

Knowledge alone Liberates

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Hello Arlindo. Thanks, and I'll have to contemplate your elaborate and interesting answer. So the knowledge DOES come first... And from this knowledge, one can do the practice of karma yoga? And I also have a question with regard to pujas, mantras, rituals... These do not belong to my culture, I think practicing them would feel a bit awkward. I felt the same when I attended zen-buddhistic rituals during sessions (periods of intensive zenmeditation), some time ago... Would it then be not better to use the rituals or prayers of Roman Catholicism (i.e. the religion in which I was educated), although I don't adhere to that Church anymore ? But still they would feel more like belonging to 'me' (the jiva) than performing exotic rituals...

Arlindo: Yes Mark, knowledge alone liberates. Sometimes people get liberated by love to God (Devotion) because in the process of surrendering one's mind to the mind of God, the sense of ownership/dooership erodes and one may come to the understand that God is but a thought in Mithya, a concept in the mind of the Jivas - and that God, Jiva, and the world, all occur within the scope of the awareness which is 'You' in your fundamental nature.

But in order for knowledge to be effective in its purpose, it requires a mature individual with certain mental qualifications. The application or practice of Vedanta boils down to listening, contemplating and assimilating - and revising the teachings over and over until the understanding/knowledge is firm in such a way that every time rajas and tamas takes over one's mind, the knowledge will neutralize those energies with pure sattva (mental clarity), which is the very nature of pure-knowledge.

Most westerners have difficult with devotion to Isvara and they tend to project their love, gratitude and appreciation towards a human guru, which in most cases is, but, a replacement of a mother/father figure. I did that myself with Osho Rajneesh, 35 years ago, until my mind developed more sattva in order to understand more sophisticated levels of the relationship guru-disciple.

The word gu-ru, means; that which removes ignorance. Ultimately the only effective guru are the scriptures on self-knowledge (the only remedy against self-ignorance). The Vedanta teacher is only a link in the tradition with the function of resolving the apparent contradictions the students are confronted with once in contact with the teachings. It is very difficult to proper understand the teachings without the help of a qualified teacher/facilitator.

If not yet, I highly recommend you to purchase those videos from Shining World on "Narada Bhakti". Any action-oriented spiritual practice will produce at most; maturity and a purer mind. They will not produce what you are or already have. Only understanding will do the job. Yes, karma yoga is a great purifier, and most appropriate for Jivas with a rajasic predominance because it does not tell you to control your experience by stopping thinking and acting, but rather explains you why you think and act the way you do, and how one should think and act if one's goal is a contemplative and happy mind.

If you don't have a bhakti temperament, it is ok, keep exposing your mind to the teachings... it will

eventually work its magic... Another suggestion is that you look into the work of Christian Leeb (one of our endorsed teachers).

It offers very good insights on how to work your mind on a practical and simple way.

Much love and good luck.