

# Service and Qualities of the Server

## SERVICE AND THE QUALITIES OF THE SERVER

The spiritual journey is followed within, but the seeker must also practice the way of service without. This is very important, and yet often tends to be overlooked. A Master does not look so much towards devotion to His Personality, important though this is, but rather to a willingness by the disciple to look constantly towards his own Light, and share that Light with others, and such a disciple is regarded as a more able servant than the disciple whose devotion tends merely towards emotional hysteria, and beyond that, inertia.

Service is a true science as it produces results in both the external and the internal worlds. Service should be seen as a tremendous creative energy which, if properly directed, produces positive results upon both the outer and the inner planes. For Djwhal Khul the science of service is of greater value than the science of meditation, as service is conducive towards the harmonious unfoldment of all the inborn and latent powers of the Soul. If done in the right spirit, service brings about a thorough catharsis of the lower vehicles of man so that his whole being can be a pure pathway for the expression of divinity. The key to all service is to come to the understanding that all any man can ever hope to be is a channel, and that therefore all obstructions such as personal plans, ideas and desires must be gently, and sometimes, vigorously, uprooted. In this way, the disciple must carefully and patiently engender the attitude of being only a pure channel for the inflow and outpouring of the collective energies of God.

The idea of service is always sweet, but true service is by no means easy, since it involves a sacrifice of time, of energy and of interest, and requires an exceptional ability to work without expecting any reward. As Vivekananda says, "It is the most difficult thing in the world to work and not care for the result, to help a man and never think that he ought to be grateful to you, to do some good work and at the same time never to look to see whether it brings you name or fame, or brings nothing at all. For a man to constantly work without seeking or caring for the approval of his fellow men is indeed one of the highest sacrifices any man can perform."

But such a sacrifice is now needed as never before. This world has surely never been in greater need of spiritual resuscitation, and consequently the responsibilities resting on the shoulders of those who have chosen to dedicate their lives towards spirituality are both real and urgent. Let it be said of the disciples of Ishvara that they were aware of the Truth and acted with justice and with Love, and let it not be said that they were aware of Truth but failed to exert themselves at the hour of the world's greatest peril. Time is of essence, so use it wisely, and to not allow it to slip on by.

Service, when properly undertaken, brings its own reward, and that reward is love, and what a reward it is. Love is the only cure for all the sorrows of the world. The system of Vedanta, rather than saying that man should turn his back on the world, urges him to work, but to work selflessly, putting God in everything, and knowing Him to be in everything, so work ceaselessly and always hold all life as dear, since it is God Himself. In every place, in every person, in every action,

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in every thought and in every deed, God is already present, and with this as his basis, the servant works unceasingly and with joy.

For any real service to be undertaken, the disciple must have overthrown the desire to gratify the lower self and he must have truly entered into and understood the essence and nature of selfless devotion. The need to satisfy and placate desire is the greatest urge of the lower self of man, but the will to serve is an equally intrinsic urge in the higher man. Just as the urge to eat is basic to everyone, so is the impetus to serve an innate characteristic of the real Self. As a result, the true servant works only from the energy of Love, whereas the counterfeit servant works only from the energy of desire, desire being understood to be the distorted analogy for love that manifests into this physical world.

It is always easy to think that we have time or leisure to serve, but how seldom do those who have time and leisure serve as those who have no time or leisure. It is easy to think that we have no ability to serve, but allow me to remind you of a story from the Ramayana about the compassion and all-embracing Love of Lord Ram, and of his clear vision concerning those who serve in whatever way they are able.

In the Ramayana, we find that Ram's wife Sita, is held captive on the island of Sri Lanka. In order to help Ram recover his beloved, monkeys uprooted whole hills and dropped them into the sea, and covered them with trees and stones, to make a bridge from India to Sri Lanka. And then a small squirrel appeared, rolled on his back in the sand, hopped onto the bridge and let the sand slip off his back, and in this manner contributed much sand towards the bridge of Rama. The monkeys fell about laughing, as monkeys are wont to do, for they were bringing great mounds of earth, large boulders, and uprooting trees, and when they saw the little squirrel rolling over on his back in the sand, they could not contain their mirth. But Rama saw it too and said, "Blessed is the squirrel, for he is doing his work, and is just as great as the greatest one of you." And he stroked the squirrel on its back. Even today, the common squirrel of India has two bands down its back, bearing the marks of Rama's hand.

Given then, that all can serve, let us look at what qualities the servant needs, and let us turn our attention to the qualities set out in the Glossary of Alice Bailey, terms to which we will add a few of our own.

## Purity of Motive:

In order for the motive to be pure, we must have an understanding of the overall scheme, of Ishvara's mission, and of humanity's plight. We must have a strong inner determination to serve Ishvara, based on the clear realisation of the fact that He is the Master and the world Messiah. And we must offer service with wisdom, and seek to contribute what best we can, giving from ourselves gladly for the benefit and success of the whole. Rather than work for the glory of the personal self, we must work for the Glory of the Real Self.

