils like dowry, caste considerations, untouchability and other such exploitations which have infested and plagued the society. People will surely follow him if he himself sets an example in this regard:

"I have no ritual to impose, no particular recitation to prescribe, no penance to subject my disciples to and no new religion to found."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

REVERENCE FOR HOLY MEN AND SCRIPTURES

The Master has strictly enjoined upon the devotees to show highest respect and esteem to all prophets, messengers, Gurus, saints and seers and glorify their teachings and preaching as also to show due veneration to all religious books and holy scriptures alike.

"Names of the Prophets and scriptures of various faiths and religions should always be mentioned with proper respect and regard."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

Let noble thoughts come from all sides. The spiritually instructive sayings be quoted most reverentially. Beyond the remotest doubt, no devotee of the Mission can ever think or even imagine to be disrespectful to the Great masters or belittle their contributions:

"Our salutations go to all the past Prophets whose teachings and lives we have inherited, whatever might be their race, clime, or creed. Our salutations go to those God-like men and women who are working to help humanity, whatever be their birth, colour or race! Our salutations to those who are coming in future - living gods - to work unselfishly for our descendants."

- Swami Vivekananda

TO REMAIN A HOUSEHOLDER

Certainly, the missionary has to stay in this world as a householder, discharging his obligations and responsibilities, domestic social and professional. He is not to become a recluse, but, at the same time, he is to avoid undue attachment and entanglement in worldly affairs. His life is not exclusively for himself, but also for others. He should firmly bear in mind that the duty entrusted to him by the Master is his foremost concern, and his household obligations should not put undue constraints or restraints on his duty to serve fellow-beings actively. In other words, there should be no clash between his personal interests and his socio-spiritual obligations. He has to so adjust himself as to be readily accessible and available for the holy task. This will necessarily require some sort of sacrifice, some sort of curtailment of self-interests, so that he does not neglect or become complacent to his spiritual activities. He has, therefore, got to be discreetly considerate and conscientious about his work as a missionary:

Rahna Sada Grihasti Ban Kay Bhagway Kapray Panay Nahien."
(Always to remain a householder and not to don saffron robes.)

- Baba Avtar Singh

TO EARN FOR HIMSELF

Man must toil to earn his livelihood honestly. He is not to don saffron robes, hold a staff and a beggar's bowl and go a begging. He should not become a parasite. Let him make it a religious point that he does not employ shady or unfair means or corrupt practices to make a living. Virtue (Dharma), Wealth (Artha), family and children (Kama) and salvation (Moksha) are considered the four-fold objective of human life. Wealth and relationship based on Dharma are not considered evil, rather they lead to perfection and salvation. But they may prove to be the greatest shackles if one considered material wealth and well-being as the very goal of life. Wealth earned through unrighteous means leads to bondage and misery, whereas wealth earned righteously and by honest means and above all, used in the service of the needy, leads to blessedness. Therefore, material wealth in itself is neither good nor bad, but it can be a blessing or a curse, depending upon the means through which the same is acquired or the way it is made use of. Every

person acquires and utilizes wealth, but the awakened one while doing so, remains detached in mind. As such, it is imperative for the missionary to be unimpeachably fair and square in his doings and dealings, or else he will be guilty of dishonesty and hypocrisy, bringing a stigma on himself as also on the Mission:

"Dassan Navahan Di Kirt Kamani Nahein Banana Doojay Tay Bhar."

(To earn by sweat and not to be a burden on others.)

- Baba Avtar Singh

ACTION AND FRUIT OF ACTION

Action, man cannot give up. What really he has to renounce is the desire or expectation of the fruit of his labour, which is beyond his reach. He, who has renounced the desire for fruit, has truly renounced. However, he has not to renounce the world in the traditional sense, that is, to withdraw from the world as that would be tantamount to a life of inaction and stagnation. Of course, while living in this world, one has to curb his desires and curtail his needs to be at the disposal of others for their social and spiritual emancipation. Man's duty is to act and never to be concerned with the result thereof, which is in the hand of the Supreme Rewarder, who knows how best to reward:

"Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action."

- Benjamin Disraeli

"Action, even prayer and generosity, should be without concern for fruit."

- Gita

"If we do our duty also as an action dedicated to God Almighty, we will have no trouble in this world. This sense of dedication is the blessing of the Lord Master."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

Said Baba Avtar Singh:

"Gursikh Noon Nahin Ichhia Phal Di Karam Sada Nishkam Karay."

(A devotee ever acts selflessly and without the desire for fruit).

"We are all for good actions, good human behaviour. But, if you say such good actions bestow salvation, you are sadly mistaken. Such actions are like the labour of a labourer who works the whole day without directions from the master. Salvation is possible only by the grace of the True Master and acting on his teachings.

While doing our duty in a disciplined manner, we have also to keep ourselves in constant *touch* with God Almighty. Practical life of action in consonance with the teachings of the True Master, is the highest way of truthful living."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

SALVATION

It will be a mere wishful thinking, rather a deception, that simply by attaining God-Knowledge or Gian, one attains salvation - freedom from bondage and the cycle of birth and rebirth. God-knowledge or Gian only lifts the veil of ignorance and introduces man to the Eternal Truth. It initiates and admits him to the holy order - a disciplined, truthful and virtuous living -, which a God-oriented person (*Gian-van*) has to develop and maintain in actual life in the context of spiritual experience gained by him. God-knowledge without

honest and noble deeds in day-to-day living, will not lead one to achieve the real goal of life. A person who imagines that mere God-knowledge is the be-all of man's spiritual endeavour and that nothing more is required of him to do, will be duping himself with self-conceit and consequent failure to comprehend the significance of the Enlightenment. This life, and not the after-life, is the only chance to know, that liberation shall depend upon and will be determined by true knowledge as well as his tidy faring and virtuous achievement in life:

"For a devotee of God, salvation means liberation from the snare of desires and temptations. He neither rejoices in coming into this world nor is grieved while quitting it. All the time, he is in a blissful mood."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

"Salvation is possible only through realization of God, and god-realization is possible through devotion and self-surrender."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE

The Missionary has to uphold and establish by his daily doings and dealings that the Mission inalienably stands for freedom of thought, conscience and religious belief - liberty to pray and let others pray as they like -, believing in truth, peace, non-violence, communal harmony, tolerance, fellow-feeling, mutual good-will, mutual respect, mutual understanding and co-existence:

"Ours is the path of peace and we have to follow it. We have no other option."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

FOREMOST PRINCIPLE

The Mission categorically avers: Body, mind and material belong to God and should be used with the clear-cut understanding that they are assets of God. This fundamental truth constitutes the solid core of Mission's teachings. If a person truly and sincerely catches the sense and significance of the wisdom embodied therein, there will remain no doubt that God is the sole owner of all things, big and small, having created them for the beneficial use of man and that he is just a beneficiary and no more. This honest realization will give rise to a truthful feeling: 'Nothing is mine; everything is Thine.'

