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1. Unity And Divinity In The New Year

Date: 01 January 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: New Year

Embodiments of Love!

People desire a pleasant time,
A good position and a happy life. But none attempts to attain sagacity,
Wisdom and character.
What else is to be conveyed to this Assembly of learned people?
(Telugu Poem)

IT is a rare privilege to be born as a human being. Man is endowed with a gentle heart and a sweet mind. He is gifted with precious time. But it is unfortunate that man is unable to recognize his true nature. One cannot be called a human being just because one has a human body. Man is, in fact, the very form of the Virat Swarupa (the Cosmic Person).

He is the repository of all powers that pervade the cosmos. But he is unable to recognize his own capabilities and does not make use of even a small fraction of them.

First Recognise Your Own Value

Today man is devoid of peace and happiness. Why is it so? How is it that man endowed with a precious and rare life, a soft heart, a sweet mind and valuable time is unable to enjoy the benefits of these valuable possessions and enjoy peace? Unaware of his innate potential and forgetting his true nature, man becomes narrow-minded, selfish and suffers from lack of mental peace. In fact, he is being gobbled by the demon of selfishness.

Ancient man led a very peaceful and happy life. Restlessness of the mind was alien to him because he adhered to Sathya and Dharma. Why does man today lack peace of mind? What is it that contributes to the transformation of human heart? As is the fire, so is the smoke; as is the smoke, so is the cloud; as is the cloud, so is the rain; as is the rain, so is the crop; as is the crop, so is the food and as is the food, so is the mind. Even the habits of eating and drinking of men today are not proper.

What is the true ornament of man? Lotuses are the ornaments of lakes. Houses and buildings are the ornaments of villages and towns. The waves of the ocean are its ornaments. The moon beautifies the sky. Character is the true ornament of man. The loss of this ornament is the source of all his suffering and misery. Man does not realize the purpose for which he has been created by God. God's creation is endowed with several truths, mysteries and ideals. But man has forgotten these ideals. He is unable to appreciate the significance of his legacy. Of all the powers in the world, human power is the greatest. In fact, it is man who assesses the value of all the materials of the world. Who gives value to a diamond or, for that matter, to gold? Who attaches value to land? Is it not man? Man assigns value to everything in this world, but he is unable to recognize his own value. Then how can he ever understand the value of divinity? First of all, man has to realize the values of human life. Only then will he be in a position to understand divinity. God does not reside in paradise or Kailasa. These are His temporary camping stations. The true dwelling place of God is the heart of man. You don't need to go in search of God. He is not in a foreign land. Similarly, sin does not exist in some foreign land; it is attached to your actions. Not being able to recognize your innate divinity is ajnana (ignorance). You have to enquire into the reason for this ignorance. This is mainly because you follow pravritti marga (outward path) all your life under the influence of sense organs, which are projected outward. You are not making any effort to follow nivritti marga (inward journey). All that you see, hear or think are outward acts. In fact, everything that you do is outward. Thus, you are fully engrossed in the outward activities and are completely neglecting the inward path.

Wisdom Dispels Ignorance

Embodiments of Love!

You need to make an effort to understand the value of man. In fact, there is no divinity other than that present in man. Thus, first it is necessary to understand man before you can even attempt to understand divinity. In fact, there is no difference between man and divinity. Man is God; God is man. There is only difference of perception. You see the world with a worldly view and do not recognize the divinity that pervades it. You have to make an effort to change your vision from outward to inward to perceive this divinity.

Here is a rose. From the worldly point of view it is just a flower. But, from the divine point of view it is the flower of the heart. Wherefrom do you have this capacity to perceive the shape and smell of a rose? It is from the Divine. Your inability to perceive the omnipresent divinity is the main cause of all the pains and miseries you suffer in this world.

Madalasa imparted the knowledge of this basic truth to her children from their childhood. She told them, "My dear children, you are not this physical body. Do not mistake physical things for spiritual realities. Don't become a victim of delusion due to your attachment. This delusion gives you the mistaken impression of the physical reality. Just as the dream state disappears when you wake up from sleep, the delusion caused by moha (attachment) disappears when you awaken into the state of jnana (wisdom)." Moha Makes You Forget Your True Form When do you get dreams? You attribute dreams to your food or your thoughts. But this is not true. Give up this attachment of samsara (world) and wake up from the sleep of delusion. Moha makes you forget your true form. If there is no sleep at all, there is no dream possible. Therefore, sleep is the main cause of dreams. For the dream of ajnana (ignorance), avidya (lack of true knowledge) is the cause. Therefore, do not fall into the sleep of avidya. Teaching this way, she transformed all her children into great Yogis.

Human birth has not been gifted to man merely to indulge in worldly pleasures. None of the worldly pleasures is capable of conferring true

satisfaction. They only increase your desires more and more.

Therefore, man should give up worldly desires and recognize the principle of divinity.

New Year Augurs Well For Humanity

From the physical and worldly point of view, today marks the beginning of the year 2000. This is not a universal measure of time as it is restricted only to a particular calendar. Moreover, it applies only to vyashti (individual) and not to samashti (cosmos) because cosmos is beyond worldly time frame while individual is bound by time and space. Cosmos, in fact, is divinity itself. The individual is jeeva while the cosmos is deva (divinity). From the point of view of divinity, 2000 years form merely an infinitesimal speck. Several million years have gone by in the past. Hence, 2000 years carry little significance from this aspect. 2000 years have passed from the era of Jesus Christ. What about the hundreds of thousand years that have preceded the advent of Christ? Some of the names of months of English calendar are related to various Roman kings and Greek gods and goddesses. Periods of time have been named after humans, but the truth about human nature is being ignored.

Man is the very embodiment of divinity. In the word manava (man), the three letters stand for: 'ma' - ajnana (ignorance), 'na' - without, 'va' - to act. So, man is one who acts without ignorance. There is another way in which this word can be interpreted. 'ma' - not, 'nava' - new, i.e., man is not new. He is purathana (ancient) and sanathana (eternal). Man has been in existence for countless number of years.

Disputes about dates are meaningless. Every second is the birth of a new year. Seconds add up to minutes, minutes to hours, hours to days, days to months and months to years. Every second of your life is new. Thus, there is no particular sanctity about the beginning or ending of a year. There are people who attribute special significance to this day and speculate on some extraordinary or awesome events to take place. The time or date is not the

cause of your happiness or misery. Your own Karma (actions) in the past is the cause of both your happiness and misery. As is the seed, so are the plant and fruit; they cannot be different. Do not waste your mental energy in speculations of this or that happening.

When you are born, there are no ornaments around your neck.
There are no necklaces of pearls or
diamonds nor are there any chains of gold,
But there is an invisible necklace of the consequences of your past karmas
around your neck.
All your good and bad actions,
counted one by one, have been strung
together
By Brahma, and this is the ornament
around your neck.
(Telugu Poem)

Pure And Proper Actions Yield Good Results Only

Embodiments of Love!

When actions performed by you are proper and pure, you will get good results only.

On the whole, the coming year would be good for all of you. Actually, today is the beginning of the year 2000 and the ending of the year 1999. The year 2000 will end on 31st December. So, the consequences of the past years will be unfolded during this period. This period is going to be generally beneficial for the people of this country as well as for the rest of the world. The first three months, January to March, may have some ups and downs. Why? For man on the earth, time relates to the motion of the planets around the sun.

Some other subtle phenomena of non-material nature are also associated with these physical phenomena. Some changes in the subtle phenomena may take place in the first three months of the New Year and may carry with them some favourable as well as adverse consequences. But after March 2000, there will definitely be a better and stable period. But this does not mean that people should do nothing and merely wait for that period; effort from your side is not to be left under any circumstances.

Treasure Divine Gold In Your Heart

Today human values are on the decline. There is no trace of love anywhere. Truth and righteousness are hard to find. In these conditions, how can peace manifest? If you give some gold to a goldsmith, you can get any ornament made as per your choice. Hiranyagarbha is another name for God. Hiranya means gold. If you place this divine gold in your heart, you can make any ornament of your choice like santhi (peace), sathya (truth) and dharma (righteousness). Just as no ornaments can be made without gold, you cannot obtain santhi, sathya or dharma without divinity. Hiranyagarbha is immanent in everyone. That is why Swami calls everyone 'Bangaru' (gold). Only when you recognize this truth and have the firm conviction of immanence of God, will you obtain all kinds of benefits in your life. But you have forgotten the indwelling divinity, and are running after external objects. It is impossible to have success in life in this way. Therefore, first of all, develop faith in God.

Since ancient times, Bharat has been disseminating the knowledge of divinity to the rest of the world. The culture of Bharat is truly great. But, unfortunately, very few are recognizing this fact. The students are also not trying to understand its significance and sanctity. Our culture is divine, pure and ever new. Its scriptures set great ideals for mankind. Take, for example, the story of the Mahabharata. The priority of the Pandavas was God first, world next and themselves last. On the other hand, the priority of the Kauravas was themselves first, world next and God last. As a consequence, not only did the Kauravas lose God, they lost their life also. God should be your first priority. With such an attitude, no danger will touch you. With God in your mind and heart, serve your country.

Patriotism Leads To Divinity

Embodiments of Love!

Your country and your body are not different from each other. Both are composed of the same five elements. They are inseparably interrelated and totally interdependent. They are like mirror images of each other. Try to recognize this truth. The youth of today are the leaders of the future. If the future is to be prosperous, the modern youth should perform their duties with firm faith in God. You are not separate from the country, but a part of it. Have the firm conviction that this country belongs to you. But, unfortunately, patriotism is a scarce virtue in the youth of today. One who does not say with pride, this is my motherland, this is my mother tongue, this is my religion can be compared to a living corpse. (Telugu Poem) Every person, whichever country he may belong to, should have patriotism firmly ingrained in his heart. Abdicating their duty towards their motherland, people go to other countries and become completely alienated. How can such people ever understand divinity?

Embodiments of Love!

God is the basis of everything. He is omnipotent, omniscient and pervades all creation.

Who can say only this is Brahman

And that is not.

The only eternal existent entity is Brahman. The rest is all evanescent.

(Telugu Poem)

Just as without cotton, there can be no cloth, similarly, there can be no world without God. Do not mistake this deha (transient body) as real. It is the dehi

(indwelling divinity) that is the true reality. This divinity is beyond birth and death; the one without any beginning, middle or end. This birthless, deathless God is the eternal witness of the entire cosmos. Recognise this truth.

Recognize That Human Birth Is A Rare Occurrence

You are celebrating this day as the beginning of the New Year 2000. Do not consider that the year 2000 is related only to the Christians. Do not have any such narrow distinctions. Humanity in the whole world is one. All men of all countries belong to one race, the race of humanity. Keep this truth firmly in your heart. You must recognize that human birth is a rare occurrence. Consider time as highly valuable. The heart must be soft and the mind must be sweet. Human mind, which is supposed to be sweet, has become highly poisonous today, because man is allowing it to indulge in sensual pleasures, which are like deadly poison. Do not poison your nectarous mind by associating it with the objects of your senses. By doing so, you are making your soft heart also hard like stone. Do not waste time. Time is the very form of God. Hence, it is said in the Vedas: Kalaya Namah, Kala Kalaya Namah, Kala Darpa Damanaya Namah, Kalatheetaya Namah. God is the master of time. He transcends time. Therefore, have firm faith in God and not in your body. The body is impermanent. It grows and declines with the passage of time.

Embodiments of Love!

You are considering this day as very sacred.

"Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati" (as you think so you become). In any event, the year 2000 is not bad in any sense. It will promote very high ideals and propagate divine principles. It will foster the principle of unity. In a very short time, all the people of the world are going to be united. Today you consider America, Russia, Japan, China, Pakistan, and India as separate from each other. Very soon there will be unity amongst all these countries. Even those whom you consider as your worst enemies are going to become your best friends. You should not hate anybody. You are all brothers and sisters. In a

short time, you are all going to witness the "Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God." With a pure heart, all of you should pray for this to happen at the earliest.

There are many people in the world in great distress. The people who have been recently hijacked were under a severe strain. Prayer is the only remedy for the alleviation of such misery. There is nothing in the world that cannot be achieved by prayer. Prayer melts the hardest hearts. Pray wholeheartedly, "Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu" (May the whole world be happy). Do not pray only for the welfare of your family, friends and relatives. Such narrow-minded prayers are futile. Your prayers should be for the welfare of all people in all the countries of the world.

Start A New Life With Ideals Of Service And Love

Embodiments of Love!

The one principle that you have to uphold and develop is that of love. When love dominates, there is no room for hatred. If there is no feeling of love earlier, at least sow the seeds of love now. The Gopikas prayed to Krishna:

Oh Krishna, play your sweet flute And sow the seeds of Love
In the desert of loveless hearts. Let the rain of love fall on earth And make
the rivers of love flow.

(Telugu Poem)

You must sow the seed of love in loveless hearts. Water it with love. Let love flow in a flood and reach all. You should cultivate this pure, steady, unselfish love in this New Year. Modern man directs his love towards wordly objects and gets entangled in several complications. "Love lives by giving and forgiving, self lives by getting and forgetting." Selfish love is like the foul

smell of fish. Cultivate selfless love. Love all. Let others feel and think as they like. Do not bother about that. There is no need to fear anyone. Make your love pure. Then the whole world will become pure.

Meet All Contingencies With Love

Many people are worrying and speculating as to how the year 2000 will unfold. There will be no formidable difficulties. In this world all things, good and bad, come and go. World devoid of happiness and misery cannot exist. Nothing is bad for the world. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. How can you feel pleasure if you have never felt pain? These come and go like passing clouds. One should neither dread one nor crave for the other. Meet all contingencies with love. Transform everything into love and suffuse your lives with love. Then there shall be peace and stability in the world.

Why do you repeat the word "santhi" (peace) thrice? You pray that you may have peace at all the three levels - physical, mental and spiritual - for you are not one individual, but three - the one you think you are (physical body), the one others think you are (mental body) and the one you really are (atma). All three aspects of your being must be in a state of peace. This can be achieved only through love. Swami Himself is the proof of this. Infinite love is Swami's only wealth. Who sent out invitations to this large congregation? Your love toward Swami and Swami's love towards all of you has attracted all of you here. Hence, convince yourself that everything can be achieved with love. The evil traits of hatred, jealousy and pride should be cast aside. These are not human qualities, but animal traits. You are a human being. Love is the chief quality of man, truth is his basis and righteousness is his very life. The combination of all these ensures peace. If you possess all these, peace is your property by right.

Give up selfishness and work for the unity of your country. Pray for the welfare of all and lead an ideal life. Human life is not gifted to you to hanker after worldly objects. You have to set an ideal to the world. What is the ideal that you have to set? You must help all to your utmost capacity. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Adopting service and love as your

ideals, you must start a new life from this moment - this is My blessing and benediction to you.

2. Acquire The Knowledge Of Brahman

Date: 14 January 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Sankranthi, Sports Meet

Embodiments of Love!

Once you wake up from
The sleep of Moha (attachment),
You will understand that this Samsara
(worldly life)
Is but a dream, and you are pure,
Unsullied and eternal Atman.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

You are neither the body, which is nothing
But a conglomeration of flesh, blood and bones
Nor the mind, which is a combination of
Thoughts and vain desires.
It is the delusion, born out of attachment,
Which takes you away from liberation. You are essentially Divine.
(Telugu Poem)

THE youth of today are the future leaders of the nation and the architects of the new society. The future of a nation depends on its youth. The strength of the youth lies in their spirit of patriotism. The primary duty of the youth is to render service to the society. The physical and mental strength of the youth is the foundation on which a nation is built.

Primary Duty Of Man

Young men and women!

This is not the time to relax. Do not waste time. Wake up from the slumber of selfishness and narrowmindedness and resolve to serve the nation. Perform all activities keeping the esteem and honour of the nation uppermost in your heart. Understand the mystery behind human birth. Every individual has a goal. It is unbecoming of the youth to forget divinity and the goal of life, and to waste time in physical and materialistic pursuits. The youth should express human qualities by cultivating noble character and by rendering service to the society. They should discharge their duties with sincerity and re-establish the ancient culture of Bharat by practising and propagating its pristine values. But modern youth are neglecting their duty to the nation. They are not giving priority to the progress and prosperity of the nation. First of all, they should understand that the well-being of the individual lies in the safety and security of the nation.

Understand the truth that in the myriad forms of life, human life is the most sacred. Lead your life in a way so as to uphold Dharma, not merely to eat and sleep like birds and animals. Birds and animals act according to their innate nature, but man is forgetting his responsibility of fostering righteousness. Modern youth are under the mistaken notion that education is meant for udyoga (job). udyoga without yoga is futile. Contemplation on God is true yoga and udyoga. That is the primary duty of man. Without understanding this truth, some people take pride in their jobs. Ahamkara (ego) is the pest which attacks the root of the tree of human life. Raga (attachment) and dwesha (hatred) foster ahamkara. The three together spell doom for human life. Man's life will shine forth brilliantly only when his mind is filled with divine love. The life of one who forgets God and gets immersed in selfish love is heading towards disaster. The one who has total faith in God and love for God will lead a life of joy and bliss. Therefore, man should make an effort to understand his innate divine power, which is truly immeasurable.

Man And Brahman Are Intimately Related

Bharat is the source of the Vedas and sacred rituals like yajnas and yagas. How is it that such a sacred land is passing through hard times? The people of yore considered Truth as God and sacrifice as true human quality. They

adhered to them and experienced the bliss derived therefrom. But the modern students and the educated consider money as God and think that they can lead a happy life by holding positions of authority. This is not the true human quality. One should aspire for bliss, which can be experienced only by acquiring the knowledge of Brahman (divinity). Brahman is that which is changeless in all the three periods of time. This eternal principle is referred to in the Vedas as Prajnanam (Constant Integrated Awareness), which is immutable and invariable.

From the principle of Brahman emerged Akasha (ether). From Akasha, Vayu (air) originated. From Vayu, Agni (fire) emerged. From Agni, Jala (water) emerged. From Jala came Prithvi (earth). From Prithivi, Oshadhi (vegetation) emerged. Oshadhis gave rise to Annam (food) and man is born out of food. Thus, you can see that man and Brahman are intimately related. On this basis, Lord Krishna declared:

"Mamaivamso Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana" (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being) Without the principle of Brahman, nothing can exist, be it ether, air, fire, water, earth, vegetation or food. And man cannot survive without food. On this basis, the Vedas declared: "Annam Brahma" (food is God). What is food? Does it constitute merely cereals and vegetables that we consume? No. The whole world is composed of food. One body is the food for the other body. That which is consumed is food and the one who consumes food is also food. Everything that exists in this world is food. Therefore, it is said, food is God. You offer food to God chanting the Sloka, "Brahmarpanam..." before you partake of it. But where is Brahman? He is very much in you. That is why He responds to your prayer immediately from within: "Aham Vaishvanaro Bhoothva..." meaning, "I am in you in the form of Vaishvanara (digestive fire) digesting the food that you consume." Sathyam Is That Which Creates Food Sathyam (truth) forms the basis for food. What is Sathyam? It is that which creates food. Sathyam comprises three syllables - Sath, Ye, Yam, which stand for the jiva (individual), annam (food) and the sun, respectively. Sunlight produces food, and food sustains the individual. So Sathyam is the primordial principle and the basis for everything. Our ancients considered truth as their life and righteousness as their breath. They

considered human life as a combination of truth and righteousness. Therefore, truth is God. Man today has forgotten truth and he aspires only for food. He fails to understand that truth is the basis for food.

Brahma (divinity) is the basis for everything. Who is Brahma? All pervasive Nature is Brahma. Brahma pervades the air, the sound, the water, the earth and the sky. The five elements are the manifestations of Brahma. That is why people worship earth as Bhudevi, water as Gangadevi, air as Vayudeva, etc. But they do not realize that the same Brahma permeates all the five elements. All the five elements are present in the human body. So, Divinity is not separate from man. Man is the very form of Brahma. He is the embodiment of Truth. He should make every effort to manifest his latent divinity. That is true sadhana. Brahma is not a four-faced god as shown in pictures. Brahma permeates the entire uni-verse. So, every living being is the embodiment of God. Man should therefore recognise his innate divinity.

Divine Love Is The Ultimate Goal Of Life

Students participated in various sports and cultural activities and emerged victorious. But this should not inflate their ego with the mistaken notion that they are responsible for their victory. They should realize that it is the divinity within that does all. Students, who had never sung earlier in their lives, also sang melodiously. Similarly, some of you participated in those games, which you had never played earlier, and emerged victorious. How could you do that? In fact, everything is the reflection of the inner being. This proves that it is the divinity within that brings forth the latent talents and skills. Brahman dwells in you. In what form do you see Him? You see Him in the Soham mantra, which is echoed in your each breath and proves the presence of divinity within. Soham means That I am. You repeat this Soham Mantra 21,600 times a day, which reminds you of your divinity as many times. When power of divinity is in you, why should you consider yourself weak and helpless? In fact, man is the embodiment of all powers and faculties.

You are under the false impression that knowledge is acquired through books. In fact, it is the manifestation of that which already exists within you. Nothing

is possible without divinity. There are flowers, thread and needle, but they cannot form a garland by themselves. There should be someone to string them together. Similarly, separate letters by themselves do not convey any meaning, unless there is someone to combine them into words. For example, G, O, D are three letters. When they are brought together, they form the word God and you get a meaningful word. You have curd and a churning rod, but can you get butter out of curd without churning? No; likewise, the infinite power latent in the individual should be manifested through self-effort. It is possible only when you fill your mind with love for God. It is evident that self-effort and grace of God are essential in any human endeavour. The reason for all misery and grief is that your mind is not directed toward divine love. You will lead a blissful life only when the mind is suffused with divine love. Divine love is the ultimate goal of life.

Do Your Duties Sincerely

Perform all actions with divine feelings. Do your duties sincerely. Only then the udyoga (job) that you do will be transformed into y o g a (spiritual practice) and work will be transformed into worship. But man lacks such noble feelings. He differentiates between his work and others' work without understanding the truth that the same divinity exists in all. "Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad" (the Supreme Being has thousands of heads, eyes and feet). The entire universe is His manifestation. divinity exists in one and all, be it an asthika (theist) or a nasthika (atheist). There is God even in a nasthika. Na + Asthi = Nasthi. Asthi stands for divinity. This means divinity is the basis even for nasthika.

Experiencing Brahmananda

Man uses words without understanding their inner meaning. This is due to his ignorance. He gets immersed in worldly pleasures and says that he is experiencing Brahmananda (eternal bliss). Worldly pleasures are transient, whereas Brahmananda is eternal. The type of joy that man derives out of worldly comforts and conveniences is manavananda (human joy). Hundred times more than Manavananda is Indrananda. Hundred times more than

Indrananda is Devendrananda. Hundred times more than Devendrananda is Devananda. Hundred times more than Devananda is Brihaspathiananda. Hundred times more than Brihaspathiananda is Prajapathiananda. Hundred times more than Prajapathiananda is Brahmananda. This is the true measure of Brahmananda. It is not that which comes and goes; it is with you permanently. But you have forgotten this blissful state. "Brahmanandam Paramasukhadam...," only Brahmananda confers supreme joy. All the joys relating to body and mind are like passing clouds. They are related to waking state alone. But Brahmananda can be experienced in all three states, namely, jagrat, swapna and sushupthi (waking, dream and deep sleep states). It is changeless in all three periods of time. Man aspires to be blissful always, but he is subjected to misery because of narrow feelings and unsacred thoughts. He can experience eternal bliss only when he gives up narrow feelings and becomes broad-minded.

Embodiments of Love!

You can experience the eternal bliss only through love. There is no bliss greater than love. divinity is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. The Vedas declare: Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma (divinity is Truth, Wisdom and Eternity). This infinite wisdom is latent in man, but he fails to understand this truth. He has become weak-minded due to wrong food and bad habits. He is totally ensnared in his body attachment. All his thoughts, words and deeds are engulfed in body attachment. He should get rid of body attachment and develop attachment towards the Self to realize his innate divinity. Body is not permanent. It is bound to perish one day or the other. None can predict with any degree of certainty when one would leave one's mortal coil. This physical life is but a dream. So, do not develop undue attachment to the body. So long as you are alive, discharge your duties sincerely. Suffuse your thoughts, words and deeds with divine feelings. Then you will verily become God. Modern youth should recognise this fundamental truth.

Imbibe The Spirit Of Patriotism

The youth should resolve to eradicate poverty, suffering and injustice from

this country. This can be accomplished only by developing sacred thoughts, adhering to truth, righteousness and justice and realizing that God is omnipresent.

Students!

You are the emancipators of Bharat. Take refuge in divinity, serve the nation and resolve to script a golden chapter in the history of Bharat. That is the essence of true education. Do not take pride in the acquisition of bookish knowledge. Bookish knowledge only helps in eking out a livelihood. It will not confer total wisdom. Perform your activities with unflinching faith in God. Then you are bound to be successful. Do not therefore study just for the sake of acquiring of degrees.

In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality?
Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.
(Telugu Poem)

Virtue Cannot Be Attained Without Discipline

That is true education. That is Brahma Jnana (knowledge of divinity). There can be no greater bliss than realizing the truth that God is everywhere. No doubt, worldly education is also essential, but it should be under a certain limit; otherwise, it will corrupt the mind. When you are thirsty, is it not foolish to desire for the whole of river Ganga? A glass of water is enough to quench your thirst. Likewise, it is foolish to entertain excessive desires. Na Sreyo Niyamam Vina (virtue cannot be attained without discipline). Everything

should be within a certain limit. Proper discipline has to be maintained in eating, earning and spending. Only then will your life be blissful.

Students!

Sports and games are essential to keep your body and mind in good shape. There is no point in having a healthy body if it is not used in the service of the society. Likewise, all your intelligence will be a waste if it is not used to discriminate between good and bad. Before undertaking any activity, enquire whether it is good or bad.

Never Forsake Your Motherland

Embodiments of Love!

Do not spend all your lifetime in acquiring degrees. All your physical, mental and spiritual powers come from God. God is the giver and also the receiver. He is the one experienced. Understand the truth that everything, be it good or bad, happens according to the Divine Will. Do not develop craze for acquiring degrees, going abroad and amassing wealth. The true wealth is within you. Never forsake your motherland. For the simple reason that your mother is not beautiful, can you forsake her and consider another lady who is beautiful as your mother? Preferring a foreign land to one's own motherland amounts to doing the same. Janani Janma Bhoomishcha Swargadapi Gareeyasi (the mother and the motherland are greater than even heaven). So, one should have love for one's motherland. Develop desabhimanam (spirit of patriotism), not dehabhimanam (attachment to the body).

The physical body, made of five elements, is weak and no one knows when it would perish.

Though one hundred years of life span is prescribed, you cannot take it for granted.

You may have to leave your body at any point of time either in childhood or

in
youth or in old age, either in
town or in forest or in deep sea. Understand that death is certain. Therefore,
use your intellect to know
your true nature while you are alive.
(Telugu Poem)

If you do not know the purpose of your birth, you will become a burden on mother earth. The purpose of human birth is to experience divinity. Try to understand your true nature. Do not compare yourself with others. Follow your own conscience and enjoy bliss. Do not imitate others. Imitation is the quality of the weak-minded. Suppose, you come to know that someone has found a wallet on the road while passing through a particular locality. If you go to the same locality expecting to find another wallet on the road, you may even lose your own wallet! In order to progress in the field of education, imitation is desirable to a certain extent, but in all other fields imitation is deplorable. Imitation is weakness, creation is divine. Let your thoughts be sacred; the result will be sacred.

Life Is A Long Journey, Not A Short cut

Embodiments of Love!

This Sports and Cultural Meet has given immense joy to one and all. Do not consider sports and games as merely an annual affair. Your life itself is a game. Each moment that you spend is a part of this game of life. Play this game in the true spirit and emerge victorious. Human life is highly valuable and noble. Do not squander it in mean activities. Life is a long journey, not a short cut. Don't waste time. Time waste is life waste. Undertake righteous actions. Render service to the society. Strive for the welfare of your fellowmen. The Puranas affirm Paropakaraya Punyaya Papaya Parapeedanam (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). So,

Help ever, Hurt never. This is the essence of the Mahabharata. The Kauravas always tried to hurt the Pandavas. Ultimately, not even one out of hundred brothers survived in the Kurukshetra war. Lord Krishna foretold this before the commencement of the war. He told Dharmaraja, "Do not give scope to worry. Follow your Dharma and do your duty sincerely. You will certainly emerge victorious." He infused courage and confidence in Arjuna, saying,

Arise Dhananjaya! None can escape the destiny.
Justice will prevail and selfishness will perish.
This has been the case in every Yuga (Age).
You will see for yourself that King Dhritarashtra, father of hundred sons,
will not be left with even one son to perform his last rites.
(Telugu Poem)

Revere The Mother And Father As God

The Kauravas ruined themselves because they forgot God and reposed their faith in the world. I do not advise you to forsake the world, but do not get totally immersed in worldly life. Have faith in God. Respect your parents and make them happy. The Vedas say, Matru Devo Bhava Pitru Devo Bhava (revere the mother and father as God). Do not hurt their feelings. Perform all your activities as an offering to God. Then you will certainly emerge victorious in all your endeavours.