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## Discrimination:

In order to serve with discrimination, we must find our place, whether large or small, in the overall scheme, and be happy to be just a cog in Ishvara's wheel. We should never rush wildly in, in our desire to be of service, where even angels would fear to tread. We must discriminate between what we can usefully do, and what is outside of our capacity.

## Readiness:

To make the most of every opportunity and do the work as required. Let us look at the way we talk to others. Many have a fear about talking to others about spirituality and concoct the alibi that they will be considered arrogant, strange or demented, if they do so. They therefore keep quiet, prove unready and so pass up opportunity and so are guilty of what is called "spiritual cowardice" in that they do not illuminate others with the glow of their own spiritual light. It is important to realise that in the place where he finds himself, among his everyday companions, and with the sum total of his present personality, the servant can and must work.

## Harmlessness:

This does not mean quiescence. Ramakrishna would tell the story of the cobra that used to frighten some small boys out of their wits. A sage who happened to see the ensuing commotion was angered by the cobra's antics, and told it to cease biting people and to practice harmlessness. The abashed snake slithered away. Though it had many faults, the cobra was faith-ful to the sage's words, and struggled to live on grass and berries and roots. It grew weak and then one day, it was set upon by the same small boys it used to terrorise and was beaten half to death. It then met with the sage again, who could not understand why it was so thin and emaciated. "What has happened?" asked the swami. "Swami", said the cobra in a feeble little voice, "I fear that soon I shall die. I have killed nothing since the morning I met you, and I have grown so weak that little shepherds attacked me with their sticks. But please give me a blessing before I die, for I stayed to what you said." The sage bit his tongue in anger. "But why didn't you frighten the boys off?" "Swami", said the cobra, "you told me to bite no one." "Yes," said the sage, "but you should have hissed."

As servants of Ishvara, we have to practice harmlessness with wisdom, and with a tender heart of love and pity, serve all we meet, but also be aware that when the vibration is the vibration of inner love, the resultant words can be fierce and strong and yet still true to God. As servants of Ishvara, we must never gossip amongst ourselves or spread false rumour, since from the point of view of justice this is an aberration, and from the point of view of harmlessness, much harm

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can ensue. If we hit someone they may get a black eye for a week, but say something untrue about anyone and it may last for months and months.

## Use of Money:

The servant has a true appreciation of the mystic value of money for service. Seeking nothing for himself, except for that necessary for his own development, he looks upon wealth and that which money can buy as something which is to be used for others and as a means to aid The Master's plans. This spiritual view of money is often barely considered, yet one of the clearest insights into the status of a man upon the spiritual Path is that which relates to his attitude towards and his dealings with, that which all men crave in order to satiate desire.

The Master is always gratified by the gifts of those who are able to give only at considerable personal cost. Others give of what they can easily spare, and the giving of which involves no sacrifice. The servant gives to the limit, with justice, with wisdom, with keen worldly intelligence, in order to more ably serve the mission of The Master.

## Group Service:

As the disciple loses sight of himself in service, and as the call of his personality grows dim in the distance, the servant finds growing in him a real joy and spirit of confidence and a real love, deep and lasting, for those who work whole-heartedly for the benefit of humanity and the service of Ishvara. The will to serve can fuel the fires of personal aggrandisement, but with hindsight the servant learns to override his personal wishes in the greater service of the whole. He then is happy to have a part to play, however, small, in the great drama that unfolds, and never again loses the attitude of seeking only to contribute towards the development of the Path no matter how far he proceeds along the spiritual ladder. A real strength in service is engendered by a deep realisation of the unity of group service. Two hands are always better than one and the servant sees the group growing ever larger.....

## Adaptability:

This involves a willingness to take a back seat when others are given the job he has been doing, or its opposite, that of gladly moving into work of even greater import, when another worker can do his own job with equal competence. Wisdom is always necessary in those who serve, neither to overreach themselves, nor to take themselves too lightly. The servant must be ready to work long hours in service that is neither glamorous nor spectacular, for such may be the way that he can contribute most, but at any time he must be ready to move on when asked, and must always seek to serve the Master's plan, rather than his own.

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## Perfection of Action:

Just as smoke envelopes the flame, no action can be truly perfect, but by this is meant the steady application to the next task and the realisation that whilst work can be planned by talking, it can only be done by action, and that every little step, earnestly pursued, will contribute to the development of the mission. The world is full, at the moment, of blustering talk. What is needed now is work. The method of action may be shortly summarised as wise control of the personality, and discrimination between time devoted to work and time devoted to relaxation.