Apart from the undeniable fact that man's brain, brawn and bullion are of God, even his very stay in this world is at His Pleasure. He is just a puppet in His hands. Consequently, this conscious feeling cuts at the root of man's pride of ownership, annihilates his ego and instills in him the spirit of self-surrender, resignation and humbleness, leading to submergence of his will in the Will of the Creator. At the same time, it keeps him alive to the reality that he owes a deep dept of gratitude to the Lord for having given him an opportunity to enjoy and thrive on His bounties, and, in return for His generosity, munificence and mercy, he should adore Him and worship Him to his heart's content. In practice, Enlightenment of Gian means to thoroughly assimilate that consciousness and attain that stage of transcendence.

SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

GOD KNOWLEDGE, BASIC BEGINNING

God Knowledge or Enlightenment (Gian) is only a basic beginning, a starting point of admission to the holy order. Thereafter, a stupendous and hard task lies ahead for the missionary. Heavy responsibility devolves upon him to engage and absorb himself in the spiritual effort (Sadhna), so that he can comprehend and assimilate the true meaning and significance of the Divine Knowledge to make it practically efficacious to achieve noble results. Then alone, he becomes worthy enough to confidently serve others, to disseminate the Divine Knowledge and work for the spiritual rejuvenation of the people by his own example of ideal practical life. The practical is the sublime:

"Mere God-knowledge is not enough. It should be supported by practical living."

- Baba Hardev Singh

IMBIBING ETHICAL VALUES

Ethical philosophy and knowledge do have a vital place in the system of values. These are indispensable aids to right spiritual experience and a right means for practical attainment of Truth. The immediate benefit of knowledge is to make us aware of facts. Knowledge lights up the path of action, which we have to pursue. In our concept of God-Knowledge (Gian), right conduct and right living have a unique place. We believe that the highest religion consists in knowing God and dwelling on His Name coupled with right thought and right action. Mere academic scholarship or intellectualism, divorced from practical conduct, cannot serve the ends of spiritualism. The missionary, therefore, has to remain exalted in head and heart, emulate and justify the values and wisdom embodied in the precepts. In short, he is to be an exemplar by precept and practice.

SPIRITUAL MOOD

The missionary has to maintain a consistent spiritual mood, a mood in which he remains all the time conscious that Almighty God ever abideth with him and palpably feels His immediate presence without break. He has to be fully conscious that his thoughts, feelings and actions are being x-rayed by the Supreme Lord and are subject to scrutiny and adjudication of the Highest Authority, whose verdict is irrevocably final. Man's conscience should be ever imbued with reverential fear of God, which acts as a loving deterrent to save him from evil and ignominy. Consequently, he becomes a noble and God-fearing man of God with inner tranquillity so essentially needed by the missionary to have a peaceful heart, the centre of inner claim, for dedicating himself whole-heartedly to the pious duty to spread the sacred message, Said Baba Avtar Singh:

"Whosoever submits to the will of God, I worship him as the most revered soul."

"Self-surrender is the only way to God-realization; one has to pay the price if one is after spiritual awakening."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

The missionary should, therefore, become an instrument of God and merge his own will in the will of God.

SPIRITUAL EFFORT

Spiritual effort demands that the missionary should cultivate consciousness within by training himself for *right activity* as also to react properly to various challenges. Hence,

he has to learn to walk with God, talk with God, live with God to remain free from attachment to material creation and worldly pleasures. Rising above emotions, cravings, desires, etc. is the target to be achieved by a spiritual person. Only by self-mastery, can he be spiritually happy in the true sense:

"The permanent happiness which men seek in dissipation, excitement and abandonment to unworthy pleasures, is found only in the life which reverses all this - the life of self-control. So far as man deviates from perfect self-command, just so far does he fall short of perfect happiness and sinks into misery and weakness, lowest limit to which is madness, entire lack of mental control, the condition of irresponsibility. In so far as he approximates to self-command, just as near does he approach to perfect happiness and rise to joy and strength, and glorious are the possibilities of such divine manhood that no limit can be set to its grandeur and bliss."

- James Allen

The missionary should endeavour to achieve that state wherein one can keep composure under all circumstances. That perfect equanimity cannot be acquired through any means except by dwelling on God's Name, drawing closer to the Divine Source, whence this soul, our real nature, springs. Only by intermingling the little droplet of consciousness with the Ocean of Divine Consciousness, one is able to attain the ideal blissful state: God First, God Last, God Always and God Alone. He must hold fast to that ideal, to that through, to that spiritual mood, to that ecstasy with which no other experience compares.

AIDS TO SPIRITUAL EFFORT

The immortal message "*Dwelling on God's Name*" plus right activity is thus the focus of our spiritual effort. For the much stressed spiritual endeavour, the missionary has to seek and invoke the indispensable aids of Triple "S": Simran (constant and consistent remembrance of God), Sewa (selfless service) and Sangat (fervorous attendance of congregation). These aids serve as strong moorings and solid cornerstones for building the spiritual edifice and for providing the required exercise for spiritual strength to resist, combat and ward off unhealthy influences, to keep on replenishing the warmth and vigour of the spirit for a robust spiritual state of mind, to preserve the truthful mood for the practical implementation of the essence of spirituality and to activate the divine spark into a fulgent flame.

MEASURE OF SPIRITUALITY

A person's bent of mind and his spiritual efforts are not to be measured by the number of times the goes to religious places, reads religious books, recites holy scriptures, or judged by the number of hours he spends in telling the beads or saying prayers. All these will remain inconsequential effort and will not result in fulfillment of the aim, unless the inner life is cultivate. Unless man's mode of living is harmoniously synthesized, he cannot be called truly enlightened. He essentially needs to possess love of God and a pure heart - a heart which is not tainted with shallowness, malice and dislike for others; a heart which is full of compassion and kindness; a heart which throbs with virtue and honesty of purpose; a heart which strives to perceive the self-same Divinity in all beings.

MALEFIC INFLUENCES

The farmer, who wants to raise a good crop, has to root out weeds and shrubs from the field. Clearing the field of the wild growth is an essential precondition. In the same way, it is necessarily required of a devotee, as an imperative preliminary, that he gets rid of unscrupulous manifestations in the form of ego, hatred, jealousy, anger, slander, lust, avarice, greed, etc., which motivate and provoke evil designs in the heart, Pervert sensibility, defile thought and feeling corrupt the conscience with degrading experiences and prevent him from taking recourse to spiritual endeavour to tune and merge the little will in the infinite will of God.

