

Reality while the universe and the beings are all mere superimposition on It. Adoring the Reality to the exclusion of the appearance is but natural to him.

Among the people who believe in God, these are the four types who seek to contact Him, each according to his understanding and attainments. All the four groups are virtuous because of their right understanding and right doings.

Blessed are they who keep God as their goal and strive accordingly. Zeros have no value, but they gain in value when linked to the number one. God is the number one and all the worldly things are zeros. Independent of God, they are mere ciphers, but when associated with Him, they gain in importance.

— Sri Ramakrishna

But who stands supreme among these virtuous four? The answer comes :—

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।

प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ १७

तेषाम् ज्ञानी नित्य-युक्तः 'एक-भक्तिः विशिष्य-ते ।

प्रियः हि ज्ञानिनः अति-अर्थम् अहम् सः च मम प्रियः ॥

*teṣāṁ jñānī nityayukta ekabhaktir viśiṣyate ।*

*priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham ahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ ॥*

तेषाम् *teṣāṁ* of them ज्ञानी *jñānī* the wise नित्ययुक्तः *nitya yuktaḥ* ever steadfast एकभक्तिः *eka bhaktiḥ* whose devotion is to the One विशिष्यते *viśiṣyate* excels प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear हि *hi* verily ज्ञानिनः *jñāninaḥ* of the wise अत्यर्थम् *atyartham* exceedingly अहम् *ahaṁ* I सः *saḥ* he च *ca* and मम *mama* to me प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear

Of these, the wise man, ever steadfast and devoted to the One, excels; for, supremely dear am I to the wise and he is dear to Me.