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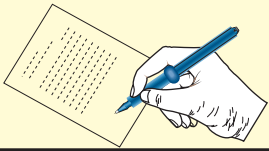
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Make Yourself Worthy of Education

When we talk about a total or a complete human being, we mean not only a physical human being, but something more. This something more is more important than an ordinary human being. The complete human being has a capacity to explore, to examine his inward being. His capacity of going beyond the usual state of mind is the factor which constitutes the 'something more' of the average human being. To make the two—the human being and the human being with the something more—is the real purpose of education. So, the real issue of education is to see that when the student leaves the school, the college or the university, he is well established in goodness, both outwardly and inwardly. The human being is courteous, the something more human being is inwardly courteous as well. It follows, therefore, that education enthrones in the minds and hearts of the students the ideals of loving knowledge and wisdom, service and sacrifice. It is not without purpose that Hindus seek salvation at the feet of Shri Vishnu or His reincarnation—or the incarnation of compassion and wisdom. Let our young men and women treasure these great goals, and strive after them and seek them, because, where your treasure is, there is your heart as well. It is these ideals which need to be religiously cherished and pursued to attain to a higher level of humanity.

In case the ideals of education i.e., service and sacrifice are practised in real life, truth is respected, beauty valued and goodness imbibed, the individual concerned would have proved worthy of his education. A great educationist, throwing light on the value and importance of education has written that—"Let all that is dark within us be burnt with flame and devil of error be torn away. Education is the most potent and effective tool to redeem our lives—to bring about an individual's development, his emancipation, his cultural regeneration, his economic advancement and training men and women for the diverse needs of a socialistic, secular and democratic society in the present scientific, technological and nuclear age."

The aspirations of an educated man are very ambitious and encouraging. But do many of us come up to the mark? Most of the so-called educated are satisfied after getting university degrees and a lucrative job. The result is the society consists of lop sided individuals and persons whose personalities are far from complete, because their activities are confined to meeting their selfish ends, and the qualities of service and sacrifice have no place in the scheme of their lives.

Education does not consist only in acquiring knowledge about the world, or about men and manners. True education stands for something which transcends the world perceived with our senses. True education caters not only to our physical side but also to our inner side. It teaches us to realize some values and ideals which pertain to wider and wider humanity and to the spiritual existence of man. True education also teaches us our Dharma of serving the society of which we are in integral part. We are a part of the whole; an isolated existence apart from the society is not possible. True education teaches us to understand others, to understand our duties towards others and to realise our spiritual relationship with a dispensation in which we live, move and have our being.

The values, which education tends to develop, do not exist outside of us, they exist within us.

Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta is a great lesson on education. In this book Arjuna is the pupil, whom Shri Krishna educates. He gives Arjuna no set of information, but asks him to

know himself and his duty **Swadharma**. The dharma of our action is a consequence of our nature which is to be realised in our relationship with people around us. Thus, an individual does not exist in a vacuum; he hasn't an isolated existence. He is a part of the whole. Man is a man only when he is a member of the society. No development is possible without society. The true aim of education is to awaken in the individual this sense of his being a part of the society. That is why his true dharma lies in serving the society of which he is the product and in which he has his being.

Defining the aim of education, the great thinker Beetle, has written that "The true aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think than what to think—rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men." To put it in short "An educated man is one who has the right loves and hatreds." (Linyutang) "In view of what we have talked of true education, the advice given by Chepin seems to be very apt and sane, Do not ask, if a man has been through a college, ask if a college has been through him."

True education transcends the realm of knowledge and goes deeper into the heart, the dwelling place of wisdom and the spring of values and relationships. To make our education worthwhile, or to prove worthy of the salt of education, we have to bring out the best within us, and help redemption of ourself and the society. "We must not think that it is the statesmen and the politicians of the world, the great people striding the world's stage, who alone decide the future. They may be able to create conditions that last for a while. But eventually humanity's outer state must reflect the inner and that inner state is created by each one's thoughts, influences and actions."

—N. Shriram

Education may not make us all leaders, but it can teach us to understand others, to understand our duties towards others and realize our spiritual relationship with a dispensation in which we live, move and have our being.