EGO

"The essential enemies of man are not his brothers, children of Spirit, the one Father; but his own ego foes, born of mortal ignorance."

- Mahatama Gandhi

Spiritual awareness makes it mandatory for a man that he banishes and bans his 'I-ness' and 'Mine-ness'. Ego, the root-cause of human degradation and downfall, wrecks and disqualifies him from pursuing the gigantic task honestly. Ego does not permit the swollen-headed to submit, surrender and merge his will in the will of God. Its maddening and disastrous impact whirls the head, poisons the mind, pollutes the heart and soils the conscience with callous arrogance and pride. This brings in its wake so many other malignant and venomous perils, which work havoc, consume and wreck the man physically, mentally and morally like the fire that burns and reduces the fragrant sandalwood to ashes. And, certainly, it inhibits his spirit of love, sympathy and service to his fellow-beings. It is like the monstrous hydra with jaws ever ready to swallow the whole human structure. Ego, with its collaterals and accomplices, makes man a devastating moving arsenal of self-destruction.

Beyond any doubt, annihilation of ego is a prerequisite for mental, moral and spiritual health. The positive need is that not even an imagined feeling of self-conceit or self-importance be allowed to raise its ugly head and afflict the human mind. But ego is such a deep-rooted and tough vice that it will not detach itself from man and flee so easily. Mere crying it out, cannot help man to wriggle out of its clutches and become immune from its evil impact. To relinquish ego is, of course, a colossal and uphill task. It requires tremendous courage and strong will-power to bring about a momentous revolutionary change in human psyche to look at and understand life entirely from a different angle of perception and comprehension.

However, we know ego has its invaluable counter attribute, i.e. humility, which costs nothing, and, at the same time, is the sweetest and purest antidote, a potent blissful remedy that exterminates and drives it away. Ego and humility cannot rest in the same coil. Where humility makes its presence felt, ego emigrates and vanishes in the thin air, dares not show its ugly face and becomes non-existent. Therefore, if one desires to deport and extern ego, he must import and intern humility.

Beware of the perpendicular "I" pronoun - Ego. Ego ruins so many good causes. Grief follows it like a shadow. Where there is no ego, joy, peace, courage, co-operation and love flourish.

AVARICE AND LUST

The missionary has to be an ideal householder, yet his worldly pursuits do not give him unchecked liberty to hanker after and pile up mundane effects with ever-bulging ambition. Avarice, lust and craving lead man to indulge in dishonest and shady deals to further his own interests, or to work to satisfy his ravenous appetite to amass appetite to amass more and more. The missionary has, therefore, to remain ever alert that neither does he involve himself in any unholy game nor does he even touch any gain, howsoever paltry or petty it may be, if earned by dishonest means. He should take utmost care that he always remains neat and tidy in his doings and dealings and, at all cost, refrains from craving for the running after earthly gains. When one is disappointed and his pride is hurt, it is natural for him to feel disheartened, disgusted and desperate. To maintain his poise and piety, he has to realize the import and significance of true contentment - *Sabar Saburi* -, and be fully satisfied with what he has from the Lord through honest efforts, as the fruit of his labour is entirely in the hand of God. God Almighty is the sole benefactor and He grants to everybody what pleases Him. As such, the missionary should not be so fickle as to succumb to the illusive charm of bewitching and glittering allurements for seeking sensual gratification at the cost of his spiritual advancement. The realized soul lives untainted in this world so full of impurities. Like a lotus flower that blooms in the muddy water and the duck that floats carefree in the stream, he remains detached from worldliness, ever enshrining the Lord in his heart and mind:

"To make a man happy, add not to his possessions but subtract from the sum of his desires."

- Seneca

ANGER

Anger is a wildly excited mood that frays the nerve-centre. It is a madness which unhinges and upsets mental equilibrium. Man frets and fumes and goes amuck with frenzy. Then follows fear that destroys whatever is left of sense and sensibility, and thereby sets his own house on fire. It incites him to resent, retaliate, be vindictive and revengeful to settle the scores: a tooth for a tooth, an eye for an eye. Resentment destroys peace of mind if expressed, and equally destroys it if it is suppressed. Recoiling malice provokes man to take acrimonious steps. Revenge and retaliation widen the ruptured gulf, add fuel to the fire, aggravate the situation and make the relations worse beyond the point of rapprochement. Doubtlessly, that is not the right way to defuse the bitterness, resolve the issue and reclaim the strained mutual trust and good-will. With such a highly inflammable material, an angry, fiery man may succeed in defeating and vanquishing his opponent but, surely, he can never make friends, rather he may turn friends into foes. As such, the missionary is not expected to grudge and grumble or get offended and flared up even in the face of worst instigation or provocation. He is not to lose his temper even when the other person may not be right. It necessarily implies that he is not to be obstinate and obdurate. Essentially, he is to remain calm, cool and composed, and should always try to extinguish the fire of hatred and enmity by his conciliatory and mellow attitude. This will require limitless patience, unbounded tolerance and tremendous forbearance to keep himself under restraint. And, at the same time, with love and humility, he should be ever eager to bring about rapport, never making any issue a prestige issue. Thus, he will successfully turn even foes into friends:

"Anger and intolerance are the twin enemies of correct understanding"

- Mahatama Gandhi

"Why use harsh words when sweet ones serve?"

- Saint Valluvar

"Anybody can become angry - that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way - that is not within everybody's power and is not easy."

- Aristotle

HATRED AND JEALOUSY

The missionary should not expose himself and be vulnerable to fits of jealousy and hysteria of hate and violence. Jealousy and hatred, the known vile wreckers, keep one agitated, restless and perplexed, struggling and venomously recoiling, making him a miserable misfit in society, a square peg in a round hole, unfit to serve others. It is dangerous to nurse or be swayed by such emotions, which result in confused thinking, unnerving and leading one to mental imbalance, and possibly to the extent of derangement. Such persons breed bad blood and ill-will to harm others. They are bound to create conflict, confrontation and spite, which destabilize and strain relations and breed mutual dislike and discord. Many even derive sadistic pleasure and rejoice in others' sufferings. To satisfy and appease their pent up base feelings, they hurl curses, accusations and insults and, sooner or later, are at loggerheads, even daggers drawn. One cannot hope to expect any good from such ill-natured persons. In social circles, they are unwanted and dreaded. In fact, a jealous person himself stands to lose, as he forfeits the confidence and trust of his fellow-beings. His very bona fides are looked upon with suspicion and thus he renders himself incapable of befriending anyone.