Embodiments of Love!

You gave immense joy to thousands of people with your performance. However, pleasing the entire world without pleasing God is of no use. Even if the whole world is opposed to you, so long as God is with you, you need not fear. When God is with you, the whole world will follow you. When God is pleased with you, the whole world will be pleased with you. Therefore, let all

your efforts be towards pleasing God.

Tirumalacharya, the author of Sri Sathya Sai Suprabhatam, used to live here. He had served in the royal court of Venkatagiri. He was a great scholar in Sanskrit and Sastras. He accompanied Bhagawan to Badrinath at the advanced age of ninety. Bhagawan asked him whether he was fit enough to undertake such an arduous journey. He affirmed that with Swami by his side, he would travel any length of journey without any discomfort.

He said, "Sai Matha, if You forsake me, my entire existence is a waste. If you accept me as Yours, it is as if I have everything at my command." This was the state of Bhakti and surrender in which Tirumalacharya spent his life. He was constantly meditating on Sai Matha. He spent all his time in Swami's proximity, whether it was here or in Brindavan. His Bhakti was beyond measure. Consequently, his end was peaceful.

He very well knew that his end was approaching and one day expressed his feeling. On being questioned as to how he knew about it, he replied, "Swami is telling me from within." He went for his bath, brought some water, washed Swami's feet and sipped a few drops of the sanctified water and said, "Swami, my life has found fulfilment. Poornamada Poornamidam Poornat Poornamudachyate Poornasya Poornamadaya Poornameva Avashishyate (The whole is all That. The whole is all this. The whole was born out of the whole. Taking the whole from the whole, what remains is also the whole). Physically, mentally and spiritually. I have attained this wholesomeness. Now the time has come for me to merge in You." Thereafter, he cast off his mortal coil and merged in Swami.

There is no shortage of men filled with Bhakti of this kind in the world. It is only because of the presence of such devotees that the world is able to sustain itself.

Students!

Wherever you may go, never forget truth. The only form of gratitude that you

can express towards this university is by adhering to truth. Earn a good name to the Institute through your good conduct. That is all I expect from you.

Earn A Good Name For Yourself And Your Institute

You know Swami sent a few students to Bangalore for training in horse-riding and driving of gokarts. Lt.Gen. Mehta gave them all help and facilities. He arranged the horses and also the trainers. The trainers were astonished at the skill and dexterity displayed by the boys, who learnt the art of horse-riding within a short span of time. They extolled the character of the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, saying they were knowledgeable, smart and intelligent. Such a good name is what Swami expects you to earn for yourself and the Institute.

There are a lot of people in the world who wear white dress, but they may have black hearts. Students of our Institute are pure both from inside and outside. Just as the dress they wear is white in colour, so also their minds are pure. That makes Swami very happy.

Swami is always near you, with you, in you and around you. You should all become men of character and propagate spiritual values. You know the state of the country now. There is strife, misery and turmoil everywhere. Strive to alleviate this misery. This is what Swami expects from you. Do not wait until the next sports event. Perform your daily activities with diligence and constantly contemplate on God. Sanctify your life with divine love.

People cannot stand the Lord in superhuman form. It is only when the Lord comes in human body that people are able to approach Him and learn to love Him even a little bit. But one should not make the mistake of thinking that, that is all there is to the Lord. For instance, the aeroplane flying high in the sky descends to the airport. But one should not think that the plane is the ground machine because one sees it on the ground. Once it has taken on its load of passengers, it again zooms up high into the sky. In like fashion,

although the Lord has made a landing here on the earth, so to speak, He is not limited by His human form.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

3. Perform All Actions To Please God

Date: 14 January 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Sankranthi, Sports Meet

The principle of Atma has neither birth nor death;
It has neither beginning nor end;
It is the eternal witness and all-pervasive; Atma is Brahman and Brahman is Atma.

(Telugu Poem)

The Lord of Puttaparthi will always protect you.
He is the ocean of compassion.
Holding your hand, He will take care of you.
He will never forsake you. Recognise this truth.

(Telugu Poem)

Bharat is the holy land of the Vedas and
the Sacred rituals like Yajnas and yagas.
It is the motherland of many noble souls.
It is the land of sacrifice that has taught To the world morality and code of conduct.

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

BHARAT is the centre of truth, righteousness and morality. It is your great good fortune to have been born in this sacred land. This is the land of merit, penance and sacrifice (tyaga). Such a tyaga bhoomi (land of sacrifice) is being converted into a bhoga bhoomi (land of pleasure). We do not need a bhagya bhoomi (land of wealth) or bhoga bhoomi (land of pleasure). It should remain a tyaga bhoomi. So, every citizen of Bharat should develop the spirit of sacrifice and work hard.

Spiritual Wealth Of Bharat

Bend the body, mend the senses and end the mind - this should be your endeavour. Live up to the reputation of muddu biddalu (dear children) of this motherland. Do not become moddu biddalu (foolish children) or chedda biddalu (bad children). Your motherland will feel proud of you only when you become noble and ideal. You may not hold any worldly qualifications, but you can take pride in the fact that you are the sons of this sacred land of Bharat. This in itself is the great qualification.

Bharat is the land endowed with the wealth of spirituality, sacrifice and bliss. Born in this sacred land, every Bharatiya should resolve to foster spiritual values and spirit of sacrifice. Consider service as your duty. Service is God. Divinity can be experienced only through service.

On deep enquiry, you will know that you are in God, God is in you and you are God. Understand this truth and act accordingly. You should be able to say with conviction that you are a spark of the Divine. If someone were to question where is God, say with courage and conviction that God is everywhere.

Never doubt the omnipresence of God
or say that He is here and is not there.
In fact, you can find Him
wherever you search for Him.
(Telugu Poem)

God does not exist for those who deny Him. He exists for those who believe in His existence. He says 'yes' for those who say 'yes', and 'no' for those who say 'no'. You may say 'yes' or 'no', but for Sai, everything is 'yes, yes, yes.' If someone were to tell you that God does not exist, teach him a lesson saying,

"God may not exist for you but He does exist for me. You have no right to deny the existence of my God." With such courage and conviction, you should uphold your ancient culture. Being born as the children of this land of courage and valour, do not give scope for weakness of any kind. You are not weak. You have all the strength in you. Take a pledge to accomplish the task of restoring our ancient culture with courage and determination.

God Himself Has Taken Three Pledges:

(i) He will incarnate Age after Age for the establishment of Dharma - Parithranaya Sadhunam Vinashayacha Dushkritam, Dharma Samsthapa narthaya Sambhavami Yuge Yuge (ii) He will take care of those who constantly contemplate on Him - Ananya Chinthayantho mam Ye jana Paryupasathe, Thesham Nithyabhiyukthanam Yogakshemam Vahamyaham (iii) He will grant liberation to those who surrender to Him completely - Sarvadarman Parithyajya Mamekam Saranam Vraja, Aham Twa Sarvapapaebhyo Mokshishyami Ma Sucha.

Likewise, you too should take three vows:

(i) that you will firmly believe in the existence of God,

(ii) that you will experience Him and,

(iii) that you will become one with Him.

Make every effort to fulfil these vows.

Happiness Results From Victory Over Difficulties

The year 2000 has commenced. Many have given a bad picture of what lies ahead in this year. But there is nothing bad in this world. Even that which appears to be bad is also good. So, never consider anything bad. How can evil enter God's creation? Everything happens according to God's Will. There is no scope for bad events when the Divine Will is always good and pure. How can

you point out something as bad when divinity pervades everything? Good and bad lie in your drishti (vision), not in srishti (creation).

Have firm faith that whatever happens is good for you and face any eventuality with courage. Students having such courage and conviction are needed today. You all know that the people in the world are undergoing a lot of suffering. Human life will find fulfilment only when one acts with courage and conviction in the face of adversity. Never get disheartened and never retrace your steps. God has created you not to lead a selfish life. Uphold Dharma for the welfare of humanity, even at the cost of your life. After all, death occurs only once in a lifetime. Everything happens according to God's Will. Man who has been created by the Divine Will should sanctify his life by following the Divine command.

No matter what others say or do, have unflinching faith in God. Only the good face obstacles in their path. Whatever happens is for your own good. When a student fails in an examination, he does not give up effort. He works hard to attain success in the next examination. Similarly, never give up in the face of adversities in life.

Pleasure is an interval between two pains. Vyasa said, Na Sukhath Labhyathe Sukham (happiness cannot be gained from happiness). Happiness results only when you overcome difficulties. Happiness has no value in the absence of difficulties, just as light has no value in the absence of darkness. Difficulties are part and parcel of human existence. So, take them in your stride.

Once Kunti prayed to Krishna to give her difficulties in life so that she could remember Him always. She said, "Krishna, when my husband, King Pandu was alive, hardly did I remember You, because I was immersed in pleasures and comforts. After his death we were put to untold suffering, as a result of which we remembered You always. Now I realize the value of difficulties. They help me to remember You always. I am ready to face any hardship, but kindly ensure that my love for you never diminishes".

Be Equal-minded In Pleasure And Pain

Forty-two years had passed after the Kurushetra war. Arjuna was returning from Dwaraka. The entire clan of Yadavas was embroiled in squabble, as a result of which they all perished. Krishna too had left His mortal coil. Sighting Arjuna at a distance, Dharmaraja went up to him and enquired about the well-being of Lord Krishna. With deep agony, Arjuna informed Dharmaraja that their friend, mentor and God, Lord Krishna was no more. On hearing this, Kunti collapsed and breathed her last on the lap of Dharmaraja. A grief-stricken Dharmaraja bemoaned. "Oh Mother! Have you gone in search of our dear Lord Krishna? It appears to be so. Life is meaningless without Krishna. All along we lived with Krishna, earned name and fame and emerged victorious in the war. All this was possible because He was on our side. There is no meaning in life after Him." He summoned Bhima and asked him to make arrangements for mother Kunti's funeral. Arjuna was asked to make arrangements for the coronation of his grandson, while Nakula and Sahadeva were asked to make preparations for going to the forest for final journey. All the three activities - Kunti's funeral, coronation of Parikshit and the Pandavas' final journey were to take place on the same day. Only Dharmaraja, being the recipient of divine grace, could execute these diverse duties with equanimity.

After performing the last rites of their mother Kunti and crowning Parikshit, the Pandavas left Hastinapur for the forest. Droupadi who considered the five Pandavas as her five life-breaths also followed them. The Pandavas remained united both in pleasure and pain. Such unity is lacking today. Happiness and sorrow are like passing clouds. One should not be elated in times of pleasure or depressed in times of pain. One should remain equal-minded, unaffected by happiness or sorrow. This is the sign of true devotion.

Devotion Stands For Steady Love For God

Devotion does not mean performing Puja or undertaking rituals. Devotion stands for steady love for God. It also means implicit obedience and subservience to the Will of God. Lakshmana followed Rama to the forest as he considered Him to be his very life-breath. On reaching Chitrakoota mountain, Rama instructed Lakshmana to make a hut. When Lakshmana asked Him to

show the location, Rama replied, "Erect it at a place of your choice." Hearing this Lakshmana was overcome with grief. He said, "What sin have I committed to hear such harsh words from You? Have I not surrendered to Your Will? Do I have likes and dislikes of my own?" Seeing Lakshmana's plight. Sita remarked, "Lakshmana, why are you so agitated? Rama neither beat you nor did he admonish you." Lakshmana replied, "Mother, I would have been happy if beaten or scolded by Him, but I cannot bear to hear that my likes and dislikes are separate from His. There is no greater sorrow than hearing such words from Lord Rama." This incident reveals the intensity of devotion and total surrender of Lakshmana.

Obey The Divine Command Implicitly

Surrender implies that the individual will should become one with the Divine Will. Obey the Divine command implicitly without questioning. That is the sign of true devotion. Whatever God does is for your good. The Pandavas had to undergo innumerable hardships. Ultimately, victory was theirs as they obeyed God's command implicitly. Through devotion and sincerity you can achieve anything in life. Do not crave for bhoga (pleasure); aspire for yoga. Yoga means union with God. The Bhagavad Gita starts with the chapter Vishada Yoga. Arjuna's vishada (sorrow) turned into v i j a y a (success) on account of his association with Krishna. Before attaining success in any endeavour one has to face hardships. Pleasure and pain come together just as the bitter rind and the sweet juice coexist in an orange. You cannot enjoy the sweet juice of sugarcane unless it is crushed. Likewise, gold has to be put in fire, hammered and cut before it is made into a beautiful jewel. Similarly, humanness will shine only when one undergoes trials and tribulations.

Earn Divine Grace Through Love

Hiranyagarbha is another name of God. If you place this divine gold in your heart, you can make any ornament of your choice like truth, righteousness and peace. Just as no ornament can be made without gold, you cannot obtain the jewels of Sathya, Dharma and Santhi without divinity. Hiranyagarbha is immanent in everyone. That is why Swami calls everyone 'Bangaru.' You say

this prayer: Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu (May the whole world be happy!). Develop love for all in order to earn divine grace. You cannot get even a handkerchief unless you pay for it. You are asking God for peace, happiness and liberation. But what are you giving to God in return? Offer your love to Him and receive His grace in the form of peace, happiness and liberation. Everybody has this right. But you have to give first to earn it. Only through love and service will you earn this right to ask. There is no other way.

I said this morning, Annam Brahma (food is God). In fact, human body is composed of five sheaths, namely, Annamaya Kosha, Pranamaya Kosha, Manomaya Kosha, Vijnanamaya Kosha and Anandamaya Kosha, each sheath being subtler than the other in that order. In order to attain liberation, one has to reach the subtlest of these sheaths, i.e., Anandamaya Kosha. The ananda you experience after this is referred to as Brahmananda. Such bliss can be experienced only through Divine Love.

Chanting of the Divine Name of Sai Rama will destroy mountains of sin. I often tell you Pibare Rama rasam (drink the nectar of Lord Rama's Name). Tulasidas prayed to Rama for the nectar of His love. When sugar and water are mixed, syrup is formed. Likewise, when your love becomes one with Divine Love, then it becomes nectar, the experience of which makes you immortal.

"Each Word Of Mine Has Immense Value"

Do not hate anybody. Love all. Many of you feel bad, thinking that Swami does not speak to you. But you do not enquire whether you are following Swami's teachings or not. I too follow certain rules and regulations. When I give you something, you should make proper use of it. Otherwise, what is the point in My giving? When I give you what you ask for,

is it not your duty to do what I say? I feel it is better not to speak than to speak and lose the value of My words. Each word of Mine has immense value associated with it. I will fulfil your wish only when you obey My command. God does not have anger or hatred towards anybody. But, you have actions. As is the action, so is the reaction. Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi (as is your

feeling, so is the result).

If you are good, I will certainly yield to your request. Sometimes, I behave as if I am angry, only to put you on the right path. Without understanding this truth, you sometimes feel that Swami is ignoring you. What place have you given to Swami in your heart? To what extent are you putting His teachings into practice? I take all this into consideration. When a beggar asks for alms, the lady of the house gives him food. Sometimes she even forgoes her own share of food to serve the beggar. But if she finds the beggar throwing away the food, would she serve him the next time? No; likewise, Swami too stops talking to you if you do not follow His teachings. I do not have any desire whatsoever. I do not need anything from anybody. I do not hate anybody. If you make proper use of what is already given, you will be given much more. Enquire whether your actions are in accordance with Swami's teachings. It is not easy to attain God. It is possible only when you get rid of evil qualities.

When your heart is filled with negative thoughts, how can you expect God to fill it with His love and grace? First of all, cleanse your heart of all evil qualities. Only then can God fill your heart with His love and grace.

Earn The Love And Grace Of Your Parents

Students should develop good character along with acquisition of knowledge. Education without culture is useless. Just as the electric current flows when the positive and negative come together, likewise your life will be redeemed when education is coupled with culture. Students are good, but they do not know the right path. Some know what is good, but they do not follow because of limitless desires. As worldly desires increase, naturally the desire for Divine grace diminishes. Head can be filled with noble feelings only when it is empty. It is not possible to do the same if it is already stuffed with worldly desires. So, first and foremost, rid your head of all desires. I am giving you time for that and I am waiting to shower My grace on you. I will certainly fill your heart with Divine Love. I am always ready, ready, ready. Those who keep the vessel of their heart pure attain Me easily.

Embodiments of Love!

Human life is highly sacred and divine. It is gifted by God. Make proper use of it. Make your parents happy. How can you please Swami if you cannot please your parents? First and foremost, earn the love and grace of your parents. Only then will you be the recipients of Swami's love and grace.

Sports Meet Delighted Everyone

Students!

The Sports Meet was most wonderful in all respects. I begin My discourse with a poem, which is like a plate full of delicious items and end it with a Bhajan, which is like a lid that covers these delicious items. The same can be said of our Sports Meet too. The programmes of the Institute students were like delicious dishes served on a plate. The Primary School children covered the 'plate' with the lid of love. As a result, this Sports Meet has left an indelible impression on the hearts of one and all. Make everybody happy. That will make Swami also happy. The Primary School children are highly virtuous. They are of tender age. They do not have in them even a trace of worldly desires.

I told you the story of Madalasa this morning. After putting her child in a cradle, she used to sing a lullaby revealing to the child its true identity and explaining the ephemeral nature of this world. She would tell the child, "My dear one, you are one of purity, wisdom and supreme bliss. Wake up from the sleep of moha (attachment), then you will realize that the samsara (world) is but a dream." She transformed her sons into renunciants. Seeing this, her husband got annoyed. "Who will take care of this kingdom if you send all the children to the forest?" She replied, "How long can one rule over a worldly kingdom? It is only for a temporary period. I am making my sons the emperors of hridaya samrajya (kingdom of the heart), which is true and eternal." There are many mothers like Madalasa, who impart sacred teachings to their children.

It Is A Great Mistake To Criticize God

Every human being is essentially pure, divine and without attachment. But due to the impact of Kali Age, even young children are getting enamoured of worldly life. If you get caught in the web of worldly life, even God may not come to your rescue. Once you get carried away by the sleep of attachment, you will certainly get dreams of bad thoughts. If you have chosen the worldly path, enter the family life and be happy. Gradually develop detachment and devotion. Discharge your duty sincerely. Having chosen family life on your own, it is sheer ignorance on your part to blame God for your suffering.

People commit sin and consequently when they are confronted with difficulties, they blame God that He does not come to their rescue. There can be no greater ignorance than this. So, never commit sin. Divinity can be experienced in all the four Ashramas, namely, Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa. Do not blame God for your suffering. You have to reap the consequences of your actions. God is the eternal witness. It is a great mistake to criticize God. Leave everything to His Will and perform all actions to please God - Sarva Karma Bhagavad Preethyartham. Then you can achieve anything in life.

4. Sanctify Your Life By Chanting Gayatri Mantra

Date: 10 February 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam

Dear Boys!

THIS is the most auspicious moment of your life. Human life can be compared to a four-storeyed mansion. The four storeys correspond to four stages of man's life, namely, Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, and Sanyasa (celibate, householder, recluse and renunciant). Today you are laying the foundation of the mansion of your life. The safety and security of the mansion is assured once you make the foundation strong and sturdy.

Man has four births.

His first birth takes place from his mother's womb.

He gets a second life when he is initiated into the Gayatri mantra.

His third birth occurs when he studies the Vedas.

He becomes a Brahmin when he recognises the principle of Brahman. This is his fourth birth. One becomes a Brahmin not merely by birth, but by knowing the nature of Brahman. For this, chanting of Gayatri Mantra is very essential.

Man is the embodiment of all gods. In fact, the gross form of the food that man consumes refers to the principle of Brahma. On this basis, it is said,

"Annam Brahma, Raso Vishnu"
(food is Brahma and the essence is Vishnu).

The subtle form of the food denotes the principle of Vishnu. The subtlest form

symbolizes the principle of Easwara. The gross part of the food strengthens the body. The subtle part of the food strengthens the mind; the subtlest part of the food purifies the speech. So, food plays a vital role in strengthening and purifying the body, mind and speech.

Gayatri Is The Mother Of The Vedas

Gayatri is sarvadevata swarupini and sarvamantra swarupini (embodiment of all gods and all mantras). It is said,

Gayatri Chhandasam Matha
Gayatri is the mother of the Vedas

There is no need to chant any other mantra if you chant the Gayatri mantra.

Gayatri has three names: Gayatri, Savitri and Saraswati.

Gayantham Trayate ithi Gayatri
Gayatri protects the one who recites it

Gayatri is the master of the senses. Savitri is the presiding deity of the life principle. When Gayatri acts as the protector of life force, she is known as Savitri. You might have heard the story of Savitri, a woman of chastity, who brought her dead husband, Sathyavan, back to life with the power of her prayer. Savitri protects those who lead a life of Sathya (truth). This is the inner meaning. Saraswathi is the presiding deity of speech. Man has to earn the grace of Gayatri, Savitri and Saraswati to sanctify his life.

First and foremost, man has to purify his speech. Only then will his life be safe and secure. If you slip and fall, the injury can be cured, but the injury caused

by the slip of the tongue is incurable. It will make your life miserable. So, you should have control over your speech. Excessive talk will lead to untruth and unpleasantness. That is why the ancient saints and seers used to observe silence. You can uphold truth and attain fame only by talking less. Limited talk will confer happiness. Excessive talk will put to grave dangers.

Gayatri, Savitri and Saraswati are latent in everybody. Bhur, Bhuvah, and Suvah in the Gayatri mantra refer to body (materialization), life-force (vibration) and soul (radiation). Bhur means Bhuloka (the earth), which is nothing but the combination of materials. This denotes the human body, which is also a combination of materials. Bhuvah refers to the life-force, which makes the body vibrate. Suvah refers to *Prajnana Shakti*, which sustains the life-force. This Prajnana Shakti is known as Constant Integrated Awareness. This is also termed as radiation. All the three, namely, materialization, vibration and radiation are present in man. I tell you often, you are not one, but three - the one you think you are (physical body), the one others think you are (mental body) and the one you really are (Atma).

Heart Should Be Pure And Compassionate

Human life is the combination of body, mind and atma. Body is the basis for attaining wisdom. So, it should not be misused. One has to purify one's body and mind by undertaking sacred actions. The principle of atma is always pure and unsullied. Human life is highly sacred.

Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham
(human birth is the rarest of all beings).

Sareeramadyam Khalu Dharma Sadhanam
(body indeed is the first medium for the pursuit of Dharma).

Do not underestimate the potentialities of human body. In fact, human body is the basis for attaining the goal of life.

Work for the redemption of your life by chanting the Divine Name and undertaking sacred activities. You need not make any special effort to acquire the human values, namely, Sathya, Dharma, Santhi,

Prema and Ahimsa. They are with you right from your birth. But you have forgotten them, as you have not put them into practice. Instead of giving tons of speeches, it is better that you practise at least an ounce of what you have learnt. Today humanness is on the decline because man does not practise human values. Man is developing asalu (desires), forgetting adarsalu (ideals). His attachment to the body is becoming stronger, whereas his attachment to the spirit is on the decline. No doubt, attachment to the body is essential, but it is desirable only when it comes to performing actions.

Cultivate Spirit Of Patriotism

You should give up *dehabhimanam* (attachment to the body) and cultivate *deshabhimanam* (spirit of patriotism). After Ravana was annihilated, Lakshmana prayed to Rama to rule over Lanka. He said, "Brother, it is not proper on our part to disturb Bharata, who is ruling over Ayodhya. Moreover, the kingdom of Lanka is more affluent and beautiful than Ayodhya. So, it is my humble prayer that you should become the king of Lanka." Vibhishana too fell at the feet of Rama, saying, "Swami, I surrender myself, my wealth and the kingdom at your Lotus Feet." But Rama was not carried away by the affluence of Lanka. He said,

Janani Janma Bhoomischa Swargadapi Gareeyasi
(the mother and the motherland are greater than even heaven).

"I cannot leave my motherland even if it is not that affluent as Lanka." This shows the love and respect Rama had for his motherland.

Himachala (the Himalayas) forms the northern boundary of Bharat. 'Hima ' means ice. It is white in colour and melts easily. Whiteness symbolizes purity. 'achala ' means that which is steady. Your hridaya (heart) should also be like Himachala, pure and steady. It should melt with compassion.

Hri+Daya=Hridaya. Daya means compassion.

God resides in your heart only when it is pure, steady and full of compassion. But today human heart has lost purity, compassion and steadiness due to limitless desires. Life is a long journey and your desires are the luggage. **"Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure."** The journey of life will become enjoyable only when you reduce the luggage of desires. The lesser the desires, the happier you will be. The Gita teaches that you should offer everything to God.

Sarva Karma Bhagavad Preethyartham
(perform all your actions to please God).

Only then will you be free from all difficulties and hardships.

Turn Your Mind Toward God And Overcome Maya

The Vedas declare:

"Mathru Devo Bhava, Pithru Devo Bhava"
(reverence the mother and the father as God).

I keep telling the students very often that their blood, food, head and duddu (money) are all the gifts of the mother. So, first and foremost, one should show gratitude to the mother. You should never forget your mother who gave you birth after carrying you in her womb for nine months and brought you up providing all care and comfort, unmindful of her own discomforts. The mother always has your well-being uppermost in her mind in whatever she says or does. You may be highly educated and your mother may be illiterate, but still you should have utmost regard for her. **You should consider the teachings of your mother as the Veda itself.**

Gayatri is the embodiment of the mother principle. You should chant the Gayatri mantra everyday, in the morning, noon and evening. These are referred to as *Prata Sandhya*, *Madhyahna Sandhya*, and *Sayam Sandhya*. When your back is towards the sun, your shadow will be in front of you. It will fall behind you only when you stand facing the sun. Similarly, *maya* (illusion), which is like your shadow, will overpower you when you turn your mind away from God. It can be overcome only when you turn your mind towards God.

Spiritual Education Is True Education

Due to the impact of Kali Age and the advancement of modern education, man's intellect is getting perverted. There is no point in acquiring education bereft of character. Worldly education, which comprises mere bookish knowledge, can never help you to lead a divine life. No doubt, worldly education is essential, but along with worldly education, one should have spiritual education too.

"Adhyatma Vidya Vidyanam"
(spiritual education is the true education),

"Nadinam Sagaro Gatih"

(rivers ultimately merge in the ocean).

Worldly education is like rivers and rivulets, while spiritual education is like a mighty ocean. So, of all the forms of education, spiritual education is the highest and the noblest.

Today even the highly educated parents are acting without any sense of discrimination. They discourage their children from worshipping God and participating in Bhajans. They tell them that they would have ample time to think of God after retirement. This is a grave mistake,

"Start early, drive slowly, and reach safely."

One can remember God in old age only when one thinks of Him right from childhood.

Students!

Childhood is the right age to contemplate on God. This is the golden age as it is a very sacred age. Do not misuse it. Some parents want their children to go abroad immediately after the completion of their graduation. What is there in foreign countries that is not available in Bharat? In fact, that which is not present in Bharat is not present anywhere else in the world. Most of the students who go abroad to pursue higher studies develop perverted minds and lose their character. I have Myself seen that many students who went abroad lost their character. People send their children abroad because they want them to become *dhanavantulu* (wealthy), but not *gunavanthulu* (virtuous). Money may provide all the comforts and conveniences, but can it confer mental peace? No. Only spirituality can grant peace of mind.

Excessive Money Gives Rise To Arrogance

Today people are crazy to go to foreign countries, whereas the foreigners themselves are coming to Bharat in search of peace of mind. They have all the material comforts, but lack peace of mind. They have money in abundance. Excessive money gives rise to arrogance, which in turn leads to all wicked qualities. So, one should not go abroad in search of wealth. One should remain in Bharat if one wants to cultivate noble character. Take Swami's own example. Thousands of devotees have been praying to me to visit their respective countries. But till today I have not even entertained the thought of going abroad. What is the reason? Bharat is the centre of all dharmas. It is the land of sacred rituals and sacrifice. Here is a small example. The train has an engine in the front and many compartments attached to it. You will find coal, fire and driver in the engine only, and not in other compartments. Bharat can be compared to the engine. In Bharat alone you find the sacred fire of yajnas and yagas. The other countries are like different compartments attached to the engine of Bharat. Some 'compartments' may get disjoined. What is the reason? They do not have proper 'link' with the engine. The culture of Bharat is highly sacred. The Bharatiyas should be attached to their motherland; they should practise and propagate its sacred culture.

