

How To Eradicate Corruption

Talk: Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

To eradicate corruption we require individuals who are incorruptible and, undoubtedly, what produces such individuals is spirituality. There is a saying that violence begins in the mind. This is true also of corruption: corruption begins in the mind. If we can alter our thinking, we can safely say that we shall have eradicated corruption by at least 50%. What changes the heart and mind for the better is spirituality. When an airplane takes off, it leaves behind everything and reaches a higher plane, at which point it is capable of flying towards its destination without any hurdles. Similarly, a spiritual seeker is able to fly to a higher plane where he is free of negative influences.

There are two aspects to spirituality: theory and practice. Basically, spirituality is a non-materialistic approach to life's issues as opposed to the other approach that is based on materialistic interest. The root cause of corruption is the materialistic approach.

Applied spirituality enables one to infuse daily life with spiritual values and those who do so are able to distance themselves from all kinds of corrupt practices. One aspect of applied spirituality is the duty-consciousness which it induces. A rights-conscious person can see only what is in his own interest, while the duty-conscious person looks to the well-being of others and, in doing so, can never stoop to corrupt practices.

How to inculcate spirituality among people? Basically, it is a part of education, both formal and informal. Education means mind training, with special emphasis on inculcating high values. To spread spiritual values in society, we need value-based education, especially during schooling, which is a preparatory period for

life, and if we want to build a spiritual society, we must adopt a value-based education.

A spiritual perspective makes one evaluate actions in terms of their results – a major factor in having a sense of responsibility. One who cultivates such a perspective is able to see things in terms of value. He is able to differentiate between right and wrong.

There is a saying: "A wise man is one who knows the relative value of things." A wise person is one who has a predictable character. All these qualities stem from spiritual training. It is the responsibility of reformers, therefore, to train people to become duty-conscious – for a duty-conscious person can never involve himself in any negative activity such as corruption.

Spirituality helps keep emotions under control and brings peace of mind. An education system that includes spiritual values in instruction will help students imbibe eternal values and truths that enable them to not only develop their intellectual capacity but also to fulfil their role as responsible human beings in society.

A materialistic person is more concerned with material than with spiritual goals or values. Corruption is a phenomenon of a materialistic society while spirituality is a phenomenon of evolved persons. It is only such persons who can build a non-corrupt society. Spirituality and corruption cannot go together.

If a society is to be free of corruption, it has to be made up of evolved or, at least, evolving individuals who have a fairly strong sense of what is right and what is wrong. This is the only solution to the problem of corruption. This is the right beginning and only the right beginning can make it possible to reach the desired goal.

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