## Joy in the Fullness of Service:

Seek to find joy in your work and service, for there is great joy to be found. Learn to relax and ride easily along the Path. Just as food not passed through the system causes indigestion, learn to pass knowledge onto others with love and discrimination in order to ward off stagnation and inner pain. Much wisdom and elevation comes to many at this time, but it is for helping us to teach others, and not for our own exclusive gain. I know that the joy I find in my heart when I teach as an Adept far outweighs any joy I could ever find in the world. There can be no greater or purer joy than the burning urge to give selflessly, with no motive other than of a pure love for others. The motto for the servant can well be expressed in the words: "I serve gladly, because I am glad to serve".

## Control of the Physical Vehicle:

Without physical strength we are limp and weak, and so we must be on guard against excessive tiredness and eat a healthy diet in order to better be able to carry out The Master's requests. The physical body should serve the inner man through self discipline and personal sacrifice.

## Control of the Emotional Body:

Love is a harmony, bringing all into balance and alignment with the rule of law. The servant therefore should cultivate love, devotion and inner stability in order to travel quickly along the way. The emotional body should not be a waster and dissipator of energy.

## Development of the Mental Vehicle:

Whereas the emotional body should be controlled through restraint, the server should seek to acquire knowledge and identify areas of depletion with the aim of ensuring that the stock of knowledge that he has at his disposal is ever growing and ever more able to lend itself towards The Master's service through being available for the disciple's use whenever it is needed. Unlike a library that would have to be carried hither and thither, the servant works hard at storing in himself all the knowledge that he needs for his everyday discourse.

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## The Attitude following Action:

This is very important. The servant should be utterly dispassionate and completely occupied with the next task at hand. He tries to work to the very best of his ability, but seeks no personal rewards or praise for his actions, and does not suffer pride over what he has done, and does not suffer from unnecessary anguish when things do not go as he planned. He always gives his all to his service and spends no time in endless recrimination or backward contemplation. The attitude following action can be summed up as complete dispassion and a growing love for The Master.

All of the above qualities will be brought about through an earnest application to meditation and a willingness to serve. Inner contact with the Lifewave brings deep peace and stability and provokes a man to be a force for service in the world. Stability and balance are found by finding stillness within and beyond the restlessness of the body, and by dovetailing the lower self to the dictates of the higher, and by ensuring that the desire of the mind and the kindness of the heart are ruled by the wisdom of the soul.

We could also do well to point out briefly the dangers that can occur to disrupt the dedicated life of service. I am sure that many of you will be aware through your own life experience of what these dangers are.

## Physical Condition:

Poor health undercuts the ability to serve.

## Illusion:

Where the goal of service becomes dim and ego, pride and unwillingness to work with others rears its ugly head. Believing your own plans to be of more value than The Master's.

## Lack of Clarity:

Wanting to do too much, and entering into areas of service that you have no ability to carry through effectively. Failing to see that you have strayed far from what is required. You must be willing to let others serve, and benefit thereby, rather than seek to be the kingpin of the wheel. This fault is based on the false appeal of Ego.

## Love of Personal Power:

It is easy to be deceived by the ideals of service and the supposed backwardness of one's own position, and yet seek nevertheless personal power and individual aggrandisement and be so envious of others that you completely overlook the lessons which you still must learn. All these <sup>are</sup> traps which many fall into, since they

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enter The Path of service without any clear idea of what is expected or what is required.

So - beware of the above dangers, they are real and yet entrancing, but in service we must learn to give and serve with a loving spontaneity rather than from a rigid and forced sense of duty. Seek to live the life of selfless service and all will be well. The way will be hard, with many battles to be fought, but the victory once won will free you from the vanity of ego, and allow you to rejoice in the inbuilt beauty of spirituality. Put your life and strength behind Ishvara, who serves mankind upon the ever difficult battlefield of life itself. So take heart from the story of the squirrel in the Ramayana, for all Initiates can serve, have every opportunity to serve, and indeed must serve. The motive for service must be away from the egocentric objective of personal development, and towards the universal needs of The Path. The qualities of discrimination, keen analysis of motive and the inner realisation of the essence of service are of prime importance. Service is to give and not to count the cost, and to work without thought of result or reward. The servant must develop an impersonal love for all mankind, based on the Truth that all mankind shares the same Self, and all are as branches and leaves on the same tree. The servant must be willing to take responsibility when needed, and carry the burden for others, and serve for its own sake, solely out of a pure love for God.

"What then", may you ask yourself, "should my service be?" "How can I best help Ishvara?" Find out these answers in meditation and in the everyday circumstances of your life. Seek always to ask: "What can I do for Ishvara?" "Where are the people I can help?" and "What is the next thing I should do?" rather than "What is in it for me?" and "Will The Master notice?" and "How will I benefit?"

Service is certainly no easy task, but then no easy task is ever really worth doing, and for the saving of the world, the call to true service sounds for all who can hear. Much work, as always, remains to be done.

With Devotion in Ishvara

Adara Chris