Upanayanam Necessary At Early Age

Gayatri is known as *Panchamukhi*, meaning she has five faces. What are they?

Om is the first face;

Bhur Bhuvah Suvah, the second;

Tat Savitur Varenyam, the third;

Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi, the fourth;

Dhiyo Yo Na Prachodayat is the fifth.

Gayatri mantra has three parts: praise, meditation and prayer.

First, the Divine is praised, and then it is meditated upon in reverence and, lastly, prayer is offered to the Divine to dispel the darkness of ignorance and to awaken and strengthen the intellect. Dheemahi relates to the meditative aspect. Dhiyo Yo Na Prachodayat relates to the prayer.

Chanting of the Gayatri mantra purifies the mind and confers devotion, detachment and wisdom. Young men must necessarily chant the Gayatri mantra. Today we find that they get initiated into the Gayatri mantra at an advanced stage of their youth. Intellect will blossom and shine in all its splendour after initiation into the Gayatri mantra. That is why it is essential that Upanayanam be done at the age of eight. One who is initiated into the Gayatri mantra at an early age will become highly intelligent. Man's life will be sanctified by chanting this mantra.

It is because man does not think of God with devotion and sincerity that fear and restlessness have become the order of the day. Chanting of Divine Name alone can make one fearless. God is referred to as *Hiranyagarbha*. *Hiranya* means gold. Only when you place this 'gold' in your heart, can you get the jewels of *Sathya*, *Dharma*, *Shanthi*, and *Prema*. Once God is installed in your heart, only divine feelings will originate from it. When sweet pudding is poured into a vessel with a number of holes, what comes out of the holes will also be sweet pudding. Likewise, when you fill your heart with divinity, all your actions will become divine. But man lacks faith in divinity. He has *swasa* (breath), but no *viswasa* (faith). Such a life is useless.

Evil Qualities Are Gateways To Hell

The youth should work for the progress of the country. They should always help their fellowmen.

Sage Vyasa gave the essence of 18 Puranas thus:

Paropakaraya Punyaya Papaya Parapeedanam
(one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them).
So, Help ever, Hurt never.

This is the true devotion and surrender. Devotion does not mean offering worship or doing bhajans. They are all external activities. All these are futile if there is no inner purity. So, develop love.

Love is God, God is love. So, live in love.

Love your parents. Serve them, obey their command and satisfy them. They have immense love for you. But, sometimes, they may try to put you on the wrong path unknowingly. In such a case, explain to them, what is right and what is wrong and convince them. If they want you to go abroad to earn more money, tell them that character is important, not money. If you explain to them in a proper way, there will certainly be a transformation in them.

Boys!

If you chant the Gayatri mantra wholeheartedly, you will never face difficulties or hardships in life. Chant the divine name incessantly. You know the story of Prahlada. His father Hiranyakasipu commanded him to stop chanting the name of Lord Narayana. Prahlada never argued with his father. He smilingly listened to all that his father said but ultimately followed the dictates of his conscience. Huge elephants were let loose to trample him under their feet, poisonous snakes were set on him to bite. He was pushed down from mountain cliffs, thrown into the deep sea. But never did he give up chanting the Lord's name. As a result, the elephants, poisonous snakes, mountain cliffs and mighty oceans transformed into Lord Narayana Himself. The Lord came to his rescue whenever he was put to danger. Likewise, if you

have divine feelings in your heart, God will protect you wherever you are. Have unwavering faith in Him and chant His name with love.

Love Can Transform Even A Foe Into A Friend

Do not give scope to the evil qualities of desire, anger, and greed. They are like gateways to hell. Ravana was highly educated and powerful, but he ruined his entire clan and kingdom as he became a victim of *kama* (desire). Hiranyakasipu symbolized anger and ultimately ruined himself. Duryodhana was greed personified and he too suffered the same fate as that of Ravana and Hiranyakasipu. You may have immense knowledge, wealth and valour, but you are bound to suffer if you become a slave to anger, desire and greed. Do not take pride in your wealth, physical strength and education. Develop strength of love. Love can transform even a foe into a friend. Only through love can your life be redeemed.

Some people may argue that it is foolish to believe in the existence of God whom you cannot see. But, in fact, you are seeing God all the time, because the entire universe is the form of God. Right from microcosm to macrocosm, all forms are His. The Vedas declare:

Easwara Sarva Bhutanam
(God is present in all beings).

You are unable to see Him because you see Nature from the physical point of view. Give up the worldly feeling and see Nature with divine feelings. Then God will certainly manifest before you. Just as fragrance is present in the flower, divinity is latent in you. Flower can be seen by the naked eye, but can anyone see its fragrance? Mother loves the child. She has a form, but her love has no form. That love is God.

Divine Power Exists In All The God Forms

Gayatri mantra is highly sacred. As Sastri Garu pointed out, Gayatri mantra contains the essence of all the mantras. Gayatri is the embodiment of all gods and goddesses. Just as a single thread runs through all the flowers in a garland, the same divine power exists in all the god forms. Understand this unity in diversity. One who has understood this unity will never be put to suffering. Develop faith in God. Do not get carried away by what others say. Follow the dictates of your conscience.

Dear Boys!

Today is a sacred day. In fact, it is the foundation day of your life. Make this foundation strong and sturdy. Then the mansion of life raised on this foundation will also be strong and secure. This will give strength to the grand edifice of our nation. You should develop national and patriotic feelings. The spirit of nationalism is absent in the youth of today. This is due to the influence of those politicians who keep their self-interest above the interests of the nation. But, you should be ready to sacrifice even your life for the nation. This should be your ideal in life. If you develop such lofty ideals, you are sure to experience divinity.

If you have the strong desire to see God, contemplate on Him with unwavering faith. Then you can certainly see Him. Never doubt His existence. He exists for those who believe in His existence and does not exist for those who deny His existence. He acts according to your feelings. So, develop faith in Him. Chanting the Gayatri mantra three times a day, i.e., morning, noon and evening, is not enough. Chant this mantra perpetually. Why should you stipulate a particular time period for chanting His name who is beyond time?

Sarvada Sarvakaleshu Sarvatra Harichintanam

(contemplate on the name of God at all places, at all times and under all circumstances).

At first, God stands at a distance watching your efforts. He is like the teacher who stands aside while the student writes the answer to his questions. When you shed your attachment to the material world and turn to doing good and serving others, God comes encouragingly near.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

5. Sheaths Of The Self

Date: 04 March 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

Embodiments of Love!

ONE who has recognised the truth that the same atma exists in all, experiences unity with God and enjoys divine bliss, whether he is a renunciant or a householder, or whether he follows the path of action or not. The principle of atma cannot be understood by merely studying the Vedas and sacred texts or listening to discourses. Just as a gigantic tree originates from a tiny seed, so also the entire universe has its origin in the principle of atma.

Embodiments of Love!

You are verily the embodiments of bliss and

happiness. Is it not sheer ignorance to search for bliss and happiness in the external world when they are very much present in you? True spiritual transformation lies in understanding one's own real nature.

Both the present and the former Vice Chancellors of our Institute have prayed to Me (in their speeches earlier) that I should explain in detail the concept of Pancha Koshas (five sheaths of the Self). The pure Atma is enveloped by five sheaths; and due to its association with these sheaths, it acquires their traits. The physical body is referred to as the Annamaya Kosha (food sheath). The atma associated with gross body in its waking state is called 'Viswa' as it is endowed with jnanendriyas and karmendriyas (organs of perception and action). As this body is involved in various external activities, it is also known as Vyavaharika. Thus, the Vedas have given various names to this sheath which comprises the sthula sareera (gross body). The Pranamaya Kosha (life sheath), Manomaya Kosha (mind sheath) and Vijnanamaya Kosha (wisdom sheath) form the sukshma sareera (subtle body) as they are not visible to the naked eye. Mind in its subtle form is all-pervasive. That is why it is said,

Manomoolam Idam Jagat (mind is the basis for the entire world). Anandamaya Kosha (bliss sheath) refers to the karana sareera (causal body). One should go beyond all the five sheaths in order to experience bliss. This state is known as turiya, which is beyond sushupti (deep sleep state). This refers to the Mahakarana Swarupa (supreme casual aspect). This is Paramarthika (the ultimate spiritual principle). The bliss experienced in this state is true bliss. This bliss cannot be obtained through the senses, mind or intellect.

There are five types of kleshas (obstacles), which come in the way of experiencing this bliss. They are: Avidya Klesha, Abhinava Klesha, Asthitha Klesha, Raga Klesha and Dwesha Klesha. Man is unable to have the vision of the Atma and experience atmic bliss due to these five kleshas. One who has excessive attachment to the body suffers from avidya klesha, which leads to various desires and diseases and makes one's life miserable. The abhinava klesha arises when one does not exercise control over one's mind. Man gives undue importance to the body and gets carried away by the vagaries of the mind and as a result is put to suffering. The asthitha klesha arises out of interest in worldly pleasures. The raga klesha results from attachment towards wealth and material objects. The dwesha klesha arises when one's expectations are frustrated and desires are not fulfilled.

Give Up Body Attachment

Some devotees worship God expecting something in return. They are happy if their desires are fulfilled or else they will start hating even God. They do not enjoy the fortune on hand. On the contrary, they desire for something more which they do not deserve. As a result, they are subjected to distress. Today even the relationship between mother and child, husband and wife and between one brother and another are marred by dwesha.

The sheaths other than Anandamaya Kosha put man in bondage and subject him to kleshas. In order to understand the principle of Paramarthika, one should get rid of the mind or at least have control over it and gradually give up body attachment.

The body is made up of five elements
and is bound to perish some time or the other. But the Indweller has neither
birth nor
death.
He does not have attachment or bondage. Truly speaking, the indweller is
God Himself.
(Telugu Poem)

One cannot realize the indwelling divinity until and unless one gives up body attachment. Body attachment is an obstacle on the path of spirituality. Just as a gigantic tree is contained in a tiny seed, likewise the five kleshas are ingrained in body attachment in the subtlest manner. Attachment to the body is the main cause for man's unhappiness, anxiety,

misery and lack of peace. One should consider the body as an instrument and lead a life of truth keeping in view the indwelling divinity.

First of all man should travel from the food sheath to the life sheath. Life sheath is referred to as vibration as it is responsible for the movement of the body. What is mind sheath? Mind is all-pervasive. Mind can travel any distance in a trice. Man has death but not the mind. Mind will follow man life after life. What is wisdom sheath? It is not connected with material world. The material world is associated with reaction, resound and reflection. For example, you hit the table with your hand. Then the table also hits you in turn. As is the action, so is the reaction. This is the principle of Pratibhasika. That which is related to Pratibhasika is only worldly and secular knowledge. It cannot be termed as wisdom. True wisdom lies in understanding the constant integrated awareness. It leads to the changeless eternal bliss. This can be experienced only after transcending the five sheaths, namely, Annamaya (gross form), Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya (subtle form) and Anandamaya (causal form). Then you reach the state of turiya (supreme

causal state). That which is beyond the causal state is supreme causal state. In order to attain this state one should understand very clearly the nature of five sheaths.

Primordial Basis Of The Universe

The entire world has a primordial basis. Here is a silver plate and a silver tumbler. Silver is the basis for these. The name and form of the object can be changed, but silver remains the same. Likewise, all names and forms are bound to change, but the primordial basis remains changeless.

The principle of Atma is ancient and eternal.
It has neither birth nor death, neither beginning nor end.
(Telugu Poem)

It is the primordial basis for the body, the mind and the life principle. Divinity is the foundation of everything.

The water of the ocean becomes vapour due to sun's rays. The vapour in turn become clouds. The clouds come down in the form of rain, flowing down as rivers and streams, which ultimately merge into the ocean, (Nadinam Sagaro Gathi). Just as the rivers, which originate from the ocean, ultimately become one with it, so also all the living beings and objects, which originate from Divinity, will ultimately merge into it. This in Vedantic parlance is called mukti (liberation). The Bhagavata also says, it is but natural for all the living beings to go back to their place of origin. The individual soul has originated from divinity and is bound to merge into it.

The Principle Of Atma Is One And The Same

Embodiments of Love!

Spirituality does not mean a life of solitude. True spirituality lies in understanding the unity of the entire humanity, and giving up the sense of attachment and hatred. The principle of atma is the same in everyone.

What is the form of the Atma? Sugar has a form, but can anyone describe the form of sweetness? Sweetness can only be experienced, it cannot be explained. Similar is the case with the atmic principle too. It is ancient, eternal, attributeless, formless, pure, unsullied and immortal. The sweets such as mysore pak, gulab jamoon, burfi, etc., may vary in name and form, but sugar is the same in all. Likewise, names and forms are different, but the principle of atma is one and the same.

One Should Have Purity Of Mind

Today, man undertakes various spiritual practices such as sravanam (listening), kirthanam (singing), vishnusmaranam (chanting), padasevanam (serv- ing the Lotus Feet), vandanam (salutation), archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship) and atmanivedanam (self-surrender). But they provide only external and temporary satisfaction. It is futile to argue which spiritual practice is more beneficial. As long as one gets sleep, it hardly matters where one sleeps, be it in a choultry or a palace. Similarly, one should have purity of mind whatever may be the spiritual practice one undertakes. Once the mind is pure, one can achieve anything in life. In order to purify the mind, one should develop the principle of love. The light of love can never be extinguished. Once you develop the principle of love, you will transcend the three states of Viswa, Taijasa and Prajna and attain the ultimate bliss. The individual soul in the waking state is known as Viswa, as it is associated with karmendriyas and jnanendriyas. In the dream state, it is called Taijasa (the effulgent one), as it is associated with the effulgent principle of antahkarana (inner instrument). In deep sleep state, it is known as Prajna. It is associated with the bliss sheath.

Amarasimha, an ancient scholar par excellence, composed many verses describing the principle of divinity. But some people unable to understand his sacred nature put him through hardships. They branded Amarasimha as

an atheist. He was put to a lot of suffering and all his books were set on fire. When his works were burning, Sankara intervened and retrieved Amarakosha. Amarakosha is like another Veda. It is an enchanting and thrilling book. It is utter foolishness to destroy such a sacred book. In fact, people do not try to understand the teachings of the Vedas and sacred texts. That is why they have forgotten their true Self.

Chanting Divine Name On Sivarathri

The nights you experience on other days are ordinary nights. But Sivarathri is an auspicious night. How is it auspicious? It is auspicious when you spend your time in an auspicious way singing the glories of the Lord. The mind has sixteen aspects. The moon is the presiding deity of the mind. Of the sixteen aspects of the moon, fifteen are absent today. If you sing His glory throughout the night wholeheartedly, even the remaining one aspect can also be merged with the Divine. On this day, it is possible to get full control over the mind by contemplating on God. Hence it is considered as an auspicious night. Unfortunately, in this Kali Age, people observe the vigil of Sivarathri by seeing cinema shows or playing cards all through the night. This cannot be called Sivarathri. Every moment of the night should be devoted to the thoughts of God and chanting of His name wholeheartedly. The chanting should come from within. This is what is called the reflection of the inner being.

God has thousands of names. Of all those names, 'Satchitananda' is the most important and significant. 'Sath' stands for the changeless eternal principle and 'Chith' denotes total awareness. The former can be compared to sugar and the latter to water. When sugar and water are mixed, what results is syrup. Likewise, the combination of 'Sath' and 'Chith' results in Ananda. Fill your heart with love and chant the Divine name. Only then can you attain divinity. Perform all your activities with love. Love should originate from the source, i.e., the heart and not by force. Today people chant the divine name, not from source, but out of force. No benefit accrues from chanting the divine name unless it is done wholeheartedly. Chant His name wholeheartedly at least for half a minute, that is enough. One tea spoonful of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk. God is interested in quality, not in

Quantity.

Secret Of Remaining Ever Young

Students!

You should understand that body is but an instrument and the Atma is the doer and enjoyer. Give up body attachment. What are you studying for? You want to earn money and lead a happy life. But, are you getting happiness from your studies? No. After your studies, you want a lucrative job, then a promotion and so on and so forth. There is no end to your desires. Then how can you expect to be happy? True and permanent happiness cannot be attained in the physical world. It can be experienced only in the state of turiya. Bliss is not present in physical worldly objects.

One day, Adi Sankara, along with his thirteen disciples was going to the river Ganga for a holy dip. He came across a Brahmin sitting under a tree and repeating Dukrunkarane, Dukrunkarane... Sankara asked him what he would gain by repeating the rudiments of grammar? The Brahmin replied that he would become a great scholar, join the royal court and earn money. Then Sankara questioned him as to how long the wealth would ensure him happiness. The Brahmin said, he could lead a happy life till his death. Then Sankara asked him, what would happen after death. The Brahmin replied that he did not know. Then Sankara sang the following verse.

**Bhaja Govindam Bhaja Govindam Govindam Bhaja Moodhamathe
Samprapthe Sannihithe Kale**

Nahi Nahi Rakshati Dukrunkarane.

(Oh! Foolish one, when the hour of death approaches rudiments of grammar will not come to your rescue. So, chant the name of God). Only God's name will protect you in all periods of time and under all circumstances. Everything in this world is like a passing cloud. Only bliss and love are permanent. Love is God God is love. So, live in love.

Students!

Youth is very sacred. Do not misuse it by indulging in limitless desires and building castles in the air. Pursue your education keeping God uppermost in your mind. Do not get entangled in unnecessary activities and bondages, which will cause restlessness. Today people are in search of peace. But peace cannot be found in the external world. You find only pieces! Peace is in you. You are the embodiment of peace, you are the embodiment of truth and you are the embodiment of love. So, first of all know thyself. Only then you can be blissful always. Modern students are acquiring various degrees. But, what is the use?

In spite of his education and intelligence,

A foolish man will not know his true self And a mean-minded person will not give up

his wicked qualities.

Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom.

What is the use of acquiring worldly education

If it cannot lead you to immortality?

Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.

Only God Is Permanent

Embodiments of love!

Love all, do not hate anybody. This is the teaching of our ancient culture. Sage Vyasa gave the the essence of 18 Puranas in a few words: Paropakaraya punyaya papaya parapeedanam. So "Help ever, Hurt never." It is enough if

you put this into practice. Along with worldly education, spiritual education is also essential. It is said, "Adhyatma Vidya Vidyanam" (spiritual education is true education). That alone can confer the knowledge of Brahman, which transcends dualities and the three attributes, namely, satwa, rajas and tamas. Only God is permanent. Everything else is temporary. Today people have faith in world, but not in God. Do not take pride in your youth and physical beauty.

What will happen to you
When you become a decrepit old man, When your body becomes weak,
Legs stagger and vision fails
And you are no better than a leather
puppet.
(Telugu Poem)

And the children laugh at you Calling you an old monkey?

How long will your youth last? Just as a flash of lightning is followed by pitch darkness, likewise, youth is followed by old age. The flower that blossoms in the morning fades in the evening. Such is the nature of human body. Have control over your body and mind. Do not depend on others. Will your hunger be satiated if someone else partakes of food? No. Selfeffort is very essential in order to progress on the path of spirituality.

If you want to remain young always, you should have control over your senses. Swami is the direct proof of this. My body is full of energy. There is absolutely no weakness whatsoever in Me. Even now I can run fast. Can anyone imagine that Swami is 75 years old? What is the secret behind this? Purity, patience and perseverance are mainly responsible for this. Swami's feelings are always pure and steady. Try to emulate Swami in this regard.

Happiness Lies In Union With God

You claim yourself to be Swami's devotees. Then is it not your duty to cultivate at least a fraction of Swami's purity? You do not have the patience to give a proper answer, if someone were to ask you for some information. But, I talk to thousands and yet remain peaceful and blissful always. I am engaged in multifarious activities. None can describe the job I do. I do the work of all departments. All departments belong to Me. But, I am never restless. I am always full of bliss. During the birthday celebrations, some devotees wish Me Happy Birthday. I tell them, "You do not need to wish Me Happy Birthday, because I am always happy. Give happiness to those who are not happy." Happiness lies in union with God. If you have the firm conviction that God is in you, with you and around you, you will never face any hardship or misery in your life. People talk of worries and misery. But, I do not know what they are. They do not come near Me because of My purity. Only those with bad thoughts and bad character are affected by misery and worry. So,

See no evil, see what is good
Hear no evil, hear what is good
Talk no evil, talk what is good
Think no evil, think what is good
Do no evil, do what is good,
This is the way to God.

When faced with difficulties, do not get disheartened. Consider that they are for your own good.

A Devotee's Firm Faith Earns Bhagawan's Grace

You would have noticed Swami talking to a devotee on this platform a few minutes ago. His name is Narayana. He is from Chennai. Last week he had a

heart problem. His son, who is a student of our college, telephoned his father asking him to come to Puttaparthi immediately. He came here and doctors who examined him told Me that the four valves of his heart were blocked and it was difficult to perform operation on him. Three doctors who had come from America examined him. In fact, they were surprised to find him to be alive with such a serious heart problem.

Narayana told them that he had no pain and that he was very happy as Swami was with him always. But the doctors were not satisfied. They performed open heart surgery on him for five hours. Four bypasses were done. This operation was performed day before yesterday and today he has come to the mandir. In the normal course, after a bypass surgery, a patient has to be on the bed for at least ten days. But Narayana walked three hundred steps yesterday itself. Isn't this incredible? Today he has come here wearing pant and shirt looking like a college boy. I told him that his faith was responsible for this. Right from the beginning he has been saying that Swami was with him and that He would take care of him. He feels that his heart problem did good for him in the sense that it brought him to the abode of Swami.

He said, our hospital was not just a hospital, but a temple of healing. His operation was performed day before yesterday. Yesterday the doctors served him idlis and today he has come to the mandir for Swami's darshan. Is it possible in any other hospital? Ask any doctor, he will give an emphatic 'No' as answer. Such is the nature of human body, but God can change even the nature of the body and grant a bright future. God can transform earth into sky and sky into earth, but you should have firm faith in Him. Today man has become blind, losing the eyes of faith. He does not have faith in God. How can he, who does not know himself, know Divinity?

Develop Love For God

First know yourself, then you can easily understand divinity. Have faith in God. There is nothing that God cannot do. One with proper eyesight can see even the small glow-worm. But a blind man cannot see even the brightly

shining sun. Likewise, one without the spiritual eye will find only darkness all around him. A spark of spiritual light is enough to see the entire cosmos.

The Age of Kali has become the Age of kalaha (quarrels). There are quarrels and conflicts everywhere. Students should resolve to eradicate hatred and restlessness. On this holy day of Sivarathri, develop the principle of love more and more. I love everybody.

Everybody loves Me. But sometimes students feel that Swami is not talking to them because He is angry with them. I am never angry with anybody. But in order to correct you, sometimes I may pretend to be angry. When one falls sick, one needs to be given medicine. Also one has to follow dietary regulations. Only then your sickness will be cured. Similarly, to cure your 'diseases', Swami gives you 'medicine' in His own inimitable way. In order to bring about transformation in you, sometimes I remain quiet and do not talk to you.

Do not breed hatred, greed and jealousy. You know what happened to Hiranyakasipu, Ravana and Duryodhana who developed hatred towards God. The Pandavas led a happy life as they had immense love for God. They were subjected to innumerable difficulties, yet their love for God did not diminish. So, develop love for God. The more you develop love, the more you experience happiness and the closer you go to ultimate bliss.

6. Sanctify Your Life With Sacred Feelings

Date: 05 March 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

THE sunlight illuminates the entire world and helps the people to carry out their tasks. But the sun has nothing to do with the pleasures and pains of human beings. Likewise, the innumerable problems man faces are related only to his senses and the mind; his consciousness has nothing to do with them. It is said that the devotees search for God. But there is no need for a devotee to go in search of God as He is everywhere. In fact, God is in search of a true devotee whose heart is filled with the spirit of senses.

When you touch a hot iron ball, you say, that your hand is singed by it. But it is not the ball that singed your hand. The fire present within the ball singed your hand. The world, like the iron ball, is not the cause either for the pain or for the pleasure you experience. The divine power is present within you. You do not recognise that power and wail over your sufferings and difficulties.

Foster Divine Thoughts

Strange is the nature of modern man today. He thinks something and speaks something else. He laughs outwardly to conceal his inner wickedness. He appears to be weeping outwardly but inside he really laughs. His outward appearance is that of a human being but his mind is that of a monkey. Such hypocrites and wicked people can never find God. God expects that human beings should live like human beings devoid of such animal qualities. Pure and pious qualities are immanent in man. He should manifest these inherent pure feelings and not the animal and artificial qualities. But man today is going down-hill morally. With all these contrived situations, the world has become a morose and lifeless place.

If money is lost, it can be earned again. If health is lost, it may be possible to regain it. But if time is lost, it can never be regained. So, man should utilise the time at his disposal in the right manner. Money decreases only when you spend it. But man's life-span decreases on its own with the passage of time.

Every individual should be aware of the sharp scimitar called time hanging over his head ever ready to strike. You should not become its victim. You should be careful. Time wasted cannot be regained. It is not like health and money, which can be regained.

Embodiments of Love!

To sanctify time, you should take up virtuous actions. Good actions are the result of good feelings only. You should cultivate such pure and divine feelings. Clouds are caused by the sun, but these very clouds overshadow it. Likewise, the clouds of thoughts that originate from the heart cover the heart. So, the source is overshadowed by the elements that emanate from it. That which originates from Brahman cannot be anything else but Brahman. What is the source of this creation? It is the splendour of the Divine. It is the Will of the Divine. As the Divine Will is the cause of man's existence, he should have divine feelings only. The creation born out of the Divine Will is called Nature. So, man being the product of Nature should manifest the qualities of Nature. He should not possess qualities alien to Nature. Desire, anger, avarice, attachment, arrogance and jealousy originate from the food you consume. They are also the consequence of the samskaras of your past lives. They are not your natural qualities.

You introduce yourself as 'I'. That 'I' is the foremost name of the Divine; all the other mystical words originated later. In the Vedic proclamation Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman), the letter 'I' stands for Brahman. So, the first name of Brahman is 'I'. The second name is Atma. The third name is 'Self'. 'Brahma' is the fourth. God is the fifth. These five are the different names of one Divinity. You should understand the true meaning of these words. Where did this 'I' come from? It is the very form of the Self and the Divine. But man is putting it to much misuse by associating it with physical body. It should be put to sacred use.

Recognise Your True Nature

Embodiments of Love!

You should try to know the ways and means to adhere to truth in daily life. Without recognizing the path of truth, people undertake spiritual practices like prayer, meditation and yoga. But this is not enough. In addition to the spiritual practices, you should also nurture good feelings. Good qualities, good feelings, good acts and good thoughts should manifest in you. These are natural divine traits. Despite the truth that Nature is your origin, you are discarding the qualities of Nature and are adopting artificial behaviour. You should not lead such an artificial life. You should speak what you think and do what you speak. The Vedas say, Antar Bahischa Tatsarvamvyapya Narayana Sthita (That all-pervasive God is present within and without). The proper study of mankind is man. Who is this man? The one who maintains harmony in his thought, word and deed is the true human being. He alone can be called man. God is in search of such a true human being. He is not searching for the one who is a human being merely in appearance.

The Intellect Can Be Compared To A Mirror

Man is granted sacred intellect so that he can recognise his true nature. The intellect is pure and unsullied which can be compared to a mirror. On the rear side of the mirror, a chemical is applied. Without this chemical, you cannot see your reflection in the mirror. You can see the objects that exist behind the mirror and cannot see the objects that exist in front of it. Likewise, if you want to recognise your true nature, you should coat your intellect with the chemical of love. Today you keep the mirror without the coating of love and try to see your reflection and fail in the attempt. God has given the mirror of intellect to man to see his own form. But modern man today is not at all trying to recognise his true form with the help of this mirror. He is holding the mirror before the faces of others. Likewise, every individual is using his intellect to know the world outside. People question the whereabouts of others, but they do not try to find out their own whereabouts. Hence, stop asking others,

"Who are you?" and start questioning yourself, "Who am I?"

The intellect is granted to you to enable you to look at yourself, not to look at

others. Man is forgetting his true nature as he is associating himself more and more with worldly affairs. Everyone, from a child to an adult, is immersed in worldly affairs. Man today is not satisfied with the affairs of world only; he is trying to probe the space and stars also. He is turning towards everything else but he is not turning inward. He is traveling lakhs of miles into the space but is not traveling even half an inch into the inner recesses of his heart. So, his feelings are taking an ugly turn. We find only selfishness in him. He is not attempting to realize his true nature.

