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'Do not purge the urge to touch the blue sky'

Spirituality is not a philosophy or a belief system. It is something you should become, says Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev.

Someone asked the Buddha: "Why are you spending time with thousands of people who are not good for anything? You are a spiritual teacher; you should spend time with a focused group. Of what benefit is this?" He replied: "All of them are Bodhisattvas — they have the potential to be a Buddha. It may seem that they are living a stupid life, but they have the bearings. The seed needs to remain intact; then it is just a question of finding fertile soil. My effort is just to ensure that the seed finds fertile soil. A seed looks like a dead pebble, but it can bloom into a beautiful flower. Spirituality is all about letting the seed find its roots".

The idea of spirituality in this world is also based on a perception that is largely social; the existential plays a small role. For most people spirituality means believing in their gods, performing their prayers and carrying out the requisite rituals. But all of us need to realise that by falling into this mould, this idea of spirituality, we are restricting ourselves. We, then, are just 'living' life — not allowing any space for glory. Only when you break free from these social ideas of what life is, and can be, will you find yourself on a spiritual path.

Spirituality is not a philosophy, not a belief system, not something that you can 'do': it is something that you can become. It is the essential nature of who you are. But to be spiritual, you cannot live without the physical. That is why life is so significant; it is the only life form which gives you the discretion to go beyond the compulsions of life. No other life form has this intellectual discretion. This is a big gift — even though you may not have exercised it yet — and its possibility is tremendous.

The spiritual process, the longing to attain the ultimate is to go for something that you cannot see. The urge to leave stable ground and touch the sky is not new. It has always ravished the human heart. Many have strived to suppress it, but that is not living — because those who try to suppress their inner calling are leading half-empty lives. They are not living it up because the physical is only a small part of existence.

The physicality of life is miniscule. No matter how important your existence — you, the planet you are living on, the solar system, the stars, the galaxies — you are just a tiny speck in the scheme of the universe. What dominates existence is beyond the physical. Most human beings form their perceptions through their senses. They forget that senses are only tools for survival. People try to use them as the ultimate instruments of life, and this is what gives them a distorted sense of the physical and of life.

In fact, most people live as if the physical is everything. Only a few realise that though the physical is important, it is not everything. Only when something beyond the physical dimension

affects you, when it ravages you, when it gains momentum, you will realise how insignificant the physical is. All of us have a social sense of life; what we need to do is realise the existential sense of life.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev *is the founder of the Isha Foundation, an international public service organisation*

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