The missionary should understand that his spirit of service and good-will will suffer terribly if he succumbs to jealous feelings, as he will himself be hated and shunned by others. His own inner peace will be at stake. And, if he loses his calm and cool by his own errant temperament, he will be a victim of his own guilt, and will wear himself out. If he feels tormented and tortured by his self-created agony, none but he himself is to be blamed. With jealousy and hatred arresting him, affection and good-will, sympathy and compassion cannot find any room in his heart. Consequently, there will be left no scope for him to work for human uplift and well-beings.

Normally, a jealous person is not satisfied with his lot. When he compares himself with others, better off or better placed, he feels pained and piqued. He cannot stand and brook the sight of others prospering and wishes them bad days. The missionary by his conduct should take care that he never allows himself to be charged with such low feelings and mean thoughts. He is to develop an attitude of satisfaction and contentment with what he has. There is nothing wrong in bettering one's lot by fair means. However, he should accept what honestly comes to him with heart-felt gratitude to the Lord Master, completely unmindful of what others have:

"Eat thy dry, hard bread and wash it down with water cool.
And tempt not thy mind on seeing the buttered bread, O fool!"

- Sheikh Farid

He should rather feel happy and pray for the prosperity of one and all. Entertaining jealous thoughts about others' fortune, simply leads to misery and unhappiness. We miss the salient point that true happiness does not depend upon the worldly riches we have. While assessing another person's good luck, we allow our imagination to run riot;

and without verifying, we take it for granted that he is really happy! Shed not the blood; shed hatred, violence, and jealousy.

SLANDER

Another set of associate malefic influences which disagree with man's goodness is slander, criticism for the sake of criticism, back biting, maligning and mud-slinging with the hope that at least some will stick. One should not forget that derogatory or contemptuous remarks passed just to belittle others, bring shame and disgrace to the slanderer himself. Slander or Ninda is the by-product of the combined feelings of ego and jealousy, which spoils and mars his relations with others. He proves himself to be an undesirable and an indiscreet person in society. His very presence is disgusting and he is termed as a cynic whose sole aim is to transgress the limit of propriety with malevolent desire to bear ill-will for others. People prefer to shun his company for fear of his long and sharp tongue, incisive and spiteful utterances, embittering mutual friendly sentiments. It, therefore, behoves the spiritually enlightened not to raise a questioning brow, turn his nose up and point an accusing finger towards anybody; and if he does raise one against anyone, surely, he shall have to face the four himself. But, if the missionary wishes that people around him should eagerly seek his company and have the benefit of his sincere, sympathetic and mature advice he should cultivate an amiable disposition, affectionate temperament, affable manners, conciliatory attitude, mellow nature and extend his whole-hearted co-operation in righteous activities and causes aimed at doing good to others, and treat them with love, respect, understanding. He should not hesitate to humbly submit constructive suggestions in the best interest of common good of all concerned, but must not impose or thrust himself on others under any circumstances whatsoever:

"Let me be a little kinder, Let me be a little blinder to the faults of those around me."

-Edger A. Guest

GREED

Greed is a mania, an insatiable ravenous craze which compels man to be inextricably attached and clung to this fleeting world and its worldliness, be enamoured of and infatuated by its illusory charm - a silent cheat -, which relieves and deprives him of spiritual pursuits and gains and pushes him to slip into and be irretrievably caught in the complex meshes of over attachment, over-entanglement and over-involvement. Such an over-indulgence is the anti-theses of spirituality. Naturally, man's involvement beyond the necessary and desirable extent will put restraints and constraints on his work as a missionary, and keep him preoccupied with priority for worldly pursuits and thus hold him back from applying his mind and energy in the service of fellow-beings. Spiritual endeavour will then become a spare time hobby, depending upon his leisure and pleasure, to be flung aside even on a frivolous pretext. Attachment is a lower instinct, but it also has a higher corresponding attribute, known as dedication to the service of humanity and devotion to duty. The missionary has to be prudent enough to sort out and maintain a balance between the temporal and spiritual obligations, always bearing in mind that his foremost interest is to honour the commitment and undertaking given to the Master, which should prevail over any other consideration in life:

"While enjoying all the good things of life, we should never allow ourselves to be attached to them. This is how we can save ourselves from pain and misery."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

We must work to earn our livelihood, but we should do it in an honest and conscientious way. Since our self-aggrandizement can obstruct the pious course of life, we should not allow ourselves to be stuck up in greedy acquisition of goods and gains.

BENEDICTORY ATTRIBUTED

Benedictory attributes endow man with edifying thought-force that rescues and protects him from down-dragging malefic tendencies. Virtues like love, humility, compassion, contentment, tolerance and forgiveness regenerate the dormant inner goodness and inculcate faith in right thinking and pious outlook. They are indispensable ingredients so essentially required for building meritorious caliber and a godly way of life. They promote and foster love for God through fraternal relationship with fellow-beings. Man has to win the grace of God, but no justifiable God-ward advancement or progress can even be remotely thought of without practically imbibing and blending the noble qualities of head and heart in actual living behaviour.

LOVE AND HUMANITY

For all intents and purposes, love of God and His creation constitutes the backbone, solid care, moving force, the source wherefrom all goodness springs and flows. What is, however, needed is an intense yearning for a kind of love that will consume with total fulfillment and ensure complete security that nothing else in the world can give, neither money nor any amount of intellectual understanding. Love ennobles the mind and enables it to comprehend the Ultimate Truth. It gives us wealth not of the temporal but of the spiritual, not of pride but of humility, making the Truth manifest and giving expression of it. Love is that sweet, spontaneous and silent language which even the deaf and dumb can understand and throbbingly feel its warmth and soothing touch. It inculcates and boosts the momentum and tempo of the missionary's enthusiasm and dedication (*Lagan*), fills him with gumption and replenishes his spiritual ardour, known as the proverbial missionary zeal, so very necessary for the proper performance of his duty and for promoting the noble cause of peace, brotherhood, unity of human race and a harmonious society based on mutual love and respect and good-will, and free from vice and violence. Love is an essential ingredient of truth, humility and selfless service without which nothing noble can be achieved. It is love that spurs man on and makes him an indefatigable, diligent and honest being. Love of God is the foundation of noble and righteous living:

"He that loveth not, knoweth not, for God is love."

- Bible

"Love brings us closer to God."

- Mother Teresa

"You have to present yourself as a ideal person. You should not speak low of any one and should be jealous of none. One the contrary, you should have love and affection for all."