Strive To Know Your True Nature

Embodiments of Love!

To realize one's real nature, one's innate disposition, is the foremost aim of spirituality. This aim is not confined to spiritual practices alone. Man should realize his true nature in every field of activity - temporal, ethical, physical and secular. You are enthusiastic in finding the faults of others but you are not trying to know your own faults. You will be able to improve yourself when you try to know your own faults. Such a man will become an ideal human being. He alone is the true human being. If you behave like a monkey, who will treat you like a human being? At the most, people may show respect to you just for the sake of courtesy. But in your absence, they may criticize you in many ways. So, you should not tread that path. You should act according to your conscience. You should follow the sacred path and put the divine qualities present within you to right use.

Embodiments of Love!

You need not go in search of the innumerable aspects of the world. You should strive to know your true nature. Yesterday, I explained to you the nature of the five sheaths. The body is physical and gross. It is the cause of innumerable troubles. With the increase of attachment towards the body, attachment towards the Self declines. Without the Self, the body cannot survive. You should take care to reduce your attachment toward the body gradually. If your attachment toward the body increases, desires and avarice

too will increase.

Develop Inner Vision

The subtle body constituted by the Pranamaya, Manomaya and Vijnanamaya Koshas is called Taijasa. How did it get the name Taijasa? It got this name because it is associated with the resplendent inner thoughts and feelings. You should recognise this divine aspect of your being. The innumerable worldly affairs you indulge in give you ephemeral pleasures only and cannot give true, everlasting bliss. So, you should develop inner vision. External vision is the vision of the animals. You should not go down to their level. This is not the true nature of man. You should purify your feelings. You should develop pure, unwavering and selfless intellect. Only then will you be able to love all and serve all.

But modern man has no faith in himself. This is the main mistake of man today. First, he should have faith in himself. That is self-confidence. Selfconfidence is the foundation of the mansion of life. You can raise the walls of self-satisfaction on this foundation. Self -sacrifice is its roof. Supreme bliss of self-realisation can be attained in this mansion.

Embodiments of Love!

Do not try to find others' faults. First identify your own faults. But you will not be benefited if you simply see good in others without cultivating good qualities in you. Nurture pious feelings. You should not hate anyone. Why? Sarvata Pani-padam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthati (with hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe.). Divinity is immanent in every being.

Today, it is necessary to develop broad outlook. Narrow-mindedness and self-centred feelings should be annihilated. You should give up selfishness and self-interest. The size of the eyes is not even one inch. But this small eye is able to see the magnificent stars in the sky. It is able to see far off objects.

That is the power of the eye. You can see even greater things if you develop inner vision. So, you should have broad-mindedness. Many foreigners call it broad heart. It may denote heart enlargement. Such hearts are treated by the doctors and not by the Divine. Develop broad-mindedness in which broad feelings manifest.

Divinity Is Invisible And Cannot Be Understood

Students!

You are born in this vast universe. You are living in this vast world. So, you should have broad feelings. Man living in this vast world should not have narrow feelings. It is wrong to find faults in others. There may be faults in them. But do not see their faults, see their good qualities. Then the entire universe becomes one family. This is the spirit of the brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. Such feelings promote universal brotherhood. Mamaivamso Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). The Divine is the source of the entire creation. He is the creation, the Creator and the director of the universe. Divinity is invisible. It cannot be understood. Recognise that you all are the reflections of the Divine. Then you will not hate anyone or feel jealous of anyone; you will be free from egotism.

Embodiments of Love!

Cultivate love. Love is God, live in love. That should be the aim of your life. There is no God greater than love. If someone questions you, "Where is God?", you should tell him that He is immanent in every being. What is His form? Love is His form. You should recognise that form of love and tell it to others with full conviction. It is not enough if you say 'love', 'love', 'love'. You should express it through your conduct. Only then can you command respect and honour. That is the real attainment of true human nature.

Find Fulfilment In Serving Your Country

Students!

You are young and possess great energy. You have all the powers of mother earth. Despite possessing all the powers of the earth if you feel that you are powerless, it is a sign of your weakness. Whenever any calamity occurs at any place in the country, you should rush there and help the people.

You should not treat them as different from you. Do not harbour the feeling of separateness. Cultivate the feeling of oneness and participate in social service.

The society is the principal limb of Nature. Just as hands, nose, eyes, stomach and feet are the limbs of the body, the body is the limb of the society. The society is the limb of humanity. Humanity is the limb of Nature. Nature is the limb of the Divine. So, you should recognise this truth and participate in social service with love. Only then does human life attain fulfilment. Limbs like hands and nose belong to the body. But the body belongs to the society. So, it should serve the society. You should work with the active participation of all your limbs. Identify the different needs of different people and act accordingly so that they will be benefited. That is true social service.

These days many people go to villages, sweep the roads, whitewash the temple walls and feel satisfied that they have done social service. No, no. That cannot be treated as service as it is your duty. What is true service? Find out the main problems being faced by the people in the villages. What are the unfavourable circumstances? What are their immediate needs? You should do your best to fulfil their needs. Summer is the next season.. Drinking water is not available in some villages. Water is the very life of man. You should help them out either by digging borewells or by channeling water through some other source. When you take up such acts, which have utility value, you can claim that you have done some social service. In fact, you should not treat this good work as service. If you feel that you are doing service to someone else that may promote egoism in you. You should feel that you are serving your own people. All are human beings. All belong to one caste - the caste of humanity. All belong to one religion - the religion of love. There is only one

language - the language of the heart. You should cultivate such broad feelings. Only then the service you render becomes true service. In this way, you should serve people and make your education and skills useful and meaningful.

The Purpose Of Education

The purpose of education is not to go abroad and amass wealth. This is the weakness of the Bharatiyas. The moment a student gets a degree in engineering or medicine, he applies for a passport. Serve the people in your own village instead of going abroad. People are going abroad to earn money but not to earn good qualities. You should foster your culture. Lord Rama said, Janani Janma Bhoomishcha Swargadapi Gareeyasi (the mother and the motherland are greater than even heaven). But are you emulating Rama while performing your duties? He followed the command of his father, sacrificed his kingdom and spent fourteen long years in the forest. Your body, intellect and mind are the gifts of your parents. Your head, your blood, your food and the money you spend are all the gifts of your parents. So, you should show your gratitude to them. That is the true service to God. It will give you the true service of peace. Today man is shouting 'peace,' 'peace' while holding atom bomb in his hand. Although he has conquered space and reached the moon, he has no peace in his heart. How can it be attained? Fill your heart with divine feelings. Throw the bomb away. Then you can experience peace. Peace is the reflection of your inner being. Everything comes from within.

Nourish The Sacred Culture Of Bharat

Embodiments of Love!

You are good, highly educated and intelligent. But selfishness is destroying your every other good quality. One drop of poison can infect the whole pot of milk. So, you should eschew anger and hatred and serve the society with love. You may be able to do service in a small way. Do not get disheartened if you cannot do service in a grand way. Enter every tiny hamlet and identify

the needs of the people there. In case you do not have the required money or capacity, do not worry about it. You students come together, join your hands and work together. There is nothing in this world which cannot be accomplished with unity.

Today in Bharat, we find difficulties, sufferings, sadness and fear everywhere. What is the reason? We attained independence but lost unity. Lack of unity is the cause of all these sufferings. Even brothers fight with each other. First achieve unity. That should be the aim of your life. Unity should underline the tasks you undertake. Only then does all your learning become meaningful. You say that you have passed MBA, MFM, M.Tech. Then you go abroad begging for jobs. If you want to beg, do it here in your own country. Do not become a beggar in a foreign land. As you are beggar there, you are losing respect here also. Look after the welfare of your own country.

Bend Your Body And Work Hard

Your mother may be ugly. Still you call her mother. She brought you up. Do you treat someone else's mother as your mother just because she is more charming and beautiful? You call your country a poor country. This is the weakness of the youth. Know that India is not a poor country at all. What cannot be found in India cannot be found anywhere else. India possesses all the powers. This is the land of Yoga. This is the land of virtuous actions. These days people are trying to convert such a great land into a land of ephemeral pleasures. You should not crave pleasures. They breed diseases. You should dedicate everything to God through sacrifice. Bend your body and work hard. Your hands should be busy in work and your mind should be filled with good feelings. If you do so, there will be no greater man than you. Such human being is a true human being. God is in search of such a true human being. Devotees need not search for God. He is everywhere. Instead make every attempt to make your mind pure and pious. You should become a good man and not a great man. Is the world gaining in anyway from these so-called great people?

Students!

You should not feel otherwise. Understand the truth properly. Educated people are the cause of difficulties, losses and sufferings of this country as most of them are motivated by self-interest. They are utilizing their learning and skills to serve their own interests and not the interests of the nation. There are many great intellectuals in India. They have brought the nation to this sorry state. They are not at all selfless. If they had sacred feelings, the country would have made giant strides on all fronts. They are utilizing their intelligence for their personal benefit only. In our country, some people take Rs.10,000 as salary and do not do work worth even Rs.10. How much is the country losing that way? Question yourself. Is the work put up by you in a month worth Rs.10,000? But such people when they go abroad work very hard. They even do extra work. They work at night also. If they can work like that in foreign countries, why not in their own country? You should express your love, sacred feelings towards your country with broad outlook. This is true devotion. Devotion does not mean worshipping the photo of God. Such activities can be treated as good actions. You should cultivate good feelings. Without good feelings, good actions yield no beneficial results.

Fill Your Mind With Positive Thoughts

Embodiments of Love!

What is the significance of Sivarathri? Siva stands for auspiciousness. You should sanctify your life with pious feelings on this day. You did bhajan throughout the night. It has given you happiness. But it is confined to the external activity of listening and chanting only. The happiness should be felt in the innermost recesses of the heart.

What is the use if you involve in positive and constructive activities with negative thoughts in your mind? Get rid of negative thoughts first. Fill your mind with positive thoughts. Then the entire world will flourish; the society will flourish; your village will flourish and your home will flourish. Social service should expand from the individual to the society and from the society to the entire nation. Do not observe any differences while doing service. It can be any organization. It does not matter. Go and participate. Service is

your aim; sacrifice is your aim. Nurture pious and divine feelings. Only then will your life find fulfilment.

Have A Broad Outlook

Many youth waste their time and face innumerable problems till they get suitable jobs after completing their education. They blame the government for not providing them employment. How many jobs can the government create? If it goes on giving jobs this way, is it possible for it to run the country? Moreover, the employees are asking for a hike in their salaries. But the treasury is empty. There is no expected income. If the government imposes taxes, people blame it, saying that it is harassing the public. If the government does not impose taxes, how can it look after the welfare of the people? So, you should pay attention to this viewpoint also. In our institution, no fee is charged from the students, but in other institutions students object when the tuition fee, exam fee, etc., are raised. They insist that the fee should be reduced whereas the teachers demand that their salary should be raised. Wherefrom can the government get the funds? It collects from the public and spends for their welfare. Without taxes, it is not possible to pay salaries or to spend for the education of the children. So, you should have a broad outlook.

Indian culture preserved for posterity from ancient times spread to other lands and attained great glory. But today the Indians themselves are looking at it with indifference and thereby harming the nation and the world. No other country had a culture of its own for such a long time. Others follow one culture today and adopt another tomorrow. But for the Indians there has been only one culture which is eternal, pure and virtuous. This culture alone can help you to cultivate the true nature of man. You should uphold this truth. You should nurture human values. The process of development should not be restricted to the fields of science and industry only. If you go on establishing more industries, risk of environment pollution will also go on increasing. So, you should nurture sacred feelings in your heart to your utmost capacity.

Money Comes And Goes, Morality Comes And Grows

Embodiments of Love!

You are studying many branches of knowledge and are attaining degrees. When you finish your studies and leave Prasanthi Nilayam, serve the villages with the permission and help of your parents. Do not crave government jobs. You should yearn to serve the public. If you serve them, they will look after your welfare. You do possess divine powers, but you behave as if you are powerless and weak. Today you are trying to have friendship, wealth and strength. But you are not fostering good character. What is friendship? It is just hello, hello. If you eat well, you get physical strength. You can also earn a lot of money by working hard. But are you living just for the sake of these things? These are all passing clouds. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows. You should cultivate virtues. You should respect elders and officials and love your parents. You should have faith in your parents. You should have faith in your teachers. You should nurture such sacred feelings. Humanness and human values will unfold within you, which should be nurtured and developed. Without these human values all your learning becomes useless. Contentment is the hallmark of true education.

If you help others, you will be able to set an ideal to the world. The ideal never dies. It does not get dissolved. It grows day after day. You should foster such ideals and for that youth is the right age. It is the golden age. This sacred age should not be put to misuse. Utilise it in the right way. Only then will all your learning become fruitful and valuable.

Embodiments of Love!

Cultivate love. Whatever you do, do it with the spirit of love. Without love, all your actions become unsacred.

Knowledge of the Atman destroys illusion, doubt and sorrow. Hence, Atmajnana confers the steadiest santhi, and with it holiness and happiness.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

7. Sanctify Your Life By Sacred Actions

Date: 05 April 2000 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Ugadi

A person having ego and pomp
Will not be loved by anybody,
Not even by his own wife and children.
Only when he gives up these evil qualities,
He will be loved by one and all.
Anger is one of the main causes of man's misery. A man filled with anger
can never experience Happiness in his life;
He will always be drowned in misery.
So long as one is filled with desires,
One can never attain peace.
A greedy man can never be happy.
Therefore, ego, anger, desire and greed
Are mainly responsible for man's
Misery, anxiety and restlessness.
(Sanskrit Verse)

WHEN the New Year begins, people start speculating as to what the New Year has in store for them and also for the world at large. The future of the world depends on the actions of man, not on the New Year. Actions depend on the mind, the mind on thoughts. As are the thoughts, so is the action. Hence, for the world to be peaceful and prosperous, man should foster truthful thoughts. The world will enjoy safety, security and peace only through men of truthful thoughts.

Actions Determine Your Future

Karmanubandheeni Manushya Loke (Human society is bound by action). It is

action alone that is responsible for creation, sustenance and dissolution. Merit and sin, pleasure and pain are contained in action. But man, unable to understand this truth, acts according to his own whims and fancies. He performs evil deeds wilfully and feels happy while doing so without realizing the truth that consequently he will have to face mountains of misery. Man is bound to face the consequences of his actions, be they good or bad, small or big. It is most essential for man to understand this truth and act accordingly. Before undertaking any action, enquire whether it is good or bad, right or wrong. Do not act in haste. Haste makes waste, waste makes worry. So, do not be in a hurry.

The Upanishads taught Thasmai Namaha karmane (one should offer salutations to the action before undertaking it). One should pay one's respects to the presiding deity of action so that one may perform only sacred actions, which are beneficial to one and all. This is one of the major principles of the culture of Bharat. For example, we find dancers paying their obeisance to the anklets before they tie them and start their performance. Likewise, various instrumentalists offer their salutations to the respective instruments they play at the beginning of their programme. The sum and substance of this is that man should pay his respects to the work he undertakes and do it in such a manner so as to sanctify his life.

Essential Qualities Of A True Human Being

Since ancient times, the culture of Bharat has attached utmost importance to the principle of action. It is rather easy to do evil deeds, but it is very difficult to face their consequences. Do not be under the false impression that you can perform an evil deed and be done with it; remember that you will have to face the consequences for the rest of your life. Having been born as human being and having known Divinity, sanctify your life by undertaking sacred actions. Life devoid of sacred actions is useless. A true human being is one who adheres to sathya (truth), Dharma (righteousness) and thyaga (sacrifice). Truth is neethi (morality), righteousness is reethi (procedure) and sacrifice leads to khyathi (fame). All these three constitute manava jathi (human race). Today man has strayed away from this three-fold path of truth, righteousness

and sacrifice. As a result, humanness is on the decline. It makes one really wonder whether a true human being exists in this world at all! It is said, "The proper study of mankind is man." A true human being is one who has harmony in thought, word and deed.

Manasyekam Vachasyekam Karmanyekam Mahatmanam Manasyanyath Vachasyanyath Karmanyanyath Duratmanam (Those whose thoughts, words and deeds are in complete harmony are noble ones; those who lack harmony of these are wicked). Man does not want to be called wicked, but he lacks harmony in his thoughts, words and deeds.

Human Body Is The Temple Of God

Embodiments of Love!

Human life is the noblest and the most sacred. It is divine in nature. Where is God? You are God yourself. Deho Devalaya Proktho, Jeevo deva Sanathana (body is the temple and the indweller is God).

Understanding this truth is the goal of all spiritual pursuits. In this temple of body, God is installed in the form of Atma. This principle of atma is described as nirgunam, niranjanam, sanathana nicketanam, nithya, shuddha, buddha, mukta, nirmala swarupinam (attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). Having such divine principle in you, why do you go in search of divinity elsewhere? There are 6000 million temples in this world, which means every human body is a temple of God. Divine consciousness exists in each and every human body.

The Vedas declare: Easwara Sarva Bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). But, unfortunately, people are unable to realize this truth. Have the firm conviction that every human body is the temple of God. Do not hate or hurt anybody. One who has realized the truth that God exists in all is a true devotee. How can you call yourself a devotee if you hurt others' feelings and indulge in criticism and slander? Criticising others amounts to criticising God Himself. Human body, being the temple of God, is highly sacred. It has to be

respected and revered. Do not get carried away by the outward looks of the 'temple'. Direct your vision on God (the Atma) installed in the 'temple' and experience the bliss derived therefrom. Make proper use of the body by undertaking sacred actions.

Emperor Asoka And The King Of Magadha

The life of Emperor Asoka bears ample testimony to this. He used to undertake various social welfare activities with the money collected from his subordinate kings in the form of taxes. Without collecting taxes, it is very difficult to run a kingdom. The same thing holds good even today. How can the government provide comforts to the people unless it collects taxes from them? It is foolishness to expect the government not to levy taxes and yet expect it to provide comforts and conveniences. Once on his birthday, all the subordinate kings of Emperor Asoka, except the ruler of Magadha, brought taxes and filled his treasury. On being questioned by the emperor, the king of Magadha replied, "O king, this year my kingdom suffered from severe drought. Consequently, people did not have water to drink and were afflicted with terrible diseases. I had to spend a lot of money to rehabilitate the drought-affected people. I made arrangements for the supply of drinking water. I also got many hospitals constructed to treat the sick. Not merely that. I established schools at various places for the education of children. All my revenue was spent on these social welfare activities. As a result, I am not able to pay tax this time." Emperor Asoka was immensely pleased with his reply. He made him sit by his side and said, "O king of Magadha, your ideal is worth-emulating.

Pure drinking water, good medical and educational facilities are very essential for the welfare of citizens. So, in this regard, I will extend to you all my cooperation." Asoka was one of truth and sacrifice. His name, A-soka, itself implies that he was one without soka (grief). The king of Magadha won his heart by his public welfare schemes.

Education is related to the head, medical care is related to the heart and water is very essential for the sustenance of life. He is a noble one who

provides all these facilities to the people. Such a person is equal to God Himself. This was the ideal taught by Emperor Asoka. He earned name and fame by his spirit of sacrifice and sacred actions.

Good actions are very important. One who undertakes sacred actions excels everyone. That is why I often exhort you to undertake service activities. You are born and brought up in the society. You owe your education, wealth and happiness to the society. Then is it not your bounden duty to show gratitude to the society? You can express your gratitude to the society by undertaking service activities. Serve one and all because God is present in everybody.

Keep Control Over Your Food And Habits

Embodiments of Love!

Do not waste time speculating over what would happen in this New year. If your actions are good, your future is bound to be good. The future of the nation depends on your actions. God is a witness. He neither protects you nor punishes you. In fact, it is you who protect or punish yourself. Whatever you utter, be it good or bad, God always blesses you saying, "So shall it be." God blesses everybody. Each one is responsible for his pleasure or pain.

Today the world is in utter chaos. Humanness is becoming extinct. Human being does not merely mean the physical body consisting of five senses. True human being is one who makes proper use of the five senses without giving scope to evil qualities like lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy. One should not fall prey to them. Foster the noble qualities that originate from the heart.

Embodiments of Love!

Wherefrom do the evil qualities like lust, greed, etc., arise? They arise out of the food you consume. So, keep control over your food and habits. Take only sathwic food. Then you will get only sacred thoughts. God has gifted you with many noble qualities. They are innate in you. But you are neglecting them.

Reading, writing, taking up jobs, earning money, building mansions, etc., originate from the head and are related to the pravritti marga (outward path). These are all acquired by you with some effort. But you do not need to make any special effort to acquire the noble qualities like compassion, love, forbearance, etc., as they are latent in you. Head is the source of bad thoughts and heart of noble thoughts.

Follow The Heart, Not The Head

Embodiments of Love!

Follow the heart, do not follow the head, lest you should be caught up in the mire of worldly life. Head puts you in many dangers. If you follow the head, you may lose your head itself! Turn your vision inward. Follow the heart, which is the source of all noble qualities like truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence. Here we find many bulbs glowing in this Hall. How? Current flows through the wire, enters the bulb and gives us light. Likewise, when the current of truth flows through the wire of righteousness and enters the bulb of peace, we get the light of love. A true human being is the perfect combination of these five human values. These are, in fact, the very lifeprinciple of man, without which he is just like a corpse. But, unfortunately, these are missing in the modern man.

Embodiments of Love!

It is said, "Janthoonam Narajanma Durlabham" (Human birth is the rarest among all living beings). You cannot buy or borrow it. Human life is God's gift. Make proper use of it by rendering service to the society. Do not indulge in slander. Slander is the worst of sins. We find some people indulging in slander always. It is nothing but the result of their innumerable sins acquired over past lives. Hasthasya Bhushanam Danam, Sathyam Kanthasya Bhushanam, Srotrasya Bhushanam Sastram (charity is the true ornament of the hand, truth is the true ornament of the neck and listening to the sacred texts is the true ornament of the ears). Hands have been given to undertake sacred actions, not to fight with others. Why has God given you ears? You listen to

vain gossip with rapt attention, but when it comes to listening to the glories of the Lord, your ears get clogged. Recognize the truth that ears are meant to listen to the glories of the Lord. Why has God given you eyes? You are never tired of watching cinema shows one after the other, but your eyes find it difficult to concentrate on the divine form even for a minute.

Today we find even small children wearing spectacles because most of the time their eyes are glued to T.V. sets. Consequently, they have cataract even before attaining the middle age. My body is 75 years old, but there is no trace of cataract. My vision is perfect because I have never seen cinema till this day. You should try to see the reality, i.e., divinity and not the unreality of the cinema and the world.

Do not take pride in your youth and physical beauty.
Very soon you are going to become a decrepit old man.
Your body will become weak, legs will stagger, Vision will get blurred, hair will turn grey
And there will be wrinkles all over your face. Then children will laugh at you
And make fun of you calling you an old monkey. Realise the truth that you are no better
Than a leather puppet.
(Telugu Poem)

Bliss Is My Form

Modern youth are highly egoistic. They get carried away by their senses and are enamoured of physical beauty. Consequently, they forget humanness, misuse the body wasting a lot of energy. Is it for this purpose that God has given the human body? No. Serve the society, help the poor and the needy. When you involve yourself in such sacred activities, your body will remain young for any length of time. Many foreigners often ask Me, "Swami, how

come you look so young and energetic even at the age of 75?" I tell them that the three Ps in Me are responsible for this. They are purity, patience and perseverance. If you develop these three virtues, you too will remain young and energetic always.

Beauty is not related to the body, it originates from character and purity. Do not indulge in slander and jealousy. Do not censure anybody. If you find a mistake in others, try to correct them lovingly.

Spirituality does not mean giving up everything and leading the life of a recluse. One should always be cheerful and have good thoughts. Never put on a castor-oil face. Let your face be with a smile always. Happiness is union with God. One who is in constant communion with God will always be cheerful and blissful. One should be cheerful even in the face of adversities. Believe it or not, no one has as many problems as I have. When one's desires are fulfilled, one praises Me or else blames Me. But praise and blame are confined to one's own lips. They do not affect Me. I am always blissful. The letters SSS stand for Sri Sathya Sai. Everything is contained in this name.

Sai says 'Yes' to those who say yes

And 'No' to those who say no.

Yes and no correspond to your mouth, But for Sai everything is 'Yes, Yes, Yes'.

(Telugu Poem)

If one voices one's criticism loudly, it will be lost in thin air; if one criticizes within, it goes to one's own self. Either way it does not reach Me. I am always filled with bliss. Bliss is My form. I am beyond pleasure and pain. Only those who have body attachment are elated by pleasure or depressed by pain. But I am absolutely not conscious of the body. You are always conscious of the world and are related to it. That which is related to the atma is consciousness. I am Absolute Consciousness. In fact, all are the embodiments of consciousness; so, all are divine. Once you realize this truth, you will never

take to wrong path.

Bookish Knowledge Is Not Enough

Students!

You are young and this is your golden age. Do not misuse it. There are three important things which one has to bear in mind. The first, once it comes will not go away, i.e., wisdom. The second, once it goes will not come back, i.e., ignorance and the third, it neither comes nor goes, i.e., the principle of Brahman. Your faith also should be such that it should be steady, it should not come and go. But the faith of modern students keeps vacillating. Such faith is no faith at all.

Students!

What you are trying to acquire is only bookish knowledge, which constitutes only one-fourth of the total knowledge. The remaining three parts of the knowledge consist of putting all that you study into practice. You will become a truly educated person and a complete human being only when your bookish knowledge is transformed into practical knowledge. Practical knowledge is your true strength. Try to acquire it. Only then will your education find fulfilment and you will earn a good name.

In this New Year, develop new and sacred feelings and make everybody happy. Do not strive for money; strive for love. Once you develop love, there will be no scope for evil qualities like anger, jealousy, etc. If your thoughts and actions are good, your future is bound to be good. Then the whole country, nay, the whole world will prosper. Pray for the peace and prosperity of the entire world. Peace can be attained only through practice of human values.

8. Install Rama Principle In Your Heart

Date: 12 April 2000 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Rama Navami

On enquiry, one will realize that charity,
Acts of sacrifice like Yajnas and Yagas, Position of honour, adherence to
truth, Sacred rituals or even Sanathana Dharma Pale in comparison with the
principle of Love.

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

THERE is none in this sacred land of Bharat who is not aware of the epic Ramayana. The Ramayana sets ideals for the individual, the family and the society at large. Since ancient times, thousands have heard the story of Rama. But not many have tried to put its teachings into practice. Man by birth is a human being but he is not making any effort to understand humanness. He is achieving progress in various fields but his mind is not getting transformed.

What is the use of man's existence if the mind does not undergo transformation? He is changing his dresses, not his mind. He would do well if he changes his mind instead of changing his dresses. All the spiritual practices like meditation, penance, etc., will prove futile if there is no transformation of the mind. Mano Moolam Idam Jagat (the mind is the basis for the entire world). Man is not making any effort to understand what is most important on the path of spirituality.

Three Debts Of Man

Man is born with three types of debts - debt to God, debt to sages and debt to

parents. God is present in each and every cell of human body in the form of Angeerasa and it is He who protects and sustains human life. Man is therefore deeply indebted to God who vibrates in every limb of his body in the form of divine energy. The only way man can clear his debt to God is by undertaking sacred actions and by working for the welfare of fellow human beings. That is why the path of service has been prescribed for man to clear his debt to God. Man should serve not with the feeling that he is doing favour to others, but with the understanding that he is repaying his debt to God. Every little act of service reduces a certain amount of your debt to God.

You should not crave positions of authority.

You should realize that body has been given to you to serve others. A true servant is a true leader. You should sanctify your life by taking to the path of service and returning your debt to God.

The second debt that man has to repay is the debt to saints and sages. The ancient sages and seers knew the past, present and future of man. They knew the secrets of Dharma. They, therefore, prescribed various codes of conduct and spiritual paths for man so that he might find fulfilment in this life and hereafter. Man can repay his debt to the sages by following and practising their teachings in letter and spirit.

The third debt is the debt to one's parents. Parents take great pains in fostering and educating their children. Mother is the first teacher for man. The Vedas proclaim, "Mathru Devo Bhava, Pithru Devo Bhava" (revere the mother and father as God). In order to repay the debt to one's parents, one has to find a way so as not to be born again.

When you are born from the mother's womb, there are no garlands of pearls and gold on your neck.

