

Essay on My Ambition in Life

Ambition is not always praiseworthy. Sometimes odium attaches to it. Milton calls it 'the last infirmity of noble minds'. Ambition for power and conquest has wrought no end of misery in this world. But ambition also inspires a man to 'scorn delights and live laborious days'. It rouses the spirit of emulation in gifted persons. In the humbler stations of life, to which most of us belong, it acts as an impetus to good work. Surely such an ambition is not to be condemned. Ambition becomes a vice only if I seek to improve my position in life at the expense of others or to serve my own interest without offending others. When, for example, I am asked to state what my ambition in life is, the assumption certainly is that to have an ambition is not undesirable; and what is desirable cannot be bad.

It will be said that to follow a good ambition is neither impossible nor difficult. But I find that in the world as it is today, we are often faced with a problem or a dilemma. We have all to earn our livelihood and do our duty to our families. But this may be in conflict with an inner urge to serve society in some form or other. It is often difficult to reconcile these two urges in our life. We would like to dedicate ourselves to the betterment of society, but our personal life takes up so much our time, that we become selfish almost perforce. Usually, we are required to sacrifice the one to other. That is why many who have been idealists in youth turn cynics as they grow older.

I am referring to this because I am faced with this dilemma in my personal life. I am all the time faced with the pressing problem of doing something that may help me to earn my livelihood and keep the family going. I cannot ignore this, for in one view, if all of us do our duties to those who are nearest to us, that in the gross become services to society as a whole and in a particular sphere. There may

not be glamour in such limited service, but the glory is not less. Indeed, I for one take some little pride in the fact that my first ambition has always been to seek the well-being of my parents and brothers and sisters, – the happiness of those who are nearest to me.

There are some types of work in which, however, the two demands of our life may meet in co-operation. For example, let us consider the profession of a physician or a teacher. If I am a physician while I may earn fairly comfortable income, I can also –do a useful service to society-provided, of course, money-making does not become my sole concern in life. Unfortunately, speaking for myself, I am one of those who has no every great liking for the profession. That is why to be a shining light of the medical profession has never been my ambition in life.

Then shall I be a teacher? I confess a weakness for the ideals of a teacher. I know that a teacher in our country is bound to be poor. Yet to be a teacher is to be a noble ambition. I like to imagine myself watching the slowly expanding minds of young people like the petals of flowers, and helping them to receive eagerly the light of knowledge. But then I hesitate when I think of the poverty, and drudgery of a teacher's life. It may it may be that driven by this poverty, I may be forced to sacrifice the ideals that I cherish in order to do my duties to myself and my family. To take up duties to which one cannot be blind to the heroism that underlies a teacher's calling. To me, that is an inspiring thought.

Jesus said that man cannot serve God and mammon at the same time. In our modern society, it seems all too true. The craze for money and for the creature-comforts that it brings stands as a barrier against noble ambition. Still, if an ambition is rightly conceived and properly pursued, the evils of this conflict between opposite claims may be minimized. Having chosen one's aim in life, one must be

faithful to its demands. Then sacrifice on its behalf will be a joy and an inspiration. That is how I view it. if I am a teacher, or a doctor, or whatever it is that I accept as my profession. I will devote myself to in wholeheartedly, no with the object of amassing wealth, but to discharge the duties that belong to it in a spirit of social service.