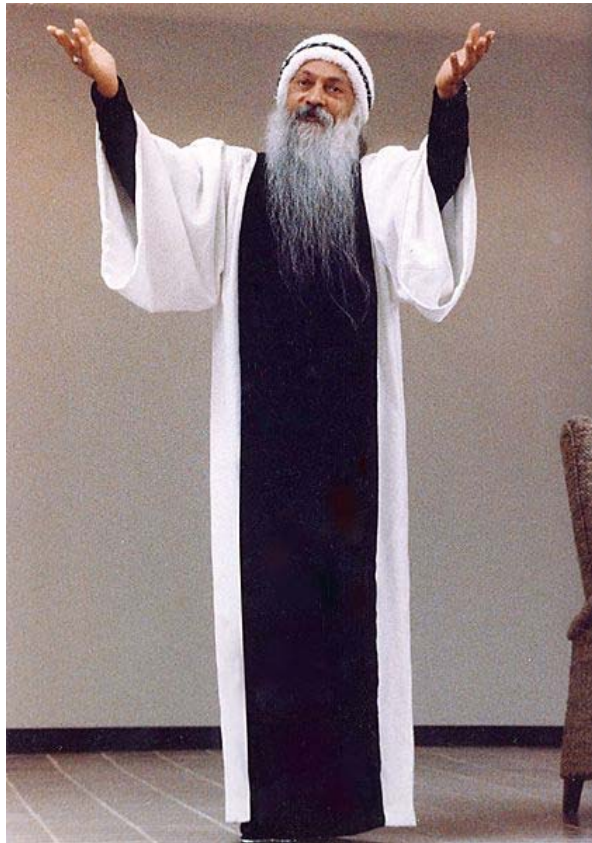


Charity doesn't help!

By Osho



All the religions have been serving the poor for thousands of years, and poverty goes on growing. Is this authentic service? Then in thousands of years poverty should have disappeared. In fact, you are feeding poverty.

Real service would be that the poor are told: "You are being exploited, and you have to revolt against the vested interests." The poor have to understand that their poverty is caused by a few people who are exploiting them, sucking their blood. It is not caused by your past lives and bad acts. It is caused by a social system which depends on exploitation.

Religions have been doing service for centuries. What is the result? A tree is known by the fruit; if the fruit is rotten, the tree is not worth much. Service seems to be a beautiful word to hide an exploiting social structure. It appears so good - serving the poor — it seems a great virtue.

But why are the poor there in the first place? Who has made them poor? On the one hand you go on serving the poor and converting them into Catholics. The service is not in the service of the poor; the service is to increase the power of the Catholic Church. You go

on finding orphans and converting them. How have Catholics increased to six hundred million? By serving the poor. The service is motivated.

If you are really interested in destroying poverty you will look into the roots. You treat only symptoms. Giving food to the poor, or clothes to the poor - how is it going to help? It will only keep them at survival level, and it will allow the vested interests to continue exploiting them. You see the vicious circle?

The capitalists go on donating to the church. The church goes on helping the poor live, because laborers and slaves are needed. Even slaves were fed by their masters. That was not service. If you don't feed your horse, if you don't feed your cow, you will lose much money. If you don't feed the poor, the capitalist will disappear. Who is going to work for him? Whom is he going to exploit? It is a very cunning game. The rich man goes on donating a small portion of his exploitation to the church. The church goes on bringing up the orphans, aboriginals, poor people, to the survival level. They are needed alive, because without them the whole system will collapse.

So on the one hand, the capitalist goes on giving money to charity; on the other hand, he goes on exploiting the poor. And between the two, the priest has his own percentage — he is a mediator - so he is living beautifully. There are millions of missionaries around the world, but they are serving the exploiters in the name of service.

I don't want to be in this vicious game. I want poverty to be completely removed.

There should be no person who needs service. A society that needs service is sick. But its prejudice about service has prevented it from hearing me.

You give beautiful explanations to the poor you give them respectability. Mahatma Gandhi used to call the poorest people in India harijanas, the people of god. But to be poor is to be condemned by the whole society. Hindus don't even touch them, they are called untouchables. You will be surprised, they don't touch these people because they are so degraded; they don't even allow their shadows to touch them. If an untouchable passes by and his shadow touches your body, you have to take a bath immediately to cleanse yourself - you have been polluted. And Gandhi calls them the people of god!

If poverty, humiliation, oppression, exploitation, makes you people of god, then why should one try to become rich? In the kingdom of god, even a camel can pass through the eye of a needle, but not a rich man. Strange, camels are holier than a rich man. Only the poor can enter there.

If that is the truth, then let this whole world be poor, suffering, starving, dying. What is the need of serving the poor, giving them food, hospitals, schools? What is the need?