There are no necklaces of gems and emeralds. But, definitely there is a heavy garland on your

neck - a garland made up of the consequences of your past deeds, be they good or bad. This is the garland given to you by God.
(Telugu Poem)

Once you are born with this garland of karma (action), you should lead your life in such a way that you are not born again. Man is born to repay these three types of debts, not for accumulating wealth and wasting his life in worldly enjoyments. People in the modern age claim themselves to be devotees of God, but their actions betray their claims.

Put Rama's Teachings Into Practice

Once Buddha was traversing all over the country in order to propagate Truth. On reaching a particular village, Buddha felt tired and was not in a position to deliver his discourse. So, he told one of his chief disciples to address the congregation. Buddha went inside to take rest. As he could not get sleep, he was listening to what his disciple was saying. The disciple said, "O people, a person like Buddha was never born before and will never be born again in future. We are all very fortunate to be his contemporaries. So, make the best use of this golden opportunity." On hearing this, the congregation gave a thunderous applause. Buddha came out and asked his disciple, "Nityananda, how old are you?" Nityananda told that he was thirty-five years old. Buddha then asked, "Have you traveled far and wide?" Nityananda told that he had visited only a few cities. Then Buddha chided him saying, "You have not seen much of the world. You are just thirty-five years old. With what authority can you say that a person like Buddha was not born before and will not be born again? Many noble souls were born and many more will be born in future. The world cannot exist if there are no noble souls in it." None Can Describe The Divine Principle There is no place in the world where God does not exist. You may not be able to see, but the whole universe is permeated with divinity. All that you see, say and do is nothing but God's Will. None can describe the

divine principle. Today you are celebrating Sri Rama's birthday. No benefit accrues from celebrating the birthdays of noble personalities unless you put their teachings into practice. It is said, "Ramo Vighrahan Dharma"(Rama is the embodiment of Dharma). His speech was suffused with truth and His conduct radiated peace. Can there be a greater ideal than this? All names and forms are His and He is the embodiment of Truth, Awareness and Bliss.

The four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna were not ordinary mortals. Looking from the worldly point of view, Dasaratha was the king of Ayodhya. It is a mistake to think that Ayodhya was a city where Lord Rama was born. Once Ashok Singhal asked Me as to what was the correct birthplace of Lord Rama. I told him Rama's birthplace was mother Kausalya's womb. I also told him not to confine Rama to a physical form. Rama is allpervasive. What is Ayodhya? It is an impregnable place where enemies cannot enter, i e., Hridaya (spiritual heart). Dasaratha signifies the chariot of the human body consisting of ten senses. He had three wives, namely., Kausalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra who represent sathwic, rajasic and thamasic qualities, respectively. These three wives had four children, namely., Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna who represented the Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana Veda respectively. True devotion and surrender lies in understanding the inner significance of the Ramayana.

Kausalya was highly virtuous and even minded. Likewise, Sumitra too was pure hearted, and as her name indicates she was a good friend of everybody (Sumitra). Her ideals were unparalleled. When Rama, before going to exile, went to seek mother Kausalya's blessings, she lamented saying, "My son! I can't live without you for a moment." Then Sumitra consoled her, "Dear sister, God Himself has taken birth as your son Rama. He can never be farther from anybody. But, He has to act according to the time, place, cause and circumstances. Do not feel sad that He is going away from you. He will come back very soon." What was Sumitra's advice to her son Lakshmana when he came to seek her blessings before going to the forest? She told him, "My son! Do not be under the impression that you are going to the forest. Ayodhya is wherever Rama is - Without Sita and Rama, this Ayodhya is but a forest. Sita is your mother, Rama is your father. Serve them with love. That is your

primary duty." She advised her second son Satrughna to serve Bharata.

Sage Vasishta Reveals A Divine Secret

What is the reason for the intimate relationship that existed between Rama and Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna? Here you have to take into consideration an incident that happened prior to their birth. When the sweet pudding emerged from the sacrificial fire of Putrakameshti Yajna (Yajna for begetting children) performed by Dasaratha, sage Vasishta told him to distribute the same to his three wives. Scholars have distorted the truth by saying that the pudding was distributed in different proportions. Dasaratha treated all his wives alike; he had no partiality towards any of them. He divided the pudding into three equal parts and distributed to each of them. He told them to have a ceremonial bath before partaking of the pudding. Kausalya and Kaikeyi were overjoyed. They kept their share of pudding at a safe place and went inside to have a ceremonial bath. But Sumitra was not all that happy. She felt "Since Kausalya is the first wife of Dasaratha, the son born to her has every chance of becoming the crown prince. Even Kaikeyi's son may occupy the throne as Dasaratha had given word to her father. But the son born to me stands no chance of becoming the crown prince." Thinking thus, she completed her bath. As there were no fans or hair dryers in those days, she went to the terrace, kept the cup containing the pudding by her side and started drying her hair in the sun. Suddenly from somewhere an eagle swooped down and took away the cup containing the pudding. Sumitra was taken aback. She was not really sad for losing the pudding, but was afraid that her husband Dasaratha might reprimand her for her carelessness. She approached Kausalya and Kaikeyi and explained to them her plight. They loved Sumitra as Sumitra loved them. So, they took pity on Sumitra and gave a part of their share to her. Out of the part of pudding given by Kausalya, Lakshmana was born to Sumitra, whereas Satrughna was born out of the share of the pudding given by Kaikeyi. Hence, Lakshmana, born of Kausalya's share, was deeply attached to Rama and Satrughna, born out of the share of Kaikeyi, was deeply attached to Bharata.

Sumitra's two children, Lakshmana and

Satrughna, started crying as soon as they were born while Rama, the son of Kausalya, and Bharata, the son of Kaikeyi, had blissful smiles on their faces in their cradles. The children of Sumitra puzzled everybody by their incessant crying. Sumitra tried various means to make them stop crying but it was of no avail. Emperor Dasaratha consulted several physicians to cure the strange malady of Sumitra's children, but nothing worked. Mother Sumitra then called sage Vasishta as a last resort to solve her problem. The eminent sage meditated for some time and said: "Oh mother, you need not administer any medicine to alleviate your children's suffering. All you have to do is to keep Lakshmana by the side of Rama, and Satrughna in the cradle of Bharata." Sumitra did accordingly and found that Lakshmana and Satrughna stopped crying immediately. The two children who had refused to drink milk till then started taking food and playing in the cradle. Surprised at this sudden change of their behaviour, Sumitra prayed to the sage to explain the cause of this behaviour. Then Vasishta explained to her, "O mother, Lakshmana and Satrughna are the amshas (parts) of Rama and Bharata, respectively. So, when they were united, they became blissful." Put An End To Your Suffering By Uniting With God Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavad Gita, "Mamaivamsho jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana" (the eternal Atma in all beings is apart of My Being). You are undergoing pain and suffering because you are not uniting yourself with God. You will be rid of all the troubles once you become one with God. Lakshmana's suffering ended once he joined the company of Rama. He spent his entire life in the service of Rama. Likewise, Satrughna served Bharata all his life. It is next to impossible to find brothers like Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna in the present-day world. We find many twins bearing the names Rama and Lakshmana, but they fight with each other over property and even go to the Supreme Court to settle their dispute. But Rama and Lakshmana of Ramayana attained supreme stage through unity.

When Lakshmana fainted in the battlefield, Rama threw aside his bow and arrow, placed Lakshmana's head on his lap and lamented, "O Lakshmana, in this vast world I may be able to get a mother like Kausalya or a wife like Sita, but I will never be able to get a brother like you." Such was the supreme love

of Rama for Lakshmana. This is a great ideal for mankind. There is no point in going through the sacred text of Ramayana unless you put into practice the ideals it demonstrates. You should try to understand the purpose behind each of Rama's actions and how he performed them. There is much more to Ramayana than Rama going to the forest, annihilating Ravana and ultimately being crowned as the king of Ayodhya. He incarnated in order to establish Dharma. What is Dharma? It is that which delights your heart. When man takes to unrighteous means, his conscience will not approve of his acts since every man is the embodiment of Dharma. He is born to practise Dharma. But as he gets carried away by worldly pleasures, he is afflicted with misery.

At the time of going to the forest, Rama tried his best to dissuade Sita from following him. He told her that it would be extremely difficult for her to live in the forest in the midst of cruel demons and wild animals. But Sita was not an ordinary woman. She was the daughter of Mother Earth. She had all the powers of Mother Earth. She insisted that as his wife, it was her Dharma to follow him under all circumstances. She said, "You are the one who protects the entire universe, can you not take care of me?" Rama wanted her to stay back in Ayodhya and look after her aging parents. Then she replied, "I am told that You insisted on your mother Kausalya remaining here and serving her husband. But in my case, you have reversed your stance to say that it is my foremost duty to serve the parents-in-law and not the husband. For the wife, the husband is god. It is true not in the case of your mother alone; it is applicable to all women without exception." She continued thus, "You are Ramachandra, the moon and I am Sita, the moonlight. Is it possible for the moonlight to be in Ayodhya when the moon is in the forest? Moon and moonlight cannot be separated from each other. Come what may, I am coming with you to the forest." With such courage and conviction, she was ready to withstand any hardship for the sake of being with Rama. You should put such great ideals into practice in your life.

What happened to Sumitra's share of pudding that was carried away by the eagle? It was left on a mountain, which Anjani Devi consumed. As a result, Hanuman was born to her. This is the reason for the intimate relationship that existed between Hanuman and the four brothers, Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata

and Satrugna. Very few are aware of it.

Hanuman's Supreme Devotion

When Sita and Rama returned to Ayodhya, people's joy knew no bounds. At the time of his coronation, Rama distributed gifts to all those who had helped him in the war, except to Hanuman. On being questioned by Sita, Rama said that Hanuman did not care for any gift and that he had no worthy gift to be given to Hanuman. Then Sita took out her pearl necklace and presented it to Hanuman. He plucked each pearl, put it between his teeth, placed it near his ear and with a face indicating disappointment threw it way in disgust. Surprised at this behaviour of Hanuman, Sita said, "Hanuman, this is a precious pearl necklace given to me by my father, but you are throwing away the pearls without realizing their value. You don't seem to have given up your monkey traits." Then Hanuman replied, "O mother, I examined each pearl in order to see whether it had the sacred name of Rama in it. I could not find it in any pearl. Without the name of Rama, they are but stones and pebbles. So, I cast them on the ground. Even the hair of mine is filled with the name of Rama." Saying so, he plucked out a hair from his hand and put it near Sita's ear. She could hear Rama's name emanating from it. Then she started praising Hanuman thus:

You are the crest jewel among the monkeys Who fulfilled Rama's mission.
You are the great hero who found the Whereabouts of Sita and destroyed
the city of Lanka.
(Telugu Poem).

It can be said that but for Hanuman, Ramayana would not have existed. He is the embodiment of devotion and surrender. Hanuman is present wherever Rama's name is chanted. Rama's name and form are not different. Hanuman experienced this unity. That is the principle of non-dualism. You call

yourselves devotees of Rama and go through the sacred text of Ramayana repeatedly, but is there any transformation in your mind? Not at all. This is not true or real devotion, but only a show of devotion. Rama does not approve of pomp and show. He gives importance only to practice. Bliss can be attained only through practice. Try to understand the principle of Rama correctly.

In the story of the Ramayana you must understand the principle of Sita. Before going to the forest, Rama distributed his wealth to the poor. Sita also followed Rama and distributed clothes and jewels. Thus, she attained Rama by leaving her worldly desires. However, in the forest she desired to have the golden deer, and, as a result, became distant from him. Today's man likewise is bound by desire. When you give up desire, you can attain God. Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaikena Amrutathwa Manasu (immortality can be attained only through sacrifice, neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it). You can attain Rama only through sacrifice. From the Ramayana, you have to learn the lesson of sacrifice. You have to install the principle of Rama in your heart. Rama practised Sathya and Dharma all His life. You should firmly adhere to these principles in your life.

9. Easwaramma - Embodiment Of Love And Sacrifice

Date: 06 May 2000 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Easwaramma Day

Rama's divinity blossomed under Kausalya's loving care,
Lava and Kusa could become powerful and famous
Due to their noble and virtuous mother Sita,
The love and care of Jijabai made Shivaji a great warrior.
Fostered with the love of his mother Putlibai, Gandhi became a Mahatma.
For all the beings in the world there is nobody greater than mother who
gives them birth
And brings them up with love and care.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

THE Goal of man's life is neither happiness nor sorrow. Man can find fulfilment in life only if he can trace the origin of happiness and sorrow. In fact, man attains wisdom from sorrow and not out of happiness. The sages and seers of yore had to face great hardships and troubles before they could set great ideals to the rest of the world. That is why their teachings have left an indelible impression on the hearts of the Bharatiyas. Both the individual and the society can achieve progress and prosperity only after undergoing many trials and tribulations. Man has to face not only difficulties, but censure and criticism also. But noble souls will never care for difficulties or criticism. Welfare of the society is their main objective in life.

Adhere To Truth And Righteousness

Embodiments of Love!

You should welcome sorrow just as you welcome happiness. You will attain equanimity of mind only when you treat happiness and sorrow alike. In the human body, head is considered sacred whereas feet are not considered sacred. When somebody comes to your house, is it possible to welcome only the head and ask the feet to get out? When you welcome the head, you welcome the feet also. Likewise, when you welcome happiness, you welcome sorrow too.

The boys and girls of today are the future citizens of the country. They have to uphold the glory and good name of Bharat by their ideal conduct. They should cultivate humility and reverence towards parents and elders. Consider the whole world as one family and love everyone. If you want to buy anything, you have to pay its price. Likewise, you can attain the human values, namely, truth, righteousness, peace and non-violence only when you possess the wealth of love. There is no wealth greater than love. One can conquer the entire world if one has love. Today human values are on the decline because man lacks the wealth of love. One can be called a human being only when one possesses human values. The culture of Bharat exhorts,

Sathyam Vada Dharmam Chara
(speak the truth and practise righteousness).

Sathya and Dharma are very essential for humanness to blossom. One should adhere to Sathya and Dharma under all circumstances. King Harishchandra sacrificed all his wealth and kingdom for the sake of upholding truth. He did not budge from the path of truth even when he had to sell his wife and son and he himself had to become the caretaker of a cremation ground.

The whole creation has emerged from truth And ultimately merges into truth.

There is no place in the world

Where truth does not exist. Understand this principle of Pure and unsullied truth.

Love Is The True Wealth Of Man

(Telugu Poem)

That is why it is said, Truth is God. Truth and righteousness are like the two eyes of man. One who does not adhere to truth and righteousness is verily blind. All the sacred scriptures, the Upanishads and the Vedas are based on these twin principles. The creation itself cannot exist without these two. Love is the undercurrent of both truth and righteousness. Love is the true wealth of man, be he a pauper or a millionaire. Just as a mother does not make any distinction and showers her love on all her children equally irrespective of their social status, so also God showers His love on all equally. God is the embodiment of love and is present in everyone in the form of love. You can attain Him only through love.

The Vedas have referred to this principle of love as the Atma. Truth, love and righteousness are all synonyms of atma. The Vedas call man atmavan as he is endowed with the principle of the atma. The atma is also referred to as Brahma.

Who is Brahma? The scriptures describe Him as one who emerged from the lotus that originated from Vishnu's navel. That Brahma is the 'I' (aham) in everyone. So, this principle of Brahma is present in one and all, be he a theist or an atheist.

Soham ('I am Brahma') mantra clearly demonstrates this truth. This process of inhalation and exhalation has its origin in the navel of man. It repeats itself 21, 600 times a day reminding man of his divinity. Without paying heed to the teaching of the inner voice, man goes through various scriptures and the Vedas in search of divinity.

First and foremost, listen to the inner voice, which is your true preceptor and God. The Vedas describe God as amogha, as He is changeless, eternal and beyond description. God is also called Siddha as He is ever ready to fulfil the wishes of His devotees. Though God is always ready to answer the prayers of His devotees, He does not do so when their prayers are not wholehearted. When the prayers are sincere and intense, God will certainly answer them. He does not have any desires except the welfare of His devotees. To be a recipient of His grace, one has to develop sacred thoughts.

God Is The Common Property Of Man

Who is man? One endowed with the mind is man. The mind is nothing but a bundle of thoughts. You will be called a true human being only when your thoughts are based on truth. God is the common property of man, be he a pauper or an emperor. He is the friend of everybody. All have equal right to experience divinity. But one should have purity of heart to experience His grace. The heart should be filled with compassion. But today, there is no compassion, there is only fashion!

Spirit Of Sacrifice Of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar

Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar was the epitome of compassion. He along with his aged mother lived in a village near Calcutta. They lived in such abject poverty that they had hardly anything for food other than gruel. As Vidyasagar had sincerity and earnestness, he used to study even under street lights.

Sraddhavan Labhate Jnanam

(one with sincerity and earnestness alone can attain wisdom).

One with sincerity can accomplish any great task. Vidyasagar passed the law examination and obtained a good job. Neither happiness nor sorrow is permanent. One follows the other with the passage of time. Likewise,

Vidyasagar's days of poverty were over when he began to earn a handsome income.

One day, he told his mother that he wanted to buy some good saris and jewels for her as he was earning sufficient money. He asked his mother to express her wish. The mother said that she did not need anything at that time and would express her wish at the appropriate time. Being an obedient son, he would never force his mother in any matter. As months passed by, his salary increased substantially.

On a particular Sunday, he sat by his mother's side and said, "Mother, I have a lot of money with me, I pray you express your wish at least now."

The mother said, "Son, I want three jewels. As there is no school in our village, the children are forced to walk a long distance to attend the school. The parents are concerned about their safety and spend anxious moments till they return from school in the evening. So, please construct a small school in our village. This is the first 'jewel' I desire from you."

Accordingly, Vidyasagar got a school constructed in his village. After some time, his mother expressed her second wish.

She said, "Our villagers are suffering from lack of medical facilities. When the children are afflicted with any disease, the mothers have to carry them to the town for treatment. So, I want you to construct a small hospital in our village. This is the second 'jewel' I expect from you."

Vidyasagar built a hospital too. As days rolled by, Vidyasagar's name and fame spread far and wide. People were all praise for his social service activities. After some time, his mother expressed her third wish. She said, "Son! The water in all the wells of our village has been reduced to a trickle. The villagers are suffering due to lack of drinking water. So, I want you to make arrangements for water supply in our village." As per his mother's wish, Vidyasagar provided drinking water to the villagers.

His mother was overjoyed. She blessed her son saying, "I wish every mother had a noble son like you who dedicates his life to the welfare of the society. What is the use of having many sons who bring disrepute to the family as did the sons of Dhritarashtra?"

Why does water scarcity arise? When there is a decline in Sathya and Dharma, the level of water in the earth also declines. As compassion and love have diminished in the human heart, water has become scarce. This problem is not due to divine fury as some people may imagine. It is because of the rise in evil qualities in man. If people strictly adhere to the path of truth and righteousness, there will never be water scarcity. People blame bad times for their misfortunes. But there is nothing wrong with time. There are adequate rains and perennial rivers. But they are merging into the ocean without being harnessed.

Money Is Meant For Sacrifice

There is no dearth of scholars, scientists, educated and rich people in India, but the country is in no way benefited by them. They are afflicted with evil qualities of jealousy and hatred and they fight with each other. There is no unity among them. One may be rich or well-educated, but all the wealth and education will be useless if one lacks virtues. Man should cultivate the spirit of sacrifice. The Vedas say only sacrifice confers immortality. There are thousands of rich people in India, but they are not satisfied with the wealth they have. They crave to amass more and more. They ruin their lives because of their greed for money. They leave their mortal coil after depositing their wealth in foreign banks. Instead, why can't they use the same for the welfare of their countrymen? Why can't they involve themselves in social service activities? They mouth sweet words, but act contrary to what they say. They make any number of promises, but translate few of them into action. Why should they make promises at all, if they are not going to fulfil them? They are heroes in giving lectures on the spirit of sacrifice and zeros in practice.

Money is meant for sacrifice. This was the ideal demonstrated by Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar. He was an orator par excellence. Yet he was very

humble. People thronged in large numbers to listen to his speeches. (Here Swami narrated the incident from Vidyasagar's life when he taught the lesson of humility to an I.C.S. officer by carrying his suitcase in the absence of a coolie. The officer was put to shame when he discovered that the person who carried his suitcase was none other than Vidyasagar whose speech he had come to listen).

Easwaramma, The Mother Of Easwar

Today we are celebrating Easwaramma Day.

Who is Easwaramma? She is the mother of Easwara. This was not the name given to her by her parents. But after her marriage, Kondama Raju (Swami's grandfather), being one of wisdom and blessed with a vision of the future, started calling her Easwaramma (mother of Easwara). She was christened as Namagiriamma at the time of her birth. But Kondama Raju told her that Easwaramma was the most appropriate name for her, as he knew that she was going to become the mother of Easwara.

Easwaramma was born in such a poor family that she did not even have proper food to eat. All that she had to eat was ragi sankati (gruel prepared from a coarse grain). Even I too eat ragi sankati only. Many people in Karnataka eat ragi sankati. I like it very much. I do not relish rice, kurma (curry), etc., Ragi sankati with groundnut chutney is My favourite food. Both ragi and groundnut are available in our village. When I come here from Puttaparthi, I bring ragi flour with Me. Easwaramma was illiterate. When I see the egoistic attitude, perverted mentality and ostentatious behaviour of the present-day educated people, I feel it was better that Easwaramma did not have any schooling.

When I was seven and half years old, I used to teach Pandhari bhajans to small children in our village.

Easwaramma and Subbamma used to feel ecstatic watching Me sing Pandhari bhajans and dance to their rhythm. Sometimes, her husband Pedda Venkama

Raju would give Easwaramma some money for the household expenditure. Once two annas were remaining with her out of this money. One could buy two bags of puffed rice for two annas those days. So, Easwaramma bought two bags of puffed rice with the two annas and distributed to the children. She always used to give away whatever she had with her. She was the embodiment of sacrifice.

She used to talk lovingly to all those who came to her. When devotees would feel sad that Swami was ignoring them, she would console them saying, "Whatever Swami does is for your own good."

Easwaramma's Kind-heartedness

When I was being taken to Uravakonda for further education, all those children whom I used to teach many good things in the evening felt very dejected. At the time of leaving, ten of those children came to Me and offered one battu (three paise) each as Guru Dakshina (an offering of gratitude to the teacher). When I gave this money to Easwaramma, she was moved to tears. She held My hand and exclaimed, "What a spirit of sacrifice at such a tender age!" Till she breathed her last, she kept those coins with her.

Initially, I was staying in Subbamma's house. But when the number of devotees increased, a new mandir was constructed. One day Easwaramma came in when I was having My food. When others tried to follow her, she told them not to come. She held both My hands and pleaded, "Swami, there is no hospital in our village. Consequently, when the children become sick, mothers are forced to carry them to Bukkapatnam. I am unable to see their suffering. My children and others' children are one and the same for me. So, kindly construct at least a small hospital in our village."

I promised her that I would fulfil her wish and accordingly I built a big hospital, which was inaugurated by the then Central Minister, Bejawada Gopala Reddy. Easwaramma's joy knew no bounds. The whole day she did not feel the need for food and water as she felt highly contented and overjoyed. She caught hold of My hands and expressed her happiness as her wish was fulfilled in a

big way.

I told her, "Be happy." After some time, she approached Swami again and wanted a school to be built in the village. As desired by her, I got a school constructed. Initially, it was a small one. Later on, I made it into a big building. She was very happy. She went to the school, kissed the children and showered her love on them. She was extremely happy and said, "In this Age of Kali, it is my good fortune to have a son like You, who has done whatever I wished."

Good Intentions Bring Good Results

Then she wanted the village to be provided with drinking water. I promised that it would be done. I found that bore wells were being dug to overcome water scarcity. But they become useless within a short period of time. So, I got a big well dug in the Old Manidir.

Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati
(as the feeling, so is the result).

If the intention is good, the result also is bound to be good. As My intention was good, a copious spring of pure water gushed forth even at a depth of seven feet! At the back side of the Mandir, an entrance was provided for people to collect water. As you are aware, Swami has now provided drinking water from the river Tungabhadra to the entire district of Anantapur. Nearly 300 crore rupees were spent for this purpose. If the ministers, leaders and elders come together, they can undertake such public welfare schemes. But this requires concern about public welfare and spirit of sacrifice.

Before Easwaramma passed away, I fulfilled all her three wishes. There is no fee whatsoever in our institutions. Education is offered totally free to one and all. Our hospitals are also free. Nowadays doctors charge at least two to three

lakhs for a heart operation. No doubt doctors need money. But there should be a certain limit.

It is very unfortunate that the Bharatiyas are selling food, medical care and education. In fact, they are selling themselves! Bharat is a sacred land, a land of sacrifice and spirituality. It is being converted into a land of material pleasures. Spirit of sacrifice is very essential. Share whatever you have with others. A small amount of food is enough to satiate your hunger. Why crave for the entire river Ganga when a small glass of water is all that you need to quench your thirst? Do not harbour greed and other evil qualities lest you should suffer the same fate as that of Duryodhana and his tribe. Fill your heart with love.

Follow The Culture Of Bharat

Students!

Talk softly and sweetly.

You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly.

You are all young. Make efforts to mould your future in the proper way. Develop the spirit of love and sacrifice. Share your love with your friends. For example, if you have two pens, give one to someone who needs it. If your parents raise an objection to this act of charity, convince them by saying, "What is the use of having an extra pen? It is better that it is given to somebody who needs it." This will certainly make them happy. There is no wealth greater than love. Respect and revere your parents as God. Offer salutations to them when you wake up in the morning, before you go to school and when you go to bed at night. Never argue with them. Try to

convince them with love. Remember that as you sow, so shall you reap. Whatever you do to your parents, your children will do the same to you. Never talk to them rudely. Be obedient.

Modern education system imparts only bookish knowledge. It is making the students highly ignorant. They study by rote and reproduce the same in the examination. The very next day if you ask them the same questions, there will be no reply. More than education, culture is important. Indian culture is very sacred. Put it into practice in your daily life. Talk with humility even when you are talking over telephone. Learn to respect elders and treat the guests with love and humility. No benefit accrues from merely acquiring bookish knowledge. Adhere to the culture of Bharat and live in love. Only then will divinity manifest in you.

Isavasyopanishad has declared that when every action is free from the sense of egotistic doership (Ahamkara) and all enjoyment is free from attachment or desire, there will be no difference between enjoyment and renunciation. Hence any enjoyment associated with ego and attachment will be enjoyment without sacrifice. When ego and attachment are absent, the actions are free from self-interest and hence are tantamount to acts of sacrifice.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

10. Real Name Of God Is Love

Date: 16 July 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Guru Purnima

It is the power of love that is responsible For the earth to rotate without a pivot.

It is the power of love that makes the stars Stand across the sky without falling on the ground.

It is the power of love that keeps the oceans Within their limits.

It is the power of love that makes the wind Blow incessantly in all the worlds. That power of love is mysterious, infinite, Most wonderful and one without a second; It permeates the entire cosmos.

The entire creation is saturated with love.

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

GOD is love. Love is the form of God. The Bhagavadgita declares: Mamaivamso Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of the Divine). Just as God, the embodiment of love, showers His love on the entire world, man too should share his love with one and all. The principle of love is beyond definition or description. As man is not able to recognise the sacredness of love, he is directing it towards worldly and ephemeral objects.

God transcends all attributes. The same can be said of love too. But man conditions and limits love by associating it with worldly relations and wastes his life. He uses the sacred word love to describe the relationship between mother and child, wife and husband, brothers, friends and relatives, etc. Prior to birth, who is mother and who is child? Similarly, prior to marriage, who is

husband and who is wife? The relationship that exists between mother and child, wife and husband, brothers, sisters, friends, relatives, etc., has physical body as its basis. This physical relationship cannot be called love in the true sense of the term. There is no giving and receiving in true love. Many modern devotees pray, "O God, if you fulfil my desires, I will offer you ten coconuts." They offer their filthy hair and pray for mighty favours. Can this be called devotion? No, not at all. A true devotee is one who only gives and does not expect anything in return. Surrender is the true sign of devotion.

World Is Combination Of Dharma And Adharma

Human life is a combination of physical and spiritual aspects, which are related, respectively, to the head and the heart. But man follows the head and has only the physical world in view, thereby forgetting the spiritual aspect. So long as man follows his head alone, neither he nor the society nor the country at large can attain peace and security. Peace and security will reign supreme in this world only when man gives up body attachment and follows the principle of love that originates from his heart. The dualities of righteousness and unrighteousness, truth and falsehood, merit and sin, heat and cold, etc., co-exist in this creation of God.