- Baba Avtar Singh

Humility - self-effacement - is the touch - stone of man's transformation. Be humble at heart, because only a humble heart can love all and serve all. Baba Gurbachan Singh attached great importance to this sterling virtue when he said:

"The more we become humble, the more durable is the honour that the Lord Master bestows upon us."

"Humility and love are the essence of true religion; the humble formed to adore; the loving to associate with eternal love,"

- Johann Kaspar Lavater

"A tree laden with fruit always bends low. So, if thou wantest to be great, be low and meek."

- Sri Ramakrishan

"Saints conquer the world with humility."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

TOLERANCE AND FORGIVENESS

The missionary has got to be patient and tolerant. Patience and tolerance demand that he should temper himself with the spirit of forget and forgive. He should not be a grave-digger and should avoid post-mortem of what might have transpired. Unless he stops rankling, he will not stop taking up cudgels. Forgiveness is the greatest virtue, which helps and enables man to bury the hatchet. It has in it such a strength and sweetness of character that assuages the estranged feelings, melts the heart even of an indignant aggressor, calms down the enraged and brings about normalcy in strained relations. The one, who forgives, is himself saved from the fire of bitterness and hatred. And, he who forgives is really the most compassionate, the most peace-loving and the most courageous. Forgiveness, however, requires deep understanding, massive will-power and momentous self-control.

"To recognize the frailties and foibles of human nature and to try to be everlastingly patient, forgiving and understanding."

- Wilfred A. Peterson

"Retaliate not an injury. The joy of revenge lasts but one day. But the glory of him who forgives, endures for ever. Be the wrong suffered even as great, yet abstain from revenge."

CONTENTMENT

A contented heart is always large enough to accommodate with good grace the mental and material affluence of his fellow-beings without a trace of grumbling and jealousy. Contentment comes when man realize the truth that he has no choice or option in reaping the fruit of his labour. Since nothing happens without God's Will, why worry? Having full faith in the Divine Justice, man should surrender to the Divine will, for whatever He bestows, gratefully praying: All is good that pleases the Lord.

The missionary, who does not catch and imbibe this spirit of an enlightened being or *Brahm Giani*, is himself a discontented soul and, therefore, not fit to give solace and succour to others. Hence, he should accept what life gives without being too much elated or too much discouraged. Sorrow and disappointment should not affect him nor should material gain and fame unduly attract him. That is the state of a true spiritual being. But contentment does not mean inaction or to be an idler or become a parasite. On the contrary, a spiritually awakened being must work hard and make a living by toiling honestly; work is worship. At the same time, he should remain satisfied with whatever the Lord grants him. We hear people blaming, accusing, even cursing God as

an unjust, tyrant and grumbling, 'What wrong have we done to God?' Truly speaking, such a person is an ungrateful, accursed being:

"True saints are above the feelings of pain and pleasure. They do not cry or curse their stars. They do not cry or curse their stars when in trouble."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

Prosperity inheres in contentment; only a contented person can enjoy life, looking upon pain and pleasure alike.

INNER CALM

As James Allen says:

"In the life of calm, there are no fitful periods of sinful excitement followed by reactionary hours of sorrow and remorse. There are no foolish elation followed by equally foolish depressions; no degrading actions followed by misery and loss of self-respect, but all these things put away and what remains is Truth, and Truth is ever encircled with peace. The calm life is one unbroken bliss. The calm man, the right - seeing man, cannot separate joy from duty; such separation belongs to the mind and the life of a pleasure-hunter and love for excitement. The calm man succeeds where the disturbed man fails. He, who has succeeded in governing the within, is best equipped to govern the without. The calm man perceives difficulty in all its bearings and understands how best to meet it. The disturbed mind is the lost mind. It has become blind, seeing not whither to go, but only feeling its own happiness and fear. The resources of the calm man are superior to all incidents, which may befall him. Nothing can alarm him, nothing can find him unprepared, nothing can shake his strong, steadfast mind. Wheresoever, duty may call him, there will his strength manifest itself; there will his mind, free from the frictions of self exhibit its silent and patient power. Whether he be engaged in things worldly or spiritual, he will do his work with concentrated vigour and penetrating insight."

When Aristotle was on his death-bed, his admirers requested him to give them a prescription for inner peace. The great philosopher advised them to forget two things and to remember two things:

Forget that you have done a good turn to anyone.
Forget that anyone has done a bad turn to you.
Remember Death.

Death is a somber subject from which men generally shrink and shirk. Death does not spare even the holiest who appear on this earth to lighten the burden of the suffering humanity, show light to the ignorant stumbles and even lay down their own lives for the sake of truth, cheerfully and resignedly, to fulfil the appointed mission of the Lord. They do not care for the mortal coil and the pain and suffering they undergo:

"To confront the inevitable fact that I share with all human beings a common end; that some day Death, the kind old nurse, will rock us all to sleep, so we should help each other while we can."

- Wilfred A. Peterson

[d] Remember, inner calm comes from within and not from without.

And so, with inner calm, one will be at peace with himself:

"The storm may rage without but will not affect us if there is peace within. As by the fire-side there is security from fiercest storm, so the heart that is steadfast in the knowledge of Truth abides in peace, though all-around be strife and perturbation. The bitter opposition of men and unrest of the world cannot make us bitter and restless, unless we enter into and co-operate with it. Rather, if we have peace in our heart, the outer turmoil causes our peace to deepen, to take firmer root and to show forth more abundantly in works of peace for the softening of human hearts and enlightening of human minds."

- James Allen

BEING GOOD

Being positively good without being conscious of it, is to be truly good. He that does good, is a man of God. Superior are those who do good even in return for evil:

"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

- Bible

"While we do good deeds, we should be above all ego and consider it the blessing of Almighty God."

- Baba Gurbachan Sing

"To understand that the goodness of God can be known only through human goodness; that when I express the highest and the best, I express God."

- Wilfred A. Peterson

"You have to pass through this world but once. Any good that you can do or any kindness that you can show to any human being, do it now. Do not defer it or neglect it, for you will not pass this way again."

- Sarojini Naidu

Recollect only good; do only good; speak only good and only then one approximates to God, the source of all good.

TRUTH AT ALL COSTS

The missionary should have the courage and conviction to be morally brave enough to weather and face the heaviest odds even if he has to wade through troubled waters. He must adhere to the truth fearlessly. Fear has no place in our relation with truth and God. They, who deal in truth, the Master is most pleased with them. As such, the missionary's life should be a living experience and expression of truth:

"Truth is always the strongest argument."

- Sophocles

"Man has no nobler function than to defend the truth."

