

VIII ADVICE TO HOUSEHOLDERS

I. "Those who belong to a very high plane of existence alone can take to the monastic life and free themselves from all bondages. Again there are some who are born to have a little taste of this worldly life. I say that one should see through worldly enjoyments. ... Let X- marry and finish all enjoyments in this life; otherwise there is no knowing when he may fall a victim to some unfulfilled desire. But you may be sure of this, that so long as he remains under the Master's protection he can never slip."

2. When a young man, out of temporary dispassion, expressed unwillingness to marry. Mother said, "How is that? God has created things in pairs: two eyes, two ears, two legs-and likewise, man and woman."

3. To someone hesitant about marriage, Mother said, "Why can't one lead a good life if one is married? The mind alone is everything. Did not the Master marry me?"

4. One disciple said to Mother that he had tried to lead an unmarried life, but now found it impossible to remain a celibate. Mother gave him assurance and said, * 'Don't be afraid to marry. Sri Ramakrishna had many householder disciples. Go and marry. Don't worry.'

5. To sincere lay disciples who spoke of envying monastic life. Mother would say, "Is the ochre robe everything? You will realize God without it. What is the need of taking the ochre robe?"

6. Disciple: "The Master said that those who would accept him as their spiritual ideal would not be born again. Again Swamiji said that no liberation is possible without being initiated into Sannyasa. What, then, will be the way out for the householders?"

Mother: "Yes, what the Master said is true and what Swamiji said is also equally true. The householders have no need of external renunciation. They will spontaneously get internal renunciation. But some people need external renunciation. Why should you be afraid? Surrender yourself to the Master and always remember that he stands behind."

7. "Spiritual progress becomes easier if husband and wife agree in their views regarding spiritual practices."

8. Disciple: “The scriptures declare that in the service of her husband a woman may find divine beatitude and union with the Divine. If a woman tries to lead a life of self-control by pleading and reasoning with her husband somewhat against his wishes, is that a sin?” Mother: “If it is for the sake of God, then it is no sin. One must control the senses.”

9. “Sri Ramakrishna used to say, ‘One must practise self-control after the birth of one or two children.’”

10. Regarding family people who wanted to renounce worldly life. Mother said, “If you really want to give up, first make suitable arrangements for the subsistence of your dependants.”

11. Regarding earning money and accumulating it. Mother said, “You have your wife and children. You should lay by something for them* ... What you have to consider, my boy, is that if you put by something, there will be some provision for your family and the future. Besides, you will be able to serve the holy men too. If you have nothing, what will you give to the holy men, my dear?”

12. “My child, whatever one is, if he comes in the garb of a Sannyasin, you do ‘Sadhu Seva’ (service to holy people) by offering him something or serving him in some way.”

13. Regarding a devotee who wanted to purchase Mother an expensive cloth, she said, “If he will brook no disappointment and wants to spend the money, let him buy a piece of land whereby the Sadhus and the devotees will be served.”

14. “The rich should serve God and His devotees with money, and the poor worship God by repeating His Name. ‘

15. To a young householder devotee who had spoken somewhat disrespectfully to a Sannyasin, Mother said, “Be careful about these three things: first, a house situated on the bank of a river; at any time the river may destroy that house and sweep it away in its current. Second, a snake; you must be very careful when you see one, for there is no knowing when it will come and bite you. Third, a Sadhu; you don’t know that one word or one thought of his may injure a householder. Whenever you see a Sadhu, you should show him respect You should not show him disrespect by retorts or slighting remarks.”

16. To householders concerning their duties in the world. Mother said, “The household is die Lord’s, and so in whatever work He has placed you, you should, depending entirely upon Him, do your best to perform it well. ... If sorrows and troubles assail you, call on the Master and he will show you the way.”