People want adharma (unrighteousness) to be eradicated completely from this world. They want only dharma to exist, but it is not possible. In this world, dharma cannot exist without adharma and viceversa. The world itself is a combination of dharma and adharma. It cannot exist if one of them is absent. Man should use his power of discrimination and lead a life dedicated to dharma. There lies the secret of man's happiness.

Follow Your Dharma

Man's dharma is different from the dharma of animals. But man is unable to differentiate between the two. Man's dharma is to adhere to the principles of truth, non-violence and compassion. Man can never attain peace and security so long as he does not give up bestial qualities. Food, sleep, fear and procreation are common for men and animals. Then, what is man's dharma?

To think that you are a human being constitutes only half of the total truth. The other part of the truth lies in understanding that you are not an animal. You should keep reminding yourself, "I am a human being, not an animal." Do not stop at this stage. Enquire further as to which sex you belong to and which stage of life you are in, whether you are a Brahmachari, Grihastha, Vanaprastha or Sanyasin (celibate, householder, recluse or renunciant). Follow the appropriate dharma according to the stage of your life. When you are a celibate, you should not follow the dharma of a householder. There will be decline in morals giving rise to troubles and turmoil when man fails to adhere to the dharma appropriate to his stage of life. Man today is unable to understand the principle of dharma corresponding to each of the four stages of life. The code of conduct is different for different stages of life. Never be under the mistaken notion that dharma is the same for all people irrespective of their stage of life. The cause of adharma today is that man is trying to follow dharma that is not appropriate to his age or stage of life. Each should strictly adhere to the dharma corresponding to his or her age and stage of life.

All Belong To The Race Of Humanity

Today people do not understand the significance of different faiths and different modes of worship that are prevalent in Bharat. They feel it is the existence of different castes, communities and religions that is responsible for all the violence, unrest and conflicts in this country. Existence of different religions has nothing to do with the violence and conflicts in this country. Absence of inner purity is responsible for all this.

It is the mind of man which is responsible for conflicts and disturbances, not differences in religions and communities. It is a grave mistake to attribute unrest and disturbances in a country to the existence of different religions. For thousands of years, people in India have lived in unity and fraternity in spite of the existence of various religions and communities.

Religions are many, but goal is one, Jewels are many, but gold is one, Stars are many, but sky is one,

Cows are many, but milk is one, Beings are many, but breath is one, Nations are many, but earth is one, Flowers are many, but worship is one.

Different religions have come into existence to lead man to Divinity, not to create conflicts and disturbances. There is nothing wrong with any religion. Mistake lies in mathi (mind), not in matha (religion). If mind is good, how can one find fault with religion? All people belong to one jathi (race), i.e., manava jathi (human race). You should understand the meaning of jathi. It is based on form.

Human Race Is One, But Human Beings Are Different

For example, all flowers belong to the same jathi, but you cannot get mangoes when you sow a neem seed. No doubt, all trees belong to the same jathi, but their fruits and tastes of their fruits vary. There are in all 450 kinds of tastes corresponding to the fruits of various trees. You should try to understand the underlying principle of unity of each jathi. Human race is one, but human beings are different; their feelings, thoughts and behaviour patterns are different.

It is utter foolishness to think of annihilating the jathi as a whole. It may be possible to kill a few individuals, but it is not possible to annihilate the entire human race. Human race is true and eternal. It is highly sacred. It is a sign of ignorance to give room for differences and conflicts without understanding the unity of the human race. You have to recognise the divinity in man as the basis of human unity. The ancient culture of Bharat lays great emphasis on understanding this unity in diversity. This is possible only through love.

Love is God. God is love.

Cultivating love is the true spiritual practice. If one holds on to the principle of love firmly, One becomes eligible to attain

The state of non-dualism

(Telugu Poem)

Love Is Your True Form

The state of non-dualism is contained in the principle of love alone. But man, being carried away by body attachment and physical relationship, fragments his love in various ways. This cannot be called love in the true sense of the term. As Swami repeatedly stresses on the need to cultivate love, some people may wonder as to what is the form of love. The answer is: Prem Easwar Hai, Easwar Prem Hai (Love is God, God is Love). Love is the fundamental basis of everything. atma, Brahma, hridaya, uniki (existence) are synonyms of love. Love is atma. Love is Brahma. Everything is suffused with love. Then how can everyone describe the form of love? The same principle of love exists in one and all. Once you understand this principle of unity, there will be no scope for hatred .

Today conflicts are on the rise because unity is forgotten. Ekatma sarvabhutantaratma (bodies are different, but the same atma dwells in all). Advaitam Brahma (Brahma is non-dual). Brahma means vastness. It indicates unity and not multiplicity. So, give up body attachment and strengthen faith in the spirit of oneness. It is only the body attachment that is responsible for evil qualities like anger, jealousy, greed, etc. Some people go to the temple of Lord Venkateswara and pray, "Swami, if You fulfil my desires, I will perform Brahmotsavam for You." Some others pray, "Swami,if my daughters gets married, I will conduct Your Kalyanam" (marriage). Can there be a marriage for God? Does God fulfil your wish so that you may perform His marriage? With such prayers, people are trying to cheat even God. One should pray to God out of love, not with expectation of any favours from Him. Prayer born out of selfishness is no prayer at all. You should see the atma everywhere and think that you are in the company of God always.

Confidence Is The Basis Of Love

Embodiments of Love!

I often address you as 'embodiments of love' because love is your true form, which is pure, unsullied, eternal, ancient, formless and non-dual. You love your mother because you have the confidence that she is your mother. So, confidence is the basis of love.

Where there is confidence, there is love, Where there is love, there is peace, Where there is peace, there is truth, Where there is truth, there is bliss, Where there is bliss, there is God.

Peace, truth and bliss are not elsewhere. They are in you. You are the embodiment of peace, truth and bliss. It is foolish to search for peace and bliss in the external world. Nothing exists separate from you. Everything is the reflection of the inner being. Try to visualize your reflection in everybody just as you see your reflection in a mirror. In order to propagate this truth, Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavadgita: "All are a part of My Being." I and you are not separate. The principle of love is one and the same in both of us. All your spiritual practices will prove futile, if you do not adhere to the principle of love.

The world is like a mirror. All that you find in this mirror is only the reflection, not the reality. Your right eye appears as left eye in the mirror. Then how can you consider it as reality? When the mirror is removed, the reflection also disappears and the reality remains. Consider yourself as embodiment of divinity. Experience your true nature of love. This is sakshatkara (vision of the Self). Some people claim to have the vision of the Self in meditation, but the vision of your reality is true sakshatkara.

All the worldly relationships are temporary like passing clouds. They are subject to change with the passage of time, but the reality is absolutely changeless. That is the principle of love. Worldly love may turn into hatred with the change of time. What is liked today may not be liked tomorrow. But love has no likes and dislikes. God is no different from love. You may adore Him as Jesus, Zoroastra, Allah, Rama, Krishna, Buddha or Guru Nanak. You may call Him by any name. All these are pettina perlu (names given by somebody). Love alone is puttina peru (natural name). The names given are

bound to change, but love is changeless. You should aspire for that love. That is true bhakti (devotion). bhakti confers on you yukti (discrimination), virakti (detachment) and mukti (liberation).

Consider The Entire Universe As A Single Family

Lord Krishna was the embodiment of love. His name consists of five letters - K, R, S, N, A, which represent pancha bhutas (five elements), pancha pranas (five life forces), pancha koshas (five life sheaths). Krishna is interpreted as Karshati Iti Krishna (because he attracts, he is Krishna), Krishiti Iti Krishna (Krishna is the plougher). That is, Krishna is one who ploughs the field of your heart and sows the seed of love in it. Krushyati Iti Krishna (because he imparts bliss, he is called Krishna), Thus divinity of Krishna can be perceived in every place and activity.

In this world, everything is suffused with divinity. Other than divinity nothing exists. Even this cloth (handkerchief) is divine, this flower is divine, everything is divine. If there is no divinity in this cloth, one will not desire for it. Love pervades everything. You should make every effort to understand this. Human heart is full of love. Many students write to Me, "Swami, I love You." They use the symbol of hridaya to denote love. This means hridaya is that which is filled with love and compassion. hridaya is the very form of God. Easwara Sarva Bhutanam (God dwells in all beings). Isavasyam Idam Jagat (God permeates the entire universe). Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman). Share your love not only with your fellow beings, but also with birds and beasts. Stand united. Consider the entire universe as a single family.

Embodiments of Love!

Today you find disturbance and unrest all over the world. The reason is that man lacks broadmindedness. There is no expansion of love in him, there is only contraction of love. Narrow-mindedness is man's own creation. You are trying to limit the infinite atmic principle.

Guru Dispels The Darkness Of Ignorance

Embodiments of Love!

Today we are celebrating the festival of Guru Purnima. Who is Guru? 'Gu' stands for Gunateeta (attributeless). 'Ru' signifies Rupavarjita (formless). There is another interpretation of the word Guru. Gukaro Andhakarasyat, Rukarasthannirodhaka ("Gu' signifies darkness and 'Ru' denotes that which dispels darkness). So, God, who is attributeless and formless, is the true Guru. In the word 'Bhagawan,' (God) the letter 'Bha' stands for effulgence. An ordinary electric bulb illuminates only a limited area, but God who is all-pervasive illumines the entire creation. Divinity shines in everybody. So, do not hate anybody. In this world, people are driven by hatred and narrow feelings. They go even to the extent of killing each other. What a heinous crime it is! Hurting others amounts to hurting God Himself. Our hatred will certainly rebound on us. Today people derive demonic pleasure in causing harm to others without understanding the truth that one day or the other they will have to reap the consequences of their actions. Make others happy and you will certainly be happy. Today violence and murders have become the order of the day. Greatness does not lie in killing others; even an insect is capable of doing that. Greatness lies in saving lives.

Embodiments of Love!

You are bound to face the consequences of your actions. So, do good and you will certainly reap good results. Do not get disheartened if there is no immediate reward. Wait for a while, you will certainly be rewarded. Your suffering is nothing but the consequence of bad deeds in the past. Prayer alone can alleviate your suffering to some extent. Prayer is a way of expressing your gratitude to God. The sun is extolled as Kritagnagnaya Namah, (salutations to the destroyer of the ungrateful). It means that it will withdraw itself from the eyes of those who have no sense of gratitude.

The Quality Of Kshama

As Venkataraman has pointed out (in his speech made earlier), the quality of K s h a m a (forbearance) is the most essential for one and all.

Forbearance is truth, forbearance is righteousness,
Forbearance is non-violence, Forbearance is the teaching of the Vedas,
Forbearance confers happiness and
heavenly bliss.
(Telugu Poem)

Forgive those who have harmed you and criticized you. Have faith that whatever happens is for your own good. If someone hurls abuses on you, do not retaliate. Enquire within yourself whether he has criticized the body or the atma. If he has criticized the body, indirectly he has done a favour to you because body is nothing but a heap of flesh, blood, bones and faecal matter. On the other hand if he has criticized the atma, it amounts to criticizing his own self because the same atma exists in both of you. One should cultivate this kind of forgiveness and broad-mindedness.

Embodiments of Love!

Guru is one who dispels the darkness of ignorance arising out of body attachment. Body is but an instrument. God has given you the body to take to the path of action. It is God's gift. Deho Devalaya Prokto Jeevo Deva Sanathana (body is the temple and the indweller is God). Consider all bodies as temples of God and offer your salutations. Salute even your enemies. Sarva Jeeva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati and likewise Sarva Jeeva Tiraskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God and whomsoever you censure, it also reaches God).

Understand The Principle Of Unity

I often address you as bangaru (gold) because you are the embodiment of Hiranyagarbha. The principle of hiranyagarbha is present in your heart. You may change the shape of the jewel, but gold remains changeless. The value of gold decreases when it is mixed with various metals like copper, brass, etc.

Likewise, man by birth is highly pure and most valuable. But on account of his association with evil desires and bad company, he loses his value.

Thyaja Durjana Samsargam, Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam, Kuru Punyam Ahorathram,

Smara Nityamanithyatham.

(Discard bad company, join good company, perform meritorious deeds day and night and enquire into that which is permanent and that which is ephemeral). This is your dharma.

Consider All That You See As The Form Of God

Embodiments of Love!

It is said, Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham (birth as human being is the rarest of all beings). So, sanctify your life by making proper use of your senses. Do not talk as you please. Talk softly and sweetly. Have proper control over your vision. You all know what happened to Keechaka when he looked at Droupadi with evil intentions. Bhima smashed his head into pieces. That is why Buddha exhorted mankind to cultivate samyak drishti (sacred vision). Buddha attained enlightenment only after he cultivated sacred vision. Consider all that you see as the form of God. Think what is good, see what is good, hear what is good, talk what is good and do what is good. Only then can you attain divinity.

Embodiments of Love!

This body is approaching its 75th birthday. All these years, I have remained

blissful because I am aware of the principle of unity. You too can experience bliss if you understand this truth. I do not hate anybody; nor do I have any enemies. I have absolutely no fear because everything is My own form; the same atma exists in all. When an innocent child smiles at you, you too smile at it. Likewise, when I smile blissfully, all of you do the same. Have a sacred heart.

Cultivate sacred feelings. Then the result also will be sacred. Have faith that God is everywhere. You may have to undergo trials and tribulations, but never lose faith in God. Consider faith as your very life-breath. Each one of you is an embodiment of love, but because of improper food and habits, evil qualities like jealousy and anger arise in you. As is the food, so is the head; as is the head, so is God. So, consume only sathwic food. Then you will have only sacred feelings and your speech will also become sacred.

Do Not Become A Buffalo

In order to put you on the right path, I sometimes pretend to be angry, but in reality I am never angry. The only harsh word that I use is dunnapota (he-buffalo). You are truly a buffalo if you do not undertake good actions. You can become a good fellow only when you do good. When there is a heavy downpour, the cow and calf may run away to safety, but the he-buffalo remains where it is because of its sloth and inertia. You should not become inactive like a he-buffalo; try to transform yourself. Human life is highly sacred. Do not put it to disuse. I love everybody. Love is My true form. All of you are the sparks of My Divinity. So, share your love with your fellow beings, just as I share My love with you all.

Then you too will become divine. When all follow the sacred path, the world will undoubtedly attain peace and prosperity.

Embodiments of Love!

Give up ignorance, light the lamp of wisdom within you and ultimately merge with the divine. This is Swami's message for you today. Develop love.

Through love alone can you annihilate the mind and through love alone can you get cured of any disease. Only love can eradicate the evil qualities in you. So, love all. Love the hridaya, not the physical body. Love the divinity that is installed in your heart. Body, mind, intellect and senses are merely instruments, you are the master. So, master the mind and be a mastermind. Never become a slave of your mind. Contemplate on the divine day in and day out. You may chant any name, contemplate on any form; but understand the truth that God is one and only one.

11. Women Are The Embodiments Of Nobility And Virtue

Date: 11 August 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam

This land of Bharat has given birth to many noble women like Savitri, Who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati, who extinguished wild fire with the power of truth; Sita, who proved her chastity by coming out of blazing fire unscathed and Damayanthi, who reduced an evilminded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity. It is because of such women of character that Bharat has attained the reputation of Being the land of plenty, prosperity and opulence. Among the Vratas (sacred vows) of Bharat, the Varalakshmi Vrata has supreme significance. (Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

SINCE time immemorial, the sacred land of Bharat has been enjoying peace and prosperity because of men and women of character. Bharat has always accorded an exalted position to the mother. The purohit (chief priest) made a mention of this in the morning during the course of Varalakshmi vrata.

Glory Of Indian Womanhood

Legend has it that Parvati once asked Easwara if there was any way to ensure auspiciousness, prosperity and well-being of the women. She desired that every woman should lead a long, happy and healthy life with her husband,

children, grandchildren, friends and relatives. Easwara was pleased with Parvati's prayer and told her about the Varalakshmi vrata, which would confer all a woman may ask for.

The particular vrata is a boon for all women. Women always strive hard for the welfare of their family. They always aspire for samata, samagrata, samaikyata and sowbhratrutwa (equality, integrity, unity and fraternity). Their speech is truthful, their hearts are full of peace and their actions are righteous. Women, being the recipients of eight forms of wealth, confer prosperity and auspiciousness on the family, society and the world at large.

You might have heard the story of Savitri, who, with the power of her character, overcame many obstacles to bring her dead husband back to life. Even in this Age of Kali, it is the prayer of wives that protects their husbands in times of danger. Many women in the past performed Varalakshmi vrata with devotion and sincerity and became the recipients of the grace of goddess Lakshmi (consort of Vishnu and goddess of wealth).

Sita came out of blazing fire unscathed when she was asked by Rama to undergo agni pareeksha (the test of fire) to prove her chastity as Ravana had held her captive for ten months in Lanka. Though Rama, being omniscient, had no doubt regarding Sita's chastity, he did so only in order to dispel doubts from the minds of people. Evil-minded people are like crows; they are full of doubts and pre-conceived notions. But will the cuckoo stop singing just because the crows are cawing? Likewise, the women of nobility and character are least perturbed by the criticism of the evil-minded people. They do not give scope for any doubts. Their pure heart is their witness and their sacred feelings are their dharma. They follow their conscience and adhere to truth and righteousness. This is the teaching of the culture of Bharat: Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak the truth and follow righteousness).

The Story Of Anasuya And Sumati

You all know the story of Anasuya (wife of sage Atri). She was put to test by God Himself. The Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara went to her in

disguise and begged, Bhavati Bhiksham Dehi (mother, give us alms). When she was about to serve them food, they said that they would accept it only if she served them without wearing any clothes. Immediately, she transformed them into three infants and fed them as per their wish. She could transform even Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara into small babies and play with them only because of her purity of heart and the power of chastity. Ultimately, Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati, the wives of the Trinity, begged her that their husbands may be returned to them. Anasuya, being one of compassion, yielded to their request. The Trinity blessed sage Atri and Anasuya, saying that they would be born to them in the form of Dattatreya. The name Dattatreya signifies one who is adopted by sage Atri.

Sumati was also a woman of chastity. She was pure-hearted and totally selfless. One day, a sage cursed her husband that he would die immediately after sunrise on the next day. She prayed to God with all sincerity and purity. It is only prayer that can atone man's sins and save him from curse. Sumati prayed, "If my thoughts are pure and truthful, let there not be sunrise at all." As a result, there was no sunrise and the entire world was engulfed in darkness. That is the power of women of chastity. All the gods and sages approached Sumati and prayed, "Mother, is it proper on your part to plunge the entire world into darkness for the sake of your husband?" Sumati replied, "Without my husband, the world has no value for me." Only when the gods and sages assured her of the safety of her husband, did she allow the sun to rise. Thus, since ancient times, women of Bharat led an ideal life and proved to the world the power of chastity. Not only in the bygone ages, even in this Age of Kali, there are many women who are leading exemplary lives.

Vratas Are Givers Of Boons

Since ancient times, the women of Bharat have upheld the dignity and honour of the family and the community at large. The worship of goddess Varalakshmi earned them her grace and they could accomplish all this. Varalakshmi is one who grants all the boons that women pray for. She confers on women all the eight types of wealth. Noble women like Savitri,

Damayanti, Chandramati and Sumati accomplished mighty tasks only due to the grace of Varalakshmi. Worship of Varalakshmi confers wealth, prosperity and bliss. But due to the effect of modern age, people do not adhere to such sacred practices. That is why their houses lack purity and sacredness. In Bharat, there is a proverb: "You can judge a housewife by looking at the house." In those days, housewife was considered to be grihalakshmi (goddess of the home) who kept her house sacred and unpolluted. It reflected her own purity.

Fill Your Heart With Love

Today, the food you eat, the water you drink and the air you inhale are all polluted. Man himself has become highly polluted as he has filled his mind with negative feelings, which are nothing but worldly desires. No doubt, one can have desires, but they should be under certain limits. The letters that you write will appear blue when the pen is filled with blue ink and red when it is filled with red ink. Likewise, all that you see, hear and say will become negative when your heart is filled with negative feelings. So, first of all fill your heart with love. Then all that you see, hear, say and do will be suffused with love. Sarvam Prema Mayam Jagat (the whole world is permeated with love). So, you will find love everywhere. Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati (as is the feeling, so is the result). Today human heart has become a den of evil qualities like anger, hatred, greed, jealousy, pomp and show. Love alone can drive away these negative qualities. Desire, anger, greed, jealousy, etc., arise out of body attachment and improper food habits. So, one has to put a check over body attachment and control desires. It is said, less luggage more comfort make travel a pleasure. In order to have a comfortable journey of life, reduce the luggage of desires. One can have body attachment to some extent because the journey of life is undertaken with the help of the body. When one is living with family and friends, it is not possible to give up body attachment altogether. But one should lead a sacred life with the noble feelings of Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu (may the entire world be happy!).

All the powers that you find in the external world are present in man. The human body itself is a generator of electricity. The human mind can be

compared to television and the heart to a radio. When a particular programme is broadcast on Delhi Radio Station, you are able to hear it at the same time by tuning your radio to the appropriate frequency. Today we have radios, but in those days, people considered their hearts as radios. So, make your hearts pure and sacred. All that you see in the external world can be visualized on the screen of your mind. So, the mind itself is a television. All the powers are latent in man. All that you see outside is nothing but the reflection and resound. When you criticize or abuse someone, it means you are seeing the reflection of your own bad feelings in him. Good and bad arise from within, they are not outside.

God Is Present In The Entire Creation

You can see your reflection in the mirror only when its rear is coated with a chemical. Your heart can be compared to a mirror. It should be coated with the chemical of love. Only then can you see your true self in it. Vedanta declares, Raso Vai Saha (He is sweetness Itself). Here is an example: When sugar and water are mixed, it becomes syrup. The sugar and water become inseparable. Just as sugar is present in every drop of the syrup, God is present in the entire creation. Easwara revealed the secret of Varalakshmi vrata to Parvati in order to bestow peace and prosperity on all women. Performance of this vrata is easy, though it has a potency of giving great boons. You are all very fortunate to have performed it in a sacred place sanctified by the presence of Divinity. These practices have the desired effect if you do them in the prescribed manner with purity of heart.

Betel leaf alone cannot make a pan. It has to be mixed with an appropriate quantity of betel nut and lime before it becomes a pan. Betel leaf is green in colour, betel nut is brown and lime is white. When mixed together in appropriate proportion, they form red colour. Lime adds taste to the pan, but when used in excess, it will burn the tongue. That is why it is said, Na Sreyo Niyamam Vina (no good accrues without the observance of rules).

Do Not Indulge In Vain Gossip

The normal temperature of the body is 98.4° F. Fever sets in when the temperature crosses this limit. Likewise, the normal blood pressure of man is 120/80. When it shoots up to, say, 150/90, it becomes harmful. Likewise, everything should be under certain limit. Your speech and actions should also be within certain limits. Act as per your capacity. Before undertaking any activity, enquire, where, when and how it has to be done. If you do not adhere to such discipline, you will be inviting trouble.

All the spiritual practices will yield good results only when they are performed with purity of heart and steady mind. If you have the grace of God, there is nothing that you cannot accomplish in this world. When God can bring the dead back to life, can there be anything impossible for Him? He can change sky into earth and earth into sky, but you should pray with purity of heart to attain His grace. Do not indulge in vain gossip. How can you expect God to fulfil your wishes if you talk ill of others?

Dharma Forms The Basis Of The World

Embodiments of Love!

Our ancients performed these vratas with sacred feelings. But today people have lost faith in such sacred practices. They have faith in things which are transient and ephemeral. First of all, man should transform his heart. He should have the firm faith that God is hridayavasi (indweller of the heart). Deho Devalaya Prokto, Jeevo Deva Sanathana (body is the temple and the indweller is God). Respect and revere all bodies as temples of God. Then the world will be free from all conflicts. Today, as selfishness and selfinterest are on the rise, the world is gripped in troubles and turmoil. In order to get rid of conflicts man should cultivate moral values, undertake righteous actions and love everybody.

Human life is a combination of morality, spirituality and righteousness. Today, the whole world is centred around money. I often tell you, money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows. Money is like a passing cloud. No doubt money is required for your livelihood in this world. But it is not the be all and

end all of life. Earlier people believed Dharma Moolam Idam Jagat (dharma forms the basis of the world). Now people consider Dhana Moolam Idam Jagat (wealth forms the basis of the world). Understand that dharma alone will confer peace and bliss on you. dharma alone will protect you.

During the course of the Kurukshetra War, Bhishma was the commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army. One day, Duryodhana and Dussasana confronted him and said, "O grandsire, you seem to be very inactive these days. As a result, our enemies are growing from strength to strength. It is time that you shed your slackness and show your prowess." Provoked in this manner by Duryodhana and Dussasana, Bhishma declared that he would kill all the Pandavas before sunset, the next day. Droupadi, who had five husbands, could be called a pathivrata (one of chastity). Who are the five husbands? They do not represent physical bodies. Here five husbands symbolize five elements and five life principles. Droupadi fell at Krishna's feet and prayed that He should protect the Pandavas. Krishna said, "Follow My command, I shall certainly protect your husbands." Droupadi said, "Krishna, who can I follow other than You? You are our everything." It was night-time. As the war was over for the day, all were taking rest in their respective tents. Bhishma was feeling very depressed. "I have vowed that I would kill the Pandavas tomorrow. But how am I to kill them who are noble and virtuous and whom I have brought up with my own hands all these years? It is the food of the Kauravas that has spoiled my head (mind)." Thinking thus, Bhishma was pacing up and down in his tent. Krishna sensed Bhishma's predicament. He always planned according to time, place and situation. His was the master-plan. He told Droupadi to follow him.

Since there was no electricity in those days, there were only oil lamps burning in each tent. After walking a certain distance, Krishna asked her to put off her sandals as they were making noise. Droupadi implicitly obeyed Krishna's command. Krishna immediately wrapped her sandals in his shawl and carried them with him. Once they reached Bhishma's tent, He told Droupadi to hurry up and fall at Bhishma's feet at once. Droupadi did accordingly. Hearing the jingling sound of bangles, Bhishma thought it was a married woman and as was his wont, he blessed her saying, Deergha Sumangali Bhava (may you and

your husband live long). After uttering this blessing, Bhishma noticed to his great surprise that it was Droupadi whose husbands he had vowed to kill the following day. In the meantime, Krishna entered the scene. Bhishma realized that it was Krishna's master-plan. He extolled Krishna saying, "O Lord, none can describe Your Leelas (divine play). They are most wonderful and most sacred in all the three worlds." Krishna told Bhishma that he had come to Droupadi's rescue as she was highly virtuous. What was the secret of Droupadi's greatness?

Droupadi was always contented with what she had.

She was always obedient to her husbands and would always find time to serve them.

There is no woman greater than Droupadi.

(Telugu Poem)

Today people are conferred various titles like Padmashri, Padma Vibhushan, etc. But the titles conferred on women such as Grihalakshmi, Illalu, Dharmapathni, Ardhagini, etc., are very high and sacred. How can women with such exalted titles to their credit be inferior to men? But, unfortunately, today due to the effect of Kali Age, men look down upon women and treat them as mere servants. This is a big mistake. The more you respect women, the more you will be respected.

Destructive Power Of Anger

You should see to it that women do not shed tears. Otherwise, the family will face hardships. A thorn can be removed from the foot, but a harsh word, which has wounded the heart, cannot be taken back. So, never use harsh words. Talk sweetly and softly. The husband has the right to point out the mistakes of his wife, but he has no right to use harsh words and hurt her feelings. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly. The

family will attain peace and prosperity once you observe these principles. Usually, the element of anger is more in men than in women. If you get angry once, the energy gained by you from the food consumed over three months will be destroyed. Not merely that, it also boils your blood which will take nearly three months to cool down. Such being the case, imagine what would be your fate if you lose your temper time and again.

God Always Does Only Good

The story of Jarasandha bears ample testimony to this. Many a time, Krishna challenged him for a battle. However, when Jarasandha would come with fierce anger, Krishna would run away from the battlefield. Seeing this happen time and again, Krishna was asked the reason for His strange behaviour. Then Krishna replied, "Don't be under the mistaken notion that I am running away from the battlefield out of fear. I can kill him in no time, but this is not the right time to kill him. By arousing his anger time and again, I am draining out all his strength." Gradually, Jarasandha lost all his strength and ultimately met his doom. Krishna never considered it an insult to run away from the battlefield because he was acting according to his own master-plan. He adopted this method of conquering his enemy to teach an important lesson. All the plans of God are meant only for the welfare of others. He does not do anything for himself. God always does only good, which may appear to be bad to some people. Mistake lies in their vision, not in God's creation. Whatever God does, it is always meant to help you and develop your sacredness.