- Ruth Mckenney

It requires strong will and momentous courage to face evil with the conviction that truth always triumphs. Though evil might seemingly emerge victorious for a while, ultimately, it dies its own death as it carries within it the seeds of self-destruction. Obviously, the missionary is not to bow before righteousness even if it costs him heavily. His real mettle will be on test and trial if, when an occasion arises, he does not waver, turn his back, tell lies or adopt maneuvers to escape or save his skin. He must stand upright and

unshakeable like a solid rock and prove himself to be a relentless crusader of truth. He should display the highest standard of integrity even against the heaviest odds. He should never deflect from the path of rectitude.

TRUTHFUL LIVING

It is by truthful living that one becomes competent enough to successfully exercise moulding influence on others. A special responsibility, therefore, rests on the missionary to fashion and carve out his own life up to the desired ideal - a life of purity and piety - and remain spotless and blotless in this world full of impurities and wretched allurements. He should shed evil and embrace virtue. Obviously, this necessitates honest and sincere spiritual effort. Spiritual effort does not mean regimentation, self-mortification, penance, rigid and harsh austerities, self-destroying repulsive devices or being cut off from the outside world. Actually, it comprehends and signifies an effort to keep the surge of Enlightenment actively alive in the repository of heart and pursue a practical life of good graces, building and achieving a high standard of meritorious existence and social behaviour. And, if he lacks this, he cannot be said to be learned in spiritual lore. He should clearly understand that he preaches well, who lives well: Truth is high; higher still is truthful living.

CHARACTER

"Character is the summit of being and justice is the application of it to affairs."

- Emerson

"A man, who is dirty within, cannot have a clean worldly life or be pure in action."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

Cease once for all to survive as an animal and live and act as a spiritual being, and think with a new heart, suffused with a new mind and a new heart, suffused with the inner light and attuned to the spirit. Nothing short of that can be called self-transcendence. So, one has to manifest divinity and spirituality at every moment, in every walk of life. Repose faith in the inherent goodness of human nature and the silent power of righteousness. Man's greatness is measured by his kindness and his intellect by his modesty; his caliber is gauged by the consideration and tolerance he had for others; his ignorance is betrayed by his suspicions and prejudices. Be modest in prosperity patient in adversity, equal-minded at all times; conscious of duty to one's own self as well as to one's neighbours and that there is but one basis of well-being: to understand and feel that 'I and my neighbour are one'. Help and not fight, assimilation and not annihilation, harmony and not discord, peace and not strife, unity and not dissension, are true saintly traits which the missionary ought to imbibe, promote and propagate:

"Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it, the tree is the real thing."

- Emerson

"Small kindness, small courtesies, considerations habitually practiced in our social intercourse give a greater charm to our character than the display of great talents and accomplishments."

- Voltaire

"Man sows a thought and reaps an action;
He sows an action and reaps a habit;
He sows a habit and reaps a character;
He sows a character and reaps a destiny."

- Swami Viveka Nand

"You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him."

- Voltaire

In short, man can make or mar his character and he is measured by the same:

"Every man is the architect of his own character."

- G. D. Boardman

"Character is not ready-made, but is created bit by bit and day by day."

- Edna Lyall

"The reputation of a thousand years may depend on the character of a single day,"

- Chinese Proverb

"In the times to come, the people will not judge us by the creed we profess or the label we wear or the slogans we shout but by our work, industry, sacrifice and purity of character."

- Mahatma Gandhi

GENERAL TRAITS

PRINCIPLE OF LIFE-PRESERVATION

The principle of life-preservation condemns not only the brutal destruction of the self by the self but also all other thoughts, feelings and actions which tend to lower our vitality, disturb balance of our mind and diminish the quality of our living. Pride and anger are harmful because they derange mental and nervous balance and falsify judgement. Ego, avarice and envy cramp the personality, obscure the moral sense and dwarf the intelligence. Sloth, together with intemperance, retards the development of our inherent powers and brings disorder, misery and ignorance in its train. It is to these vices that man owes his decline and decay, mental dissipation and low morals. All these constitute extremely dangerous breaches of the law of preservation. These vices weaken the individual and tarnish his image.

The reason for man's failure to respond to his inner call is that he is also a lower being, and in that he is urged by lower impulses, that is, he is not inspired by what he ought to be. This tends to keep him bound to the pursuit of inferior ends. He has footing on the earth as well as wings in the sky. This dual character results in internal conflict between the flesh and the spirit, or the lower and the higher selves. But man's higher nature does not allow itself either to be ignored or suppressed unless, once for all, he has sunk down to the animal existence, destroying his intrinsic human qualities.

MIND

Mind is the wildest and recklessly fastest nomad, "monkey-like mischievous" and "fox-like cunning," always prone to naughty and clandestine antics; fickle and slippery, easy to fall into the net of mundane allurements and temptations. If left unbridled and uncontrolled, it rebelliously becomes a great trouble maker and chief source of morbid feelings, degenerate propensities, evil thoughts, foul designs, devilish intentions, sinister motives, sensual desires, dirty maneuvers, perverse ideas, ignoble actions and pushes man to doom and destruction. A loose and vagrant mind is a devil's workshop. On the other hand, a controlled, contained and stable mind is a spring of righteousness and reservoir of blissful joy. The missionary should firmly bear in mind and fully understand that a disciplined mind with a strong will-power is not only a elementary requirement but also a rare asset. It is the mature mind, tempered with spiritual experience and ideas, that is able to enjoy contemplation of truth and goodness of which true happiness consists. As such, he must attempt and successfully develop the capacity to command his mental faculties to obey him and harness them for healthy aims and constructive objectives, instead of being subservient and sheepishly submitting to their flagrant and impish designs. The missionary has to channelise his unbounded mental potential to steer a sober and sane course, uphold moral values and cultivate holy spiritual order for carrying out his pious responsibility. It is incumbent upon him to cleanse his mind of dirt and dust of pride and prejudice, hatred and envy, calumny and the sort. Only a pure and chaste mind can visualize pure things, and it is in a pure mind that the Lord takes His august seat:

"When the human mind directs itself towards God Almighty, all worldly wealth becomes his obedient mistress,"

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

And, in the mind there is an incessant tug-of-war between the forces of spirituality and sensuality, morality and immorality, virtue and vice. The missionary has, therefore, to protect himself from the consuming and concerous maladies like ego, anger, greed, lust, passion, attachment, slander, jealousy, revenge, hatred, which egg him on to work for his own mental disintegration, keep him agitated all the time, disturb his equilibrium, preclude him from sane and just thinking and thus hasten his doom. He, who inextricably attaches himself to debauch practices and sensual pleasures, is his own worst enemy and shall have to repent and suffer. A man, who himself has no inner peace and is ever at war with himself, is totally incapable of preaching and transmitting the message of inner calm and mental harmony to others. Only a calm, serene and balanced mind can deal in truth and deliver the right goods:

"The mind in its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

- John Milton

"Bondage and liberation are of the mind. The mind will take the colour you dye with."

- Sri Ramakrishna

VIRTUE AND VICE

In the words of Dr. Alexis Carrel:

"Sin is the refusal to submit to the order of things. Any act or thought, which tends to diminish, disintegrate or destroy life, in its specifically human expression, is a sin. It is a

sin to hate one's neighbour, for hatred is destructive of both body and spirit. Vice is the result of habitual sin. As to virtue, it does not consist only, as Socrates taught, in the knowledge of good; it is an act of the will, a habit, which increases the quantity, intensity and quality of life. It builds up, strengthens and vivifies personality. Hope, faith, enthusiasm and the will to succeed, act on the body like steam on a turbine. Physical and mental activities are purified by love. These virtues heighten the personality and make it stronger and more closely-knit. Vice, on the contrary, lessens and disintegrates it; laziness, vacillation, self-pity and melancholy arrest mental development. As to pride, egoism and jealousy, they separate those who are guilty of them from their fellows and dry up the springs of spirit in themselves."

"Blessed is he who has no wrong to remember, no injuries to forget, in whose pure heart no hateful thought about another can take root and flourish."

- James Allen

RIGHT AND WRONG THINKING

To quote James Allen:

"The wrong-thinker is known by his vices, the right-thinker is known by his virtues. Troubles and unrest assail the mind of the wrong-thinker and he experiences no abiding repose. He imagines that others can injure, snub, cheat, degrade and ruin him. Knowing nothing of the protection virtue, he seeks the protection of self and takes refuge in suspicion, spite, resentment and retaliation, and is burnt in the fire of his own vices. When slandered, he slanders in return; when accused, he recriminates; when assaulted, he turns upon his adversaries with double fierceness. 'I have been treated unjustly!' exclaims the wrong-thinker, and then abandons himself to resentment and misery. Having no insight, and unable to distinguish evil from good, he cannot see that it is his own evil and not his neighbour's. That is the cause of all his troubles."

"If indeed thy heart were right, then would every creature be to thee a mirror of life, and a book of holy doctrine."

- Thomas A. Kempis

WHO LIVE NOBLY

The universe is infinitely vast and men are but specks on this planet. The individual, if he is filled with love of mankind, breadth of vision, courage and endurance, can contribute a great deal. Those, who live noble but not honoured during their lifetime, need not fear that they have lived vainly: something radiates from their lives which shows the way not only during the present time but also for ages to come. They, who lay down their lives for the sake of others, ever dwell in the world of bliss; and they, who are noble at heart, do not lose their nobility even by losing their lives:

"All exponents of Truth, who appeared on this earth, from time to time, surrendered themselves to God Almighty in all humility and God bestowed His choicest blessings on them, and they are remembered with reverence even after they have left their mortal coils."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

SOME DOS AND DON'TS

Mere dispensing the enlightenment is not the end of the missionary's duty. He has got to consolidate the work done by him. Much remains to be covered by way of maintaining

personal contact with the incoming fresher. Personal contact goes a long way to keep the enthusiasm glowing. He should make it a point to meet them whenever he revisits the place; he should evince keen interest in their social and spiritual well-being. It will certainly impress the newly initiated, rejuvenate their interest and fortify their faith, and thus save them from wavering or drifting away. And, the missionary should continue his effort till he is satisfied that the newcomers have been *rehabilitated* to the point from where they may not relapse. Surely, it will not be below his dignity to do so, rather it will be the right and proper course to cultivate reciprocal, intimate and happy relationship.

The office of the missionary is not an office of profit or status. It is a sacred duty assigned to him by the Master. And what he is doing, is in accordance with the loving dictates of his own conscience and love for the Lord. He is the humblest of the humble -*Dasan Das* -, dedicated to serve one and all. Before anything else, he is a humble devotee. As such, he is above the false sense of rank or prestige.

The missionary should be a simple man with basic values; sober in his habits, diet, and dress. He is not to be a slave of any habit, which proves a hurdle in his role as a missionary. He should be a man of few needs and limited requirements, so that he can easily and conveniently adjust himself in varying environments and situations. If he himself is simple and modest, he will impress and inspire others to be likewise. Abstinence and continence are the essential traits of a missionary. Enthusiasm to preach and propagate the sacred message of the Master is his only stimulant, which goads him on and provides impetus to work wholeheartedly and briskly.

Politeness costs nothing, but it pays a lot. The missionary should be ever cool-headed, calm-minded, soft-spoken, mild, moderate, polite, amiable, helpful and co-operative. He should work quietly but effectively.

It does not behave a missionary to be remonstrative or indulge in a heated exchange. Rather, he should bring others closer to his viewpoint with love, humility, tolerance, understanding and, above all rational explanation; and if one is not convinced, it will be saner to agree to disagree without offending the other party. This way he does not stand to lose anything. In the words of Baba Hardev Singh:

"Better lose an argument than the person. With our sweet amiable disposition, we may win tomorrow what we seemingly lose today."

Being a missionary of truth, he should have the courage to speak the truth even if it is a bit bitter: he should neither indulge in flattery nor feel flattered at his own praise:

"Flattery corrupts both the receiver and the giver."

- Edmund Burke

"It is easy to flatter, it is hard to praise."

- Jean Paul Richter

The missionary should never think indiscreetly that his is the last word. His daily experience is a learning, which would add to his knowledge. One can learn some valuable lesson even from a child. As such, one should be ever keen with a childlike curiosity to learn more and more.

The missionary should never be ashamed to own his wrong, which is but admitting that he is wiser today than he was yesterday. In other words, he should have an open mind and be open to correction. He should not try to hide anything because he has to rectify his failings for a better future.

UNIVERSAL WELFARE

What is the use of perishable body if no use of it is made for the benefit of mankind? Trees give shade to one and all, while they themselves stand in the sun and endure the scorching heat: they bear fruit, which others enjoy. Sandalwood, the more it is rubbed, the more scent it gives. This plant gives fragrance even to the person who axes it. The missionary should be full to the brim with the milk of human kindness. If the missionary is true to his mission, he cannot help being sensitive to the suffering, pain and misery of others:

"A saint does not cause sufferings to others, rather others' suffering move him."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

A true missionary works without expecting anything in return. On the contrary, he deems it a privilege to be of service to anyone and pleasure is his reward. He belongs to the world and the whole world falls within the ambit of his activity. He wishes and prays for the well-being of all, including even those who do not see eye to eye with him: *Sarbat Da Bhala* - Universal Welfare, Thus the missionary has to work for the amelioration of the society as a whole to build up a happy and harmonious social order:

"It is the sacred duty of a saint to make mankind happy."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

BY PERSONAL EXAMPLE

The Missionary has to illustrate by his practical life that he believes and practises what he preaches and propagates and that his transformation is the result of the blessings of his Master and his pious Word or Gain. To establish his worth, the missionary has to maintain the lever of spirituality stable. And for this, it is necessary for him to take care of nuts and bolts of morality, screw them tight so that there remains no scope for moral turpitude. It simply means that he has to sublimate his impulses and emotions, have a disciplined mind and make determined effort to develop a practical life of purity and piety. By building an exemplary conduct and sound character, he can convincingly attract and draw others closer to him to follow the path of truth. Hence, the practical side of his life must support and give a solid proof of his sincere faith in the truth that character is the greatest virtue. But, if he himself is clay-footed with frail legs, swept off and tossed by worldly currents of vulgar emotions, base impulses, corrupt practices and degenerate thinking with head stuffed with ego and its attendants, and, if he had built for himself a house of cards which collapses with the slightest stir, he had no locus standi to preach and exhort others to shun evil and own goodness. He will be looked upon as a pretender and hypocrite. Therefore, in this world rampant with corruption and thriving evil, the missionary had to steer a tidy course of righteousness and thus save himself from delinquency, decadence and pollution. Lack of practical truthfulness and suffusion in selfish motives, breed evil and unrest. The missionary has got to solemnly affirm and vindicate his preaching with practical life of profusion:

"Show by your lives that religion does not mean words or names or sects, but it means spiritual realisation. Only those can understand who have felt: only those who have

attuned to spirituality can communicate to others, can be great teachers of mankind. They alone are the powers of light."

- Swami Vivekananda

I have an inspiring experience to narrate. I remember on one occasion Giani Joginder Singh, a distinguished missionary of Kot Kapura (Punjab) declined to have his dinner lest he got late for the Sangat (congregation). He reached the Bhawan (congregational centre) punctually; he opened the doors and windows, swept the floor and spread the durries. And, then he received Satsangis (fellow-devotees) individually, collected their shoes, dusted them and passed on the same to the keeper. All watched him with admiration. This modest conduct, 'Vyavaharik Vichar' (Practical Discourse), as I term it, did not in any way lower his dignity, rather elevated him in their esteem. His spirit of humility is worth emulating. Such modest acts are highly meaningful and are pregnant with potentially convincing practical significance, as these help man to keep his ego subdued as well as set an exemplary lead for others.

ACHIEVING THE GOAL

KNOW THYSELF

Handling of spirituality by lesser hands, who are miles away from its real content, makes a dangerous game and a farcical toying of its theme. But in proper hands, it unlocks the chemistry of the self and heightens the awareness of the Beyond. So, dear missionary, know thyself. He, who knoweth himself, alone knoweth. Critically examine your thoughts, feelings and actions. Critical self-analysis will enable you to know your omissions and commissions, your strengths and weaknesses, your aims and objectives, your relation to the universe, your spiritual heritage. Take stock of and assess yourself. Capacity to know the self - self-search - is a great gift, because man thereby becomes a spectator of himself and is able to objectively review and evaluate his thoughts, feelings and actions, as if they are apart from him, and pass judgement of approbation or disapprobation. Introspection and self-criticism help one to assess one's own innate spiritual nature for self-determination: what one is, what one ought to be. Relinquish character that leads to internal conflict between the flesh and the spirit, between the lower and the higher selves. Man is his own friend or his own foe, according as he chooses to live - rise or fall - and, above all, his own arbiter. The merit of spirituality consists in truth, love, service, humility, sweetness, which make up intrinsic worth to arouse inner compulsion in others to understand the Reality. So, take account of day's faring and find out where you have faltered and fumbled as there always exists scope for improvement and betterment:

"Every day is a new teacher and comes with fresh lessons for those who are willing to learn."

- Ram B. Motwani

"As the silversmith removes impurities from silver, so does the wise man from himself, one by one, little by little, again and again."

- Dhammapada

Body is the farm and action are the seeds. As you sow, so shall you reap. See that you really deserve to be called a *Maha Pursha* (highly enlightened soul) and all that it implies and means. Weakness of character, deviating from the teachings of the Master and, above all, casting away of the fear of God Almighty are traits degrading and sinful. No doubt, to err is human, but not to learn to make amends, is disgraceful:

"It is disgraceful to stumble twice against the same stone."

- Baba Gurbachan Singh

"To admit that, being human, I am bound to make mistakes, but to make as few as possible and try to avoid making the same mistake twice."

- Wilfred A. Peterson

Self-search, self-enquiry, self-analysis, self-criticism or introspection necessarily points to an awareness of the highest order by which man judges himself, and the standard can be nothing short of absolute perfection for the reason that need for self-criticism will continue to be felt until an ideal, which is free from all imperfections, is achieved. *And so, explore, search and scan the inner space - inner self.*

RIGHT GRADE

It is so often mooted, even asserted, that it is not possible to be an ideal person and attain perfection. Maybe true to some extent. But that should not be an excuse for being complacent. There always exists scope to act better than before, provided one has the will to improve upon his previous record and the urge to attain the immortal through the mortal. The least one should endeavour is to set his eyes on the ideal, and certainly his striving will be rewarded. Keep on striving, for you have to become a shining example of socio-spiritual luminary to serve humanity. Invoke Master's blessings and God will help you, protect you and bless you.

Never be discouraged, never feel disappointed that you cannot make the grade. No matter how steep the path may seem at times, no matter how many times one slips, one must always keep on trying. That is the saving race of true devotees. If one continues to strive, the ideal eventually becomes part of his striving and gets identified with the goal. By never giving up, one establishes that his devotion, his dedication, his love for God is the goal and mission of his life. And, when once the Supreme Lord is convinced that it is He alone one wants, it is Him alone one turns to, then He is well pleased in spite of one's failings and shortcomings. Then God himself takes man by hand, walks with him, talks with him and tells him; *You are my own!* Therefore, arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached.

In a nutshell, a true missionary, to make the right grade, should have the pull of spiritual responsibility as a devoted disciple of the Master; sincere, honest and faithful to his duty; a humble servant of mankind and a God-fearing man of God.

**MAY
THE TRIBE OF
TRUE MISSIONARIES
BE EVER ON THE INCREASE**