Mother's Love Defies All Description

Easwara revealed the sacred Varalakshmi vrata to Parvati, so that the future generations might perform this vrata and derive the benefits therefrom. The purohit (chief priest) has enumerated the benefits that this vrata confers. When a woman performs the Varalakshmi vrata, she gets the blessings that she may live long with plenty and prosperity as sumangali (a woman whose husband is alive) with her children and grandchildren. Varalakshmi protects seven past generations and seven future generations. Noble women like Savitri and Anasuya enjoyed peace and prosperity by performing this sacred

vrata. The purpose of Varalakshmi vrata is to atone your sins, develop sacredness and ultimately lead you to divinity.

The culture of Bharat considers the word matha (mother) as most sacred. In times of suffering, one naturally calls out 'amma' (mother), not 'appa' (father). The word amma is most soothing and gentle. It bestows immense strength. The first word that a child utters is amma or ma. That is why the culture of Bharat has accorded highest place to the mother ahead of father, teacher and God. None loves you as much as your mother does. Mother's love defies all description. Varalakshmi is extolled as Lokamatha (Divine Mother of the world). All are her children. That is why the Vedas address human beings as Amrutasya Putrah (sons of immortality).

Students!

When you lose the love and affection of your mother, your life will lose its direction like a rudderless boat. Mother is the source of all your strength. So, respect your mother and obey her command. If your mother is happy with you, the whole world will be happy with you. If the mother is not pleased with you, you will become cheap in the eyes of the world. Do not be proud of your youth, beauty and physical power. Realise that very soon you will have to pass through old age. If you neglect your parents now, your children will neglect you.

Women Are Endowed With More Powers

Varalakshmi vrata is performed by women. But men should not discourage them from performing this sacred v r a t a . They should provide all the necessary support. Its performance is beneficial not only to women, but also to men as women pray for the well-being and long life of their husbands. Men should not behave in an arrogant way towards women thinking themselves to be more strong and powerful. Truly speaking, women are more powerful than men. The scriptures declare that men have only three powers, whereas women have five. Women are ready to sacrifice even their life for the sake of their husbands. Savitri was ready to give up her life for the sake of her

husband. But do we find such spirit of sacrifice in men? If one's wife dies, he is ready to marry again. But women are not like that. They are the repositories of the five virtues of respect, dignity, sacrifice, contentment and prosperity. On the other hand, men are prone to evils of anger, stubbornness and foolishness. Women are the embodiment of virtue and nobility.

Names of the Divine couples like Lakshmi Narayana, Radha Krishna and Parvati Parameswara indicate that women are given place of priority over men. That is why even in invitation cards, people write Srimati and Sri (Mrs. and Mr.) and not the other way round. Prakriti symbolizes feminine aspect of God. Prakriti and Purusha are inseparable. As the women are the embodiments of Lakshmi (goddess of wealth), the world will attain prosperity only when they are respected. Therefore, men must treat women with respect, so that they will be respected in turn. You can see it yourself, where there are women of character, there you find all prosperity. You all know that many countries suffered destruction during the two world wars. It is entirely due to the presence of virtuous women that Bharat remained safe and secure. Bharat owes its greatness and glory to its women. So respect women and make them happy.

12. Flowers That Never Fade

Date: 22 August 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Krishna Jayanthi

Eight are the flowers that please the Lord,
Offer Him the flowers of non-violence and sense-control,
Compassion on all creatures, forbearance and peace
Penance, meditation and truth above all These are the flowers dear to the
Lord.
(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

GOD does not expect you to perform rituals nor does He want you to study the scriptures. All that He desires from you is eight types of 'flowers'.

The flower of ahimsa (non-violence) is the first of the eight flowers that one should offer to God. Nonviolence means not causing harm to any living creature by thought, word and deed. We find doctors performing surgeries on patients to cure them of their ailments. In the process of surgery, the doctors cut the body with a knife. You cannot call it an act of violence because it is beneficial to the patient. Some people may argue that even cutting the vegetables is an act of violence because the vegetables and trees have life in them. No doubt, vegetables and trees have life, but they do not have the mind. Consequently, they do not suffer any pain. Only man has got five sheaths, namely, food sheath, life sheath, mind sheath, wisdom sheath and bliss sheath. One with the mind experiences pain and pleasure. Men, animals, birds and insects are endowed with the mind, not the trees and vegetables. In some trees, you find the sap oozing out when you pluck their fruit. Oozing of sap from a tree is a natural phenomenon, but some people mistake it for the tears of suffering. The trees do not suffer any pain because they do not have

the faculty of mind.

Control Over The Tongue

The second is the flower of indriya nigraha (sense control). All spiritual practices will prove futile if one lacks sense control. Control of the senses is very essential for one and all. Lack of sense control is the main cause of all the unrest and agitation that you find in the world today. How can one control the senses? First of all, one should exercise control over the tongue.

Oh tongue, ever sensitive to sweetness, I tell you truly that which is sweet and yet yields perfect health...

All this is contained in the sweet words Govinda, Damodara, Madhava.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

You must control your tongue as it always craves for a variety of delicacies. You must ask this question, "O tongue, how many bags of rice, wheat and vegetables have you devoured! How many delicacies have you consumed! Fie on you if you are still not satisfied." Bhikshannam Deharakshartham (a morsel of food is enough to sustain the body). You should eat for the sake of satisfying your hunger and sustaining the body. Do not give undue importance to taste. Likewise, tell your eyes to see God instead of watching unsacred things on the television or video. Teach your ears to listen to the stories of the Lord instead of listening to vain gossip.

O ears, you are interested in listening to vain gossip and tales about others, but you pay least attention when the wonderful stories of the Lord are narrated. (Telugu Song)

Think for a while, how you are benefited by listening to unsacred things. In fact, you are polluting your heart in the process. All that you see and hear gets imprinted on your heart. Once your heart is polluted, your life will become meaningless. The other day, while speaking to the devotees from Visakhapatnam, I made a mention of this. Human heart is like a pen. The colour of the words that you write will be the same as the colour of the ink in the pen. Likewise, when you fill your heart with love, all that you think, say and do will be suffused with love. God expects you to fill your heart with love and lead a sacred life.

Daya And Kshama

The third is the flower of daya (compassion) towards all living creatures. The Bhagavadgita says, Adveshta Sarva Bhutanam (do not hate anybody). Live in amity with everyone, but do not have too much connection with people.

The fourth is the flower of kshama (forbearance) which is very special and significant. The Pandavas suffered a lot at the hands of the Kauravas.

But never did Dharmaraja lose forbearance even when Droupadi was being humiliated by the Kauravas. It was the virtue of forbearance that protected the Pandavas and made them an ideal to the rest of the world. This flower of forbearance is very dear to the Lord. God will be pleased with you and confer boons on you only when you offer Him the 'flowers' which are dear to Him. No benefit accrues from offering the flowers, which fade away and decay. The everblooming flowers of ahimsa, indriya nigraha, daya and kshama are liked by God.

The Story Of Abou Ben Adhem

Students might have heard the story of Abou Ben Adhem who always offered sarva bhuta daya pushpam (compassion on all beings) to the Lord. Everyday he used to go round the streets to serve the destitute and the handicapped and return home late in the night. One night when he returned home, he found in his bedroom an angel writing something. When he asked her as to

what she was writing, she replied that she was making a list of those who loved God. She replied in the negative when he asked her if his name was there in that list. The following night, when he returned home, he again found the angel writing something. He queried, "Mother, what is it that you are writing now?" She said, "Son, I am writing the names of those who are dear to God." He again wanted to know if his name figured in the list. She replied that his name was on the top of this list.

The sum and substance of this story is that God is pleased when you serve your fellow-human-beings. The scriptures have prescribed nine paths of devotion, namely, sravanam (listening to the Lord's stories), kirthanam (singing His glories), vishnusmaranam (remembrance of the Lord's name), pada sevanam (service to the Lord's Lotus Feet), archanam (worship), vandanam (salutation), dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship), atmanivedanam (offering oneself to the Lord) i.e., complete self-surrender. But the path of service is the greatest of all.

Neither by penance nor by pilgrimages Nor by going through the sacred texts
Can one cross the ocean of worldly life; One can redeem one's life only
through service.
(Sanskrit Verse).

Abou Ben Adhem became the recipient of God's love because he spent all his time in the service of his fellowmen. God loves all, for He is the embodiment of love. But He will give Himself to those who show compassion to all beings.

Santhi And Thapas

The fifth is the flower of santhi (peace). One should remain peaceful through all the vicissitudes of life. Only then can one attain divine grace. Great devotees like Thyagaraja, Tukaram and Droupadi

underwent many hardships. They bore all sufferings with patience. Thyagaraja said, "One cannot attain happiness without inner peace." Man needs peace at the physical, mental and spiritual levels. Peace is not present in the external world. It is present within. You are the embodiment of peace. In the worldly life, there are bound to be many hardships, but one should not be perturbed. One should bear all sufferings with fortitude and patience. Human life is given not merely to enjoy the worldly pleasures like birds and beasts. Life becomes meaningful only when one experiences the peace that originates from the heart.

The sixth is the flower of thapas (penance). Penance does not mean retiring to the forest and living on fruits and tubers. In fact such a life can be called a life of thamas, (dullness), not Thapas. True penance lies in controlling one's emotions, thoughts, words and deeds arising out of sathwic, rajasic and thamasic qualities. One should contemplate on God at all times and achieve harmony of thought, word and deed. Manasyekam Vachasyekam Karmanyekam Mahatmanam (he is a noble one whose thoughts, words and deeds are in complete harmony). Do not be carried away by pain or pleasure. The Bhagavadgita teaches,

Sukhadukhe Samekruthwa Labhalabhau Jayajayau

(one should be even-minded in happiness or sorrow, gain or loss, victory or defeat). One should discharge one's duty and serve society without any expectation of reward. Such even-mindedness and desireless state is true penance.

Dhyana And Sathya

The seventh is the flower of dhayana (meditation). Meditation does not mean sitting in padmasana (cross-legged posture) with eyes closed in contemplation of God. This is physical, worldly activity. No doubt, this is also needed, but true meditation lies in unifying the mind with God. Just as milk and water cannot be separated, likewise, the mind, once merged with God,

cannot be separated. An iron ball cast in fire will become one with it. Likewise, your love should become one with divine love. This truth is contained in the Vedic dictum, Brahmaivid Brahmaiva Bhavati (the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Himself). Some people contemplate on God for a limited period in the morning and evening. This cannot be called meditation. Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Harichintanam (contemplate on God at all times, at all places and under all circumstances). Perform all tasks with your mind firmly fixed on God. That is true meditation. Thinking of God for a limited period cannot be termed meditation. That is only part-time devotion. Part-time devotion confers only part-time grace. You should have full-time devotion in order to attain full-time grace.

The eighth is the flower of Sathya (Truth). This is very important. The entire world has originated from truth, is sustained by truth and ultimately merges into truth. There is no place without the principle of truth."
(Telugu Poem)

Trikalabadhyam Sathyam (Truth is changeless in all the three periods of time, i.e., past, present and future). Everything may disappear, but Truth remains forever. So, Truth is God, live in Truth.

Only Service Can Confer Bliss

God will be pleased only when you worship Him with these eight types of flowers. The priests in temples worship God with various types of flowers. But God does not want these flowers. He says, "O priest, is it what you have learnt all these years? You are worshipping Me with lorry loads of roses and jasmines, which fade away in a short time. These are not the flowers that I expect from you. Worship Me with the flowers of peace, love, non-violence, etc., which will never fade." Embodiments of Love!

People worship God with devotion and sincerity, but God is not-satisfied with external worship. You should serve society. Only service can confer bliss on you. By rendering service to society, not only can you alleviate the sufferings of the people, but you can also bring about transformation in their lives. *Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). If you serve with sacred feelings, it is bound to yield sacred results. Serve society to your utmost capacity. You are doing bhajans in the morning and evening. The satisfaction that you get by participating in bhajans is temporary, whereas service confers permanent satisfaction. A few minutes ago, the students sang *Bhaja Govindam*, in which it is said, *Ma Kuru Dhanajana Yauvana Garvam, Harathi Nimeshath Kalah Sarvam* (do not be proud of your wealth, progeny and youth; the tide of time may destroy them in a moment).

Sanctify Time By Service

Youth and wealth are like passing clouds. Do not entertain excessive desires. Do your duty sincerely.

Whatever happens, be it good or bad, accept it as the gift of God. Understand that it is good for you. Time is the most precious gift of God, but you are wasting it in vain pursuits and unsacred feelings. Sanctify the time given to you by serving society. Through service alone can one get rid of worries, ego, pomp and show and other evil qualities.

The Vedas say, *Chittasya Shuddhaye Karmah* (the objective of actions is to purify the mind). Service alone is to purify the mind. Today people waste a lot of time, wealth and energy in performing activities which do not foster purity of the mind. That is why they are unable to experience peace of mind. The peace that one gets out of worldly activities comes and goes like a passing cloud. One should aspire for the true and eternal peace, which originates from the heart.

Though the Pandavas were subjected to many hardships, Dharmaraja always remained peaceful. When Droupadi was being humiliated by the Kauravas, Bhima became furious and tried to attack Dussasana with his mace. It was

Dharmaraja who pacified Bhima saying, those who adhere to dharma will ultimately emerge victorious. Not all can attain the level of peace that Dharmaraja attained. It is possible only for a few. Where there is peace, there you find Divine power, grace and fame. The Kauravas were many in number, whereas the Pandavas were only five. But the fame of the Pandavas remained permanent in society. Dharmaraja was liked by one and all.

Speak Sweetly And Softly

Today unrest and violence have gripped the world as Sathya and dharma have declined in the hearts of people. All that you find outside is nothing but the reflection, reaction and resound of your inner feelings. Human life is highly sacred, most precious and divine. Do not fritter away this life by indulging in unsacred activities. It has to be lived in the proper way by exercising control over the ten indriyas (senses). Speak sweetly and softly. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly. Pray for the wellbeing of all. Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu (May the whole world be happy!). Sanctify your senses by serving all. If you exercise control over your senses, you can achieve anything in life. If God is not pleased with you, you will be looked down upon by everyone in the world. You may think that you have given away ten bags of rice in charity and distributed clothes to five hundred people. Such accounts are to be submitted to the Income Tax Department and not to God. God is not interested in quantity, He sees the feeling behind your acts. So, whatever may be the act of charity you undertake, do it with the spirit of love and sacrifice.

What Is Your Dharma?

What is the teaching of the Bhagavadgita? Some people say that the path of action is the main teaching of the Bhagavadgita. Some others point to the path of wisdom as the main teaching of the Bhagavadgita. But none of these are correct. What is the first sloka in the Gita?

Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre Samaveta Yuyutsava, Mamaka Pandavaschiva
Kimakurvata Sanjaya? And the last sloka reads as follows: Yatra Yogeshwara
Krishno, Yatra Partho Dhanurdhara, Tatra Srivijayo Bhutir Dhruva
Neetirmathirmama.

When you join the last word of the last verse and the first word of the first verse, it becomes Mama dharma, meaning 'my dharma'. This is what the Gita teaches. What is your dharma? Your dharma is to lead the life of a human being. Remain yourself that you are a human being, not an animal. Having been born as a human being, you should cultivate human values. Do not behave like an animal. Adhere to truth and righteousness.

The entire creation is based on truth. Where there is truth, there you find plenty and prosperity. Human life is not meant to enjoy physical comforts and worldly pleasures, which are momentary. It is meant to set an ideal to the rest of the world. Having lived all these years, what is the ideal that you have set? What is it that you have achieved? Put a question to yourself. The answer is a big zero. You might have done a few good deeds in life, but they pale in comparison to the number of bad deeds you might have performed. That is not the quality of a human being. Cultivate good thoughts, speak good words and perform good deeds. That is true humanness. The names of ancient sages and seers are remembered even today because of the good deeds they performed. Do unto others what you would like others to do unto you. Do not indiscriminately follow the mind, for the mind is like a mad monkey. Follow the conscience, i.e., the principle of the atma. Your life will find fulfilment when you please God by offering Him the eight 'flowers' mentioned above. Love is the undercurrent of all this. So, lead a life suffused with love.

13. Ganapathi Confers Buddhi And Siddhi

Date: 01 September 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ganesh Chaturthi

If money is lost, one need not be worried about it,
For one can earn it again.
If a friend is lost, one can have another. If wife is lost, one can marry again.
If one loses one's piece of land,
One can purchase another.
All these can be regained;
But if body is lost, one cannot get it back.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

IN this physical, transient world, everything comes and goes. Man may acquire wealth by various means, but he may lose it in no time. He may make many friends in life, but they may leave him at one time or the other. While he can acquire all these again by some means or the other, there are no means by which he can get back his body once it is gone. Man should realize this truth and sanctify his life by cultivating human values while the body lasts.

Worldly life is temporary.
Wealth and youth are momentary.
So too are relatives and friends.
Only truth and righteousness are permanent.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

Ganapathi Is The Master Of Ganas And Sadgunas

Embodiments of Love!

Man should adhere to truth and righteousness, as these two never desert him under any circumstances; they follow him in all the births and in all the worlds. These two principles have been the mainstay of ancient culture of Bharat. The Vedas, Upanishads and the Puranas emphasise these principles: Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak the truth and practise righteousness). By ignoring these twin principles, man undergoes all sorts of sufferings and miseries and in the process forgets his very divine nature. It is impossible to experience divinity without cultivating human values. Having been born as a human being,

man's foremost duty is to cultivate human values. Otherwise, his life will become meaningless. What is the purpose of human life? Is it only to eat, sleep and indulge in pleasures like birds and beasts? No. Man is born to set an ideal to the rest of the world. Uddharetatmanatmanam (one should work for one's own emancipation), says the Gita. Man should redeem his life and also help his fellow-human-beings to work for their redemption. This is the spiritual knowledge that Ganapathi imparts. The name Ganapathi has many inner meanings. Ganapathi is the master of all the ganas (gods) and sadgunas (virtues). 'Ga' stands for buddhi (intellect) and 'Na' for vijnana (wisdom). So, Ganapathi is the master of buddhi and vijnana. He is the master of suraloka (heaven). Ganapathi has no master above him. Being the master of all, he teaches the qualities of leadership. Ganapathi is being worshipped and extolled since Vedic times. The Vedas and the Upanishads contain hymns in praise of Ganapathi. So, Ganapathi-worship is not of recent origin; it originated in the hoary past.

One Should Follow The Nivritti Marga

Divinity shines in every man and illumines the path he ought to follow. But man is ruining his life by not paying heed to the promptings of divinity within him. He is suffering from lack of peace as he is ignoring humanness in his mad pursuit of physical and ephemeral attainments. Acquisition of worldly

education and worldly powers is not the objective that man is supposed to achieve in life. All these attainments correspond to the Pravritti Marga (outward path). That which is related to Pravritti is transient. One should follow the Nivritti Marga (inward path), experience the joy therefrom and share it with others.

The body is made up of five elements
and is bound to perish one day or the
other, but the indweller has neither birth nor death.
He has no attachment and no bondage.
Truly speaking, the indweller is God Himself.
(Telugu Poem)

But man wastes his time as he considers the body as permanent and ignores the indweller. Time is the most precious gift of God, but man does not realize the value of time. He wastes three-fourths of his time in vain pursuits. How can such a person redeem his life? To sanctify the kaya (body) one has to make proper use of kala (time).

The Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas attach utmost value to humanness. Man studies all these scriptures. But does he understand the value of their teachings? Has he put them into practice? Mere study of sacred texts is futile unless their teachings are put into practice.

Peace And Bliss Are Within You

On this day of Vinayaka Chaturthi, it is the practice of the Bharatiyas to prepare delicacies and offer them to Vinayaka. These offerings are unique and special. Til (sesame) seeds, rice flour and jaggery are mixed, made into balls, cooked in steam and offered to Vinayaka. You should enquire into the purpose of making such an offering. These steam-cooked preparations are

good for the eyes and are beneficial to people suffering from Asthma and Eosinophilia. These offerings are meant to improve health and confer happiness on man. They are not to be treated as mere ritualistic practices. All that is related to God has sacred inner meaning. Man, unable to understand this truth, treats everything in the worldly perspective.

Man is endowed with pasu lakshanas (animal qualities) as well as Pasupathi lakshanas (divine qualities). Pasu lakshanas originate from the head. Worldly education and intelligence are related to the head. The scientists make use of their intelligence to study things, which are related to the world. This corresponds to the Pravritti Marga. Virtues like love, compassion and forbearance, which originate from the heart, lead man to Nivritti Marga. Today man wants to be intelligent, not virtuous. The Gita declares: Anityam Asukham Lokam Imam Prapya Bhajasva Mam (as the world is temporary and is full of misery, attain divinity by ceaseless contemplation on God). Give up pravritti and take to nivritti. Only then can you redeem yourself. Today we find elders teaching the children matters that are related to pravritti, not nivritti. Right from a child to a decrepit old man, everyone is interested in pravritti. But is there anyone who could experience peace in life by treading the path of pravritti? How can one attain peace? Where is peace? Keeping an atom bomb in hand, people give lectures on the need for peace. Such people may be able to reach the moon, but can never attain peace and happiness. There is no need to search for peace in the external world. All that you get in the external world is only restlessness. Peace is within you. It is your form. Try to manifest it from within.

All Are Sparks Of The Divine

Embodiments of Love!

There is no power greater than that of love. You can attain peace by cultivating love. Peace is your birthright. External peace is temporary. Man should try to attain inner peace, which alone is pure, unsullied, eternal and immortal. For this, it is necessary that man should make proper use of time. It is therefore his foremost duty to utilise time in a sacred manner. Today man

is wasting a lot of time in vain gossip and talking ill of others.

The atmic principle that exists in you also exists in people whom you consider as 'others'. Understand that all are sparks of the Divine. Isavasyam Idam Jagat (the whole world is the manifestation of God). Deho Devalaya Prokto Jeevo Deva Sanathana (body is the temple and the indweller is God). As all are divine, you should love all and hate none. Do not observe differences on the basis of your likes and dislikes. Treat everyone alike. Understand that divinity is one. Ekatma Sarvabhutantaratma (the same atma is the indweller of all beings). Once you understand this truth, you will lead your life with peace and happiness.

Cultivate Purity Of Heart

Today, devotees from Bangalore have brought 750 idols of Lord Ganapathi to worship, as this year happens to be the commencement of the 75th year of Swami's physical body. One may bring 750 idols or 7 crore idols, but Ganapathi is only one. No benefit accrues from offering worship to a number of Ganapathi idols without purity of heart. It is enough if you offer worship to one Ganapathi idol with the feeling of oneness. What is the purpose of doing pujas and vratas (austerities)? These rituals are prescribed to cultivate purity of heart. Chittasya Shuddhaye Karmah (the objective of actions is to purify the heart). All the nine paths of devotion, namely, sravanam (listening), kirtanam(singing), vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), padasevanam (serving the Lotus Feet), archanam (worship), vandanam (salutation), dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship), atmanivedanam (selfsurrender) are meant to confer purity of heart. Sweets like mysore pak, gulab jamoon, burfi, etc., vary in name and form, but the sugar present in them is the same. Likewise, the principle of love is the undercurrent of all the paths of devotion. So, spend your life with love and end your life with love. This is the true spiritual practice. You are not separate from God.

Divinity is the basis of human life. You can divinise your life by your karma (action). Offer salutations to karma before undertaking it. A driver, before taking his seat, offers salutations to the steering wheel. A dancer pays

obeisance to her anklets before she wears them and starts her dance performance. A devotee pays his respects to the Gita before reading it. The purpose of offering prayer to karma is to see that you perform only good actions which yield good results. This is the teaching of our ancient culture. You should offer karma and its fruit to God before undertaking it. An illiterate lorry driver pays obeisance to the work he does, but not a scientist who is endowed with knowledge. Ego is the main cause for this. Such a scientist may consider himself to be very wise, but actually he displays ignorance. Just as our shadow follows us, ignorance follows one who is bloated with ego. Human life is a combination of wisdom and ignorance. It is a big mistake to consider yourself one of wisdom. Ignorance follows you like a shadow in all that you do. In order to get rid of this ignorance, you should consider Sarvam Vishnumayam Jagat (whole world as the manifestation of Vishnu). There is nothing in this world which is not divine. On this basis, Thyagaraja sang, "O Rama, right from a Cheema (ant) to Brahma, You are present in everyone in the form of love." How can one ignore such an all-pervasive Divinity?

Consider Every Moment As Divine

Embodiments of Love!

Consider every day as a sacred day. You do not need to wait for Vinayaka Chaturthi or Navaratri to worship God. Consider every moment as divine and make proper use of it. People do bhajans without understanding their significance. Instead of focusing their attention on God, they are bothered too much about the tune and rhythm. No doubt, the tune and rhythm are also essential in bhajans. But once you fill your heart with divine love, the tune and rhythm will automatically be taken care of. If you concentrate too much on the tune and rhythm, you will not be able to think of God.

Just as the iron ball cast in fire becomes one with it, your mind should become one with God. Water cannot be separated from milk; likewise, your mind should get merged with God. You should not think that you are separate from God. One who realizes this principle of unity is a true human being. Do not limit worship of God to festival days alone. Each and every moment should be

spent in the contemplation of God. You may think, "If every moment is spent in the contemplation of God, then how is it possible to do our work?" Do not distinguish between your work and God's work. Your work is God's work as God and you are one. It is a mistake to think that all that you do in the prayer hall is God's work and outside it is your work. You should not entertain such feelings of separateness. Consider your heart as the altar of God and turn your vision inward. One who understands this truth and acts accordingly is a true human being.

Love Towards God Alone Is True Love

You think that you love your family and friends, but that cannot be called love in the true sense of the term. That is only attachment. Love towards God alone is true love. If you call yourself a devotee of Swami, act according to Swami's expectation. Do not count the number of bags of rice and the number of saris and dhotis that you have given away in charity to the poor. You may submit such accounts to the Income Tax Department, not to God. God wants quality, not quantity. He sees the feeling behind your acts of charity.

Even a small act of charity will assume immense significance in the eyes of God, if it is done with purity of heart. One teaspoonful of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk. God is pleased even if you offer a teaspoonful of milk with love. God always observes your feelings. God's valuation is always perfect; none can match Him in this respect.

Conduct Yourself In Accordance With God's Wish

Many students worship Vinayaka to secure high marks in the examination, to attain high qualifications and great reputation. But they do not aspire for good conduct and good behaviour. They should cultivate qualities, which are dear to God. Before undertaking any task, enquire whether it is pleasing to God. You are bound to attain success if God is pleased with your actions. Do not go by your own likes and dislikes. Conduct yourself in accordance with God's wish. Eschew selfishness and self-interest. Cultivate sacredness and

steadfastness. This is the teaching of Lord Ganapathi. Ganapathi confers on you buddhi (intellect) and siddhi (fulfilment). One can attain siddhi only when one has good Buddhi. You have to love God wholeheartedly and offer Him all that you do. Then even a simple task performed by you will become significant.

In this land of Bharat, Ganapathi is highly venerated. Ganapathi worship is prevalent in all parts of India. Lord Ganesh shines in every heart. Who is Bhagawan (God)? 'Bha' means effulgence. One whose effulgence spreads everywhere is Bhagawan. Having self-effulgent God in your heart, why should you search for Him outside? Look into your heart.

Embodiments of Love! Students, Boys and Girls!

Divinity can be attained only through pure and selfless love. You may chant hundred and eight names or thousand and eight names of God. But without selfless service, it is of no use. All these are sterile activities. Service alone is fruitful.

Penance, pilgrimage, learning of the Sastras or endless chanting,
None of these can help in crossing the
ocean of Samsara Without service to the pious.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

Attain Divinity Through Selfless Service

Service to your fellow-beings is equivalent to worship of God. If you find someone in distress, try to help him before attending to your work in the office or elsewhere.

A small example: A boy from Delhi had been listening to Swami's teachings

carefully. One day, he was going to the college to appear in an examination, which was to begin at 8 a.m. On his way, he saw a beggar who stumbled as he was very sick and could not walk. He helped him to get up, took him to hospital and had him admitted there. By that time it was 10 a.m. When he noticed the time, he found that it was too late for the examination. He thought, "Well this was a test of my conduct by Swami Himself." He had no regrets that he missed the examination. He was actually happy. When he came to Me, he told Me, "Swami, one paper is gone, I will not pass this year. But next year is always there. I have no regrets for I have passed in Your test." I told him, "Don't worry, you have passed in your test also." Next month, the result was out. He secured first class.

The boy did not bother about his examination because he had done a noble act of service to a poor man. He thought that he had failed in the worldly test, but he had passed in the test of God. There are many students like this who would put service before self. When you have this attitude in your life, you will never fail. Whatever you do, do it wholeheartedly. In this way, you can experience Divinity.

Forbearance Is The Highest Virtue

There are many people who consider worship as important. They disregard work in the process. This is a big mistake. Worship is important of course. But, what is worship? Offering of various kinds of flowers to the image of God is not worship in the real sense. You should offer the flower of your heart to God. That is why I told you earlier,

Offer to God the flowers of non-violence and sense-control, compassion on all creatures, forbearance and peace, penance, meditation and truth above all.

These are the flowers dear to the Lord.

(Telugu Poem)

The best flower of all is forbearance. The possession of this flower led Dharmaraja ultimately to liberation. In spite of the troubles and travails that he encountered, he was successful in the end. His wife was humiliated in public. Everyone looked down upon the Pandavas. But Dharmaraja was unaffected. Whatever is bound to happen will happen. One has to bear all that comes one's way. Thinking on these lines, Dharmaraja closed his eyes and meditated on Krishna. But Bhima was boiling with anger. He was furious,

"Brother, enough of this dharma of yours. Now, leave it to us and see what happens." Dharmaraja replied, "My dear Bhima, do not talk about your dharma and my dharma. Dharma is one. The course of action, which satisfies the conscience is the dharma that one should follow." Bhima said, "When our wife is being humiliated in public, how can we quietly close our eyes? I shall tear the Kauravas to pieces." But Dharmaraja pacified him. The Pandavas had such complete trust in Dharmaraja that ultimately they won.

Do Not Lose Your Peace Under Any Circumstances

When Aswatthama killed the sons of Droupadi, Arjuna was very much agitated. He caught hold of Aswatthama, tied his hands and feet, brought him before Droupadi and told her, "Here is the villain who killed your sons. I shall cut him to pieces. You can anoint your hair with his blood." Droupadi pacified Arjuna saying, you should not do any such thing. Why?

The one who is full of fear and has lost all courage,
or the one who is in deep sleep or dead drunk
or has surrendered to you, or the one who is a female,
O Arjuna, it is not proper to kill such a person.
(Telugu Poem)

Thus saying, she held the hand of Arjuna from killing Aswatthama. She fell at the feet of Aswatthama and said,

It is at the feet of your father, Dronacharya,

That my husbands have learnt all that they know.

Being the son of Dronacharya,

Was it proper for you to kill my children? How could you have the heart to kill

them,

Who were unarmed, young, quietly asleep, Were not having any grudge against you, And were not contemplating any harm to you?

(Telugu Poem)

Though she chided Aswatthama for his cruel act, she was calm all the while. Such an attitude of calmness often solves many difficult problems. You should not lose your peace even under the most trying circumstances. Under any provocation, you should not contemplate causing harm to anyone. Droupadi asked Arjuna, "If you kill Aswatthama, will not his mother suffer the same pangs of sorrow as I suffer now?" In spite of that Bhima was still bent upon killing Aswatthama. So high was his anger that he said:

This Droupadi is a stupid woman,
For she pleads for this wretch's freedom. She feels no anger against this
murderer
of her sons.
This assassin Aswatthama is not a

Brahmin.

Do not release him but kill him. If you do not do that, I myself will
hammer his head

With my powerful fist, for you to see!

(Telugu Poem)

But Droupadi prevailed upon Bhima and Arjuna with her pleadings and saved Aswatthama. Such was the nobility of character of the women of those days. Women are by nature forgiving. There were many women of fortitude, forbearance and purity in this country. It is because of such great women that India still holds its head high in spirituality.

Forbearance and forgiveness are the qualities which should be fostered by all individuals. You must be able to forgive even your enemies. This day is consecrated to Ganapathi teaches you forgiveness and love, so that you may realize divinity and enjoy bliss.

The educational process has not received proper attention from thoughtful persons. The institutions which ought to have been temples of Saraswathi (the goddess of learning) have become temples of Lakshmi (the goddess of wealth). The ideal held before the tender, innocent, unselfish children is a lucrative job rather than a life of peace, contentment and love.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

14. Eradicate Immorality To Attain Immortality

Date: 10 September 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Onam

O foolish mind, why do you go here and there in search of Lord Vishnu, when He is very much present in you?

Look within and worship Him with devotion and steadfastness just as Emperor Bali did.

(Telugu Poem)

EMPEROR Bali was Vishnupriya (one who loved Lord Vishnu). He was endowed with the virtues of charity and righteousness. But his reputation was slightly tainted because he was born in the clan of demons.

As Bali had immense love for Lord Vishnu and he was a repository of virtues, Lord Vishnu wanted to grant him liberation. He incarnated as Vamana and approached Bali when he was performing the Viswajit Yajna. Emperor Bali welcomed Him and enquired if he could do anything for Him. Vamana asked him for just three footsteps of land. Bali laughed at this simple request of Vamana and said He could ask for much more than mere three footsteps of land. But Vamana said that He did not want anything else. As desired by Vamana, Bali not only gave what he was asked to give, but in the process offered himself also to the Lord. In this world, there are many people who would give away wealth and other materialistic acquisitions in charity. But true charity lies in offering oneself to the Lord.

Emperor Sibi was also one of charity like Emperor Bali. Once an eagle was in hot pursuit of a small bird, which sought refuge from Sibi. The eagle argued with Sibi that the bird was its rightful prey and food. So, he should give it at once. But Sibi Said that he would never forsake one who had sought his refuge. He offered his own flesh to the eagle in order to protect the bird.

Emperor Bali Lived Up To His Name

The word Bali means sacrifice and Emperor Bali lived up to his name. Lord Rama, in order to uphold the promise of His father, renounced the kingdom and spent fourteen years in exile in the forest. Likewise, Gangeya (Bhishma) remained a Brahmachari (celibate) throughout his life for the sake of his father's happiness. That is why their names are imprinted on the hearts of people even today. Bhishma means one who remains steadfast in his vow. Bharat is the land of many such noble souls and emperors, who led a life of sacrifice.

Kerala occupies a place of prominence in this sacred land of Bharat, which is thyaga bhumi (land of sacrifice), yoga Bhumi (land of spirituality) and karma bhumi (land of action). The state of Kerala owes its reputation not only to Emperor Bali but also to the advent of Lord Vamana. It is the tradition of Kerala not to turn away anybody empty-handed. In fact, every Bharatiya is endowed with this spirit of sacrifice. The people of Kerala are not affected by the impact of Kali Age as they continue to follow the ideals set by Bali and lead their lives happily. They are righteous, devoted and god-minded. I wish that they live in harmony like members of one family. Kerala is, in fact, the birthplace of sacrifice. But today people are trying to convert this thyaga bhumi into bhoga bhumi.

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat.
Of all the sacred virtues, adherence to truth is true penance.
The nectarous feeling in this country is the feeling towards one's mother.
Character is valued far more superior to the very life itself.
People have forgotten the basic principles
of the culture of Bharat
and are following and adopting Western culture today.
Bharatiyas are not aware of the greatness
of their cultural heritage

just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength.
(Telugu Poem)

Human Beings Should Imbibe Human Values

The sacred land of Bharat, which was once highly reputed for men of sacrifice, is witnessing a sharp decline in moral values day after day. There is no unity whatsoever. Hatred is spreading like wild fire among men. Man is expected to cultivate human values like compassion, forbearance, love, truth, tolerance, etc. Human life will lose its significance if man loses human values. People may belong to different political parties, but they should have love for each other. But they are devaluing love due to their association with political parties. Parties are, in fact, parting people from each other and creating differences among them. Man is giving up the principle of love for the sake of petty worldly gains. Love is the birthright of man. Love all and be loved by all. Give up hatred, brush aside all differences and lead a life suffused with love. Today there is a decline in human values. Evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, pomp and show are on the rise. It is a matter of great shame to call oneself a human being without giving up these wicked qualities. If you call yourself a human being, show at least one human quality.

A Leader Should Always Speak Sweetly And Lovingly

Man has degenerated so much that he does not have love even for his own children. He is always filled with tension and temper. How can such a person work for the welfare of the nation?

Some people call themselves desha nayakas (leaders of the nation), but in practice they are desha nashakas (destroyers of the nation). One who works for the progress of the nation is a nayaka (true leader). One who calls himself a leader should always speak sweetly and lovingly. He should not indulge in criticism. Criticism is nothing but the reflection, reaction and resound of one's

wicked qualities. The bad qualities that one sees in others are nothing but the reflection of one's own inner feelings. No one has the right to find fault in others. He is the worst sinner who indulges in fault-finding. The tongue is given to make others happy and to sing the glories of the Lord. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly. The hands are given not to hurt others, but to earn one's livelihood and perform acts of charity. The ears have been given not to listen to vain gossip, but to listen to the sacred stories of the Lord. In this manner, man should put each of his limbs to proper use and sanctify his life. Today science has advanced, but senses have become polluted. What is the use of acquiring education, which does not confer sensecontrol?

A foolish person boasts of high education and intelligence,
Yet does not know himself.
What is the use of all the education he
has acquired,
If man cannot give up his evil qualities? All the worldly education will only
lead him to vain argumentation, not total
wisdom.
It cannot lead him to immortality.
So, man should acquire that knowledge
which will make him immortal.
(Telugu Poem)

Abandon Everything That Is Bad

Love alone can confer immortality. Love is deathless. Love is changeless. All things in the world change or perish, love alone is immortal. How is one to achieve this state of immortality? Removal of immorality is the only way to immortality. You have to abandon bad thoughts, bad company, bad habits and everything that is bad. We find hatred all over the world these days.

Deha (body) is being incinerated with dwesha (hatred). No separate cremation is required for the body; this blazing hatred itself will reduce it to ashes. Man brings about his own end by the fire of hatred.

Embodiments of Love!

Born as human beings, you should practise human values to retain your claim on humanness. All the powers that are manifest in the world are latent in man. All human virtues have been kept in high esteem in Bharat since ancient times.

This motherland of ours gave to the world noble souls renowned in all the continents.

It is the land which ousted the foreign rulers and achieved freedom.

This is the sacred land which achieved
Great heights in music, literature and science.

This divine land is the nursery of painting,
Sculpture and other fine arts.

O devotees, it is your bounden duty to
keep

This Bharatiya tradition alive and
flourishing.

(Telugu Poem)

Do Not Pay Heed To Scandal-Mongers

This glorious tradition is slowly declining these days. It is enough if man retains his humanness. But sadly man seems to have lost his basic qualities of humanness. He has even lost the right to call himself a human being. You must have the courage of conviction to proclaim that you are a human being. You must also be able to proclaim the greatness of your motherland and act

in such a way as to preserve its glory and reputation. You should declare with pride, "This is my motherland, this is my mother tongue!" It is sad and deplorable that the Bharatiyas have lost respect and love for their mother tongue, motherland and culture. Men have reduced themselves to mere caricatures of humans. From 'Shiva (embodiment of auspiciousness),

man has become shava (corpse). A person stuffed with hatred, jealousy, pride, ostentatiousness is no better than a corpse. Do not have anything to do with such characters. Those who bring a bad name to their country are worse than pests and worms. Do not pay heed to such scandal-mongers.

Recognise Your Divinity

Embodiments of Love!

Yesterday you saw the drama on Bhasmasura. He wanted that everything he touched should be reduced to ashes. What happened finally? He reduced himself to a heap of ashes. All evil qualities, anger, hatred, etc., are destructive. People are heroes on the platform but zeros in life. You think that you are criticizing somebody else, but in fact, it is your own self that you are abusing. Criticising others is a bad habit. One who abuses others is the worst sinner. One who sees the virtues of others is himself virtuous. Sarva Jeeva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati (salutations to all beings reach God). Criticising anyone is criticising God Himself. Honouring anyone is honouring God.

Adherence to righteousness and respect for others are as important as the care of the body and love for your country. Man today is destroying his life by indulging in selfishness and greed. He has become so blind that he is unable to recognise the consequences of his actions. He neither knows his origin nor his goal. It is not the right attitude. It is not wisdom. It is ignorance.

Lord Krishna declared, Deho Devalaya Prokto Jeevo Deva Sanathana (body is the temple and the indweller is God Himself). Therefore, treat every human body as a temple and the indweller as God. Every individual is an aspect of

divinity. Therefore, respect all individuals. Only then will your life acquire meaning and others will also respect you. Modern man does not have this perspective of life. He lacks broadmindedness. He respects none, but expects everybody to respect him. How is it possible? As is your company, so you become. That is why I say, tell Me your company, I shall tell you what you are.

God, who is pure, unsullied, eternal, immortal and omnipotent is very much present in you, beside you, above you, below you, all around you. You do not need to search for God outside because you are God yourself. If you develop this outlook, you can realize God. So long as you bind yourself with human limitations, you continue to be man. Give up your body attachment and recognise the divinity in you. Then you become liberated. God in the form of Vamana came to Emperor Bali to teach him this reality. He said, "Bali, you are no ordinary person. I am in you always wherever you are. Do not identify yourself with your body." The human body is made up of mere refuse devoid of any fragrance. Are you merely this body? No. Body is merely a leather puppet. Inside the body, there is the eternal being.

The divine play between the Atma and Paramatma continues in the body. They are together and separate at the same time. God is the string-puller of this entire puppet play. (Telugu Poem)

Why, wherefrom and what for have you come in this world? You have come from God, for God and to attain God. Be aware that God is with you always. If this kind of unity with God is attained, all your actions become pure.

Students Should Never Enter Into Politics

Students!

You have heard the speech given by a student from Srisailam Vidyapeeth. All the students of Srisailam Vidyapeeth are very pure and sacred. In fact, all students, everywhere have pure heart. It is the elders who spoil the innate goodness of the students. No matter what field you enter into, always have an attitude of service. Students should serve society. Serve everybody. Keep yourself pure. Do any work, but never enter into politics. Politics pollutes the mind. Politics has become synonymous with evil. If you want to ruin yourself, get into politics. If you want to be an ideal person and want to receive God's grace, then cultivate all good qualities. In olden times, there were many ideal political leaders. They practised what they preached. That is why, quite a few students were drawn into politics. Even little urchins would collect in crowds to see leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan or Subhash Chandra Bose. They used to decorate their houses with pictures of such leaders. What do you see today? You get into any student's room; you see nothing but pictures of film stars. You do not see pictures of ideal men today and do not listen to sacred words. Because people in those days were emulating ideal persons, their actions were also pure.

The Magnet Of Bhagawan's Love

Embodiments of Love!

You should also have a pure heart. It is the purity of your heart that attracts everybody like a magnet. The whole world, in fact, is a magnet. Every object howsoever small, has this magnetic power. But in man this magnet is further magnified. This is the magnet of love. Love is God, live in love. This magnet of love must be pure. Everybody will then be attracted to you. A small example: All of you are here. Did I send you any invitation card? Did I send word to you? The magnet of My love has drawn all of you here. Bhagawan's greatest property is love - boundless love. Bhagawan is not interested in any other property. There is no wealth greater than love anywhere. Therefore, you too should enhance this property of love in you. Speak with sweetness and concern with everyone. Such pleasing speech has become scarce. We hear harsh words all around. Speak softly and sweetly. Then all will become your friends.

Students!

Making friendship is nothing great in itself. You lose friends as easily as you make them. There is no point in having such friendship. Have friendship with God for which you should be prepared to sacrifice everything, even your body and life. Cultivate love.

Virtues are the most effective means of purifying the inner consciousness of man at all levels. For, they prompt the person to discover what to do and how to do. Only those who have earned good destiny can claim their excellence in discrimination. And, adherence to this determination is the raft that can take man across the ocean of flux and fear, the Bhava Sagara. The man of virtues has a place in the region of the liberated. Whatever the residual activity a person has perforce to engage himself in, the impact of that activity will not impinge on him, provided he is a man of virtues. He can merge in Brahman, the embodiment of Supreme Bliss.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

15. Education Should Foster Values

Date: 25 September 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: International Conference on Strengthening Value Education

Embodiments of Love!
Modern education fosters
only intelligence, not virtues.
Of what avail is education
if it does not inculcate virtues in man?
(Telugu Poem)

SINCE ancient times, the Bharatiyas have been using the word 'Prapancha' while referring to this world consisting of mobile and immobile objects. It is constituted by the five elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and ether.

The Bharatiyas have been worshipping these five elements as the manifestations of divinity. They called earth as Bhudevi (goddess Earth), water as Gangadevi (goddess of Ganga), fire as Agnideva (fire god), wind as Vayudeva (wind god) and Akasha (ether) as Sabda Brahman (primordial sound). The five elements relate to five senses of perceptions in man and their attributes are sight, taste, touch, smell and hearing. The true meaning of the worship of the elements is that man should not only make proper use of these elements, but should also sanctify his senses of sight, taste, touch, smell and hearing. But neither the students are making any effort to understand the divine nature of these five elements nor are the teachers making them aware of this truth. The students are interested in acquiring merely bookish knowledge and not in understanding the sanctity of these elements. True education is that which confers virtues, good intellect, devotion, duty and discipline. The teachers are also interested in imparting only bookish knowl-edge to the students and not the spiritual aspect of education.

Convert Your Knowledge Into Skill

Today, all the five elements are polluted and, consequently, man is mired in insecurity. Mere acquisition of degrees should not be the objective of students. They should make proper use of the five elements. This is the true value-oriented education the world needs today. Values are for education, education is for life, life is for love, love is for man, man is for spirituality, spirituality is for the world and the world is for peace. So, one should travel from values to peace. Today the students are acquiring education with selfishness and self-interest in mind. They are craving for money. Money comes and goes but morality comes and grows. The students should strive hard to cultivate morality. They should convert their knowledge into skill and bring about balance in their lives. But modern students are actually killing their knowledge, i.e., they are putting it to misuse. Consequently, they have completely lost their mental power and their inner reality is also eclipsed.

Modern education cannot be called education in its true sense. What is the use of intelligence if one lacks power of discrimination? And of what avail is knowledge if it is not converted into skill? True education is that which develops in you love for your fellow-beings and motivates you to serve the community. Modern system of education has undergone many changes but no change has brought about any worthwhile results. First of all, the mind of man should be transformed. Then the entire world will be transformed because the mind forms the basis of the entire world *Mano Moolam Idam Jagat*.

Maintain Ecological Balance

Today the students do not know how to convert their knowledge into skill. Where does the mistake lie? Does it lie with the parents or the teachers or the leaders? It is the mistake of everybody. The students are pure and tenderhearted. It is the responsibility of the parents to teach them the importance of human values like truth, righteousness and love. But the parents are not making any effort to teach the children to speak the truth. In

fact, some parents misguide their children in this regard. For example, if the father does not want to attend a particular telephone call, he tells his son to utter a lie, saying his father is not available. In this manner, children are taught to speak untruth. As a result, they lead a life of untruth after they grow up. Under any circumstances, one should not utter a lie. The students should learn to practise this maxim: Help ever, Hurt never. Those who adhere to this dictum will certainly progress in life.

Today boys and girls acquire education with an eye on the external world. They do not realize that all that is seen in the external world is transient. One can develop inner vision in life only when one makes proper use of one's knowledge. Humanness has declined because man lacks balance in life. If human values are to be fostered, man should convert his knowledge into skill and maintain proper balance in life. Today the world is losing its ecological balance, as man, out of utter selfishness, is robbing the mother Earth of her resources like coal, petroleum, iron, etc. As a result, we find earthquakes, floods and such other devastating natural calamities. Human life will find fulfilment only when ecological balance is maintained.

Balance in human life and balance in nature, both are equally important. Today even marine life is in danger due to so-called advancement in science. Advancement in science is welcome but it should not lead to ecological imbalance. The people and the world at large should be benefited from science. But today everyone is interested in selfish gains. No one seems to care for society.

The Foremost Duty Of The Students

The food that we eat, the water that we drink, the air that we breathe are all polluted. In fact, all five elements which are of utmost importance for man, are polluted. It is the foremost duty of the students to cleanse the world of pollution. Keep your body and mind clean. Cleanliness is godliness. Purify your actions and feelings. Speak sweetly and softly to everybody. The culture of Bharat teaches Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak the truth and adhere to righteousness). Love everybody because God is present in all. The

Vedas teach, Easwara Sarva Bhutanam (God dwells in all beings). God has another name Viswa. It means that the entire universe is His form.

One does not find unity among students as they lack the virtue of love. You should consider love as your very life. I often tell My students "when the electric current of truth flows through the wire of righteousness and enters the bulb of peace, you get the light of love. In order to cultivate love, you should adhere to the values of Sathya and dharma. Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyam apriyam (speak the truth, speak it in a pleasant way and do not speak the truth that is unpleasant). Sathyam Bruyath is the moral value, Priyam Bruyath is the social value and Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam is the spiritual value. But modern man is not interested in spirituality.

Who Is A True Human Being?

Today the rich and the educated are neglecting spirituality. They consider money as the be-all and end-all of life. Money can never give peace and bliss. Devotion is most essential. The country is facing hardships because people lack devotion to God. They do not think of God who is manifest in the form of five elements. We know water is essential for life. But values like truth and righteousness are as essential for man as water. Who is a human being? Is he merely the body? No. One with purity, love and devotion alone is a true human being. Today people are in mad pursuit of money. No doubt, money is essential but it should be within limits. Once you have love for God, money will follow you of its own accord. People are ready to sacrifice even their lives for the sake of money but do not spend even a minute in the contemplation of God. They do not undertake even a single sacred activity during the day in the 24 hours given to them by God. Each one has to enquire whether he is making proper use of time. People waste a lot of time in vain gossip and in watching television, etc. What is it that you get out of these activities? You just waste time. Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted.

One may be wealthy but wealth is useless if one lacks character. After death, are you able to carry your bank balance with you? No. It will remain in the

bank only. You cannot carry even a fistful of sand with you. So, character is most essential, not money. True education is that which removes the pollution of the mind and develops character. It is not enough if the students get good marks; they should take care that they do not get bad remarks. Only then will their marks have value.

The Essence Of True Education

Embodiments of Love!

Everyone should foster divine qualities, be he a student or an elder. Without these virtues, life is meaningless. For all your needs, do not depend on others, depend on God. In fact, you are not human, you are God as God is present in all beings. You will remain a human being so long as you think so. Have the firm conviction that you are God. Follow dharma and share your love with all. This is the essence of true education.

Can you call all those who know
how to read and write educated?
Can one be called educated
merely by acquiring degrees?
Can you call it education
which does not confer virtues?
If education is just for a living, Don't we find birds and
beasts carrying on their lives?"
(Telugu Poem)

The goal of education is not merely reading and writing, which constitute worldly education. It is to attain purity and divinity. Worldly education is transient. Knowledge of the Self alone is eternal. It can be acquired only through devotion and love for God. Man is born to set an ideal to the rest of

the world, not to amass wealth. Money makes many wrongs. Make your mind sacred. Where are all those kings of yore who amassed riches and conquered kingdoms? What is the use of such a life? One should lead a life that makes one immortal.

A foolish person boasts of high education and intelligence,
Yet does not know himself.
What is the use of all the education he has
acquired,
If man cannot give up his evil qualities? All the worldly education will lead
him
only to vain argumentation, not total
wisdom.
It cannot lead him to immortality.
So, man should acquire that knowledge
which will make him immortal.
(Telugu Poem)

That is true education. It will protect you wherever you are. This education will earn you the friendship of all, even if you do not have money and you are in a foreign land.

Cultivate Human Values Through Self Effort

Never give up human values under any circumstances. Only then can you set an ideal to the world. Human values cannot be acquired from textbooks nor can the teachers bestow them on you. They are with you right from your birth. You have to cultivate them through self-effort. Lead a truthful life. The whole creation has emerged from truth, is sustained in truth and ultimately merges into truth. Is there any place where truth does not exist? In order to lead a peaceful life, one should always adhere to truth and righteousness. No

doubt, the path of dharma is beset with difficulties. In the beginning, you may have to face many problems, but you should take them in your stride and proceed on the path of truth. Purity, patience and perseverance are very essential for man. But man is becoming a patient as he lacks patience. Each one has to question himself or herself whether he or she has these virtues. It is not enough if you proclaim that you are pure; let others say it.

True Education Fosters Purity And Unity

Embodiments of Love!

Do not have excessive desires. It is said, "Less luggage more comfort make travel a pleasure." Your desires are the luggage in the journey of your life. You will have peace of mind only when you reduce your desires. Swami is the best ideal in this regard. I don't have any desires; I don't want anything. As you are aware, we have a very big hospital at Puttaparthi and there are many educational institutions. They are functioning smoothly because they have been started with love and noble intentions.

My only desire is that all people should live like ideal human beings. After the bhajans, you chant the prayer Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu (may the entire world be happy!). It is not enough if some are happy and some are not. All should be happy. That is possible only when human values are practised. There are many who give lectures on human values. He alone is a true human being who puts them into practice. Elders should sow the seeds of human values in the tender hearts of the children. They will grow into gigantic trees and give shelter to many in future. It is said, "Start early, drive slowly, reach safely." Human values should be taught to the children right from their early years. So, some schools have to be started for this purpose. If you start fostering values from Primary School level, the children then will grow to become ideal leaders of the nation. Parents and teachers should strive hard to inculcate ideals in children. If the parents at home, teachers in school and companions in the neighbourhood foster values in children, then there is nothing greater than this.

Love Is Most Essential For Mankind

It is said, "Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are." As is your company, so shall you become. So, run away from bad company; join good company. Undertake good activities day in and day out. Even the wicked will get transformed on seeing your good conduct.

Love is most essential for mankind. To whichever country or race you belong, however rich or poor you are, you must adhere to truth and righteousness. Use your tongue to speak the truth only. With the hands given by God perform acts of charity. With the ears capable of hearing, hear only pure words. This is the purity of the limbs of man. In the same way, you must maintain the purity of the five elements.

It is solely for this purpose that Jumsai has done a lot of work. This task of fostering human values cannot be accomplished by a single person. All have to join together. Will a single thread make cloth? When threads are interwoven, cloth is produced. All worthwhile causes can be achieved only by the cooperation of several people. This handkerchief is strong only because many threads have been interwoven closely. If you remove the threads one by one, they will break easily. So, unity is essential for our movement to advance. Jumsai has great hopes for the growth of this movement. In the coming three or four days many new ideas will emerge in the conference. The faltering of a few must be compensated by others and all must move forward together. Unity, goodness and good action must be practised. If these are practised well, you can grow faster and increase in number.

Human Values Can Not Be Acquired From Books

It is not enough if you start an institution. The students must be brought up in the right way. Speak gently. Never show anger towards the children. You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly. Talk to the children softly and sweetly. Interaction between the teachers should also be pleasant. Then the children will be encouraged by their example.

Every little thing should be taught to the children to the best of your ability. Only then the children will learn with enthusiasm. Mathematics, Physics or Chemistry can be learnt from books or by experiments in the laboratory. But human values cannot be learnt that way. It is not something that can be acquired from books. It cannot be taught by a teacher by mere oral instruction. It is like training in physical exercise. Drill can be taught only by demonstration. The drill master demonstrates the actions and helps the learners to follow the steps. The children imitate their elders.

Therefore, you should teach the children the values of Sathya, dharma, Santhi and Prema by first practising the values yourself. Then the children will progress in the right direction. The whole country will grow. Not only this country, all countries of the world will be transformed. There are very few who teach these things today. Fewer still try to prove them. Those who practise are rare. That is why the world is in such a bad state now.

Swami Wants Quality And Not Quantity

Embodiments of Love!

Many of you may be wealthy. Many of you are scholars. Your greatness will not be judged merely by your possessions. To what extent you are spending your wealth in a good way, to what extent you are using your learning to good purpose, to what extent you are using your intellect for the good of the community, that is what counts with Bhagawan. Swami wants quality and not quantity. One teaspoonful of cow's milk is useful. Of what use are barrels of donkey's milk? What you have not put into practice is of no use. Practise and demonstrate. Then you become truly rich, a true scholar. Wealth, scholarship, intelligence - all become worthwhile only when used in the right way.

Money may come and money may go. Things like money are mere passing clouds. But love comes and grows. You have to realize this in all sincerity and earnestness. Then you become truly human. If you have love, all will be drawn closer to you. If you are devoid of love, none will come near you. A small example. Bhagawan is the embodiment of Love. That is why there is

such a large gathering here. No invitations have been sent to you. My Love has attracted all of you here. So, you should also expand your love. With love you can achieve anything.

You have three or four days more in this conference. Put together your queries and doubts. Analyse them and arrive at appropriate solutions. You have to make this conference an ideal for other such gatherings. Many people go to seminars and conferences. Hardly any understanding results. This is not such a conference. The outcome of the conference should appeal to your feelings and intellect. That is a proper conference. All should be united. Develop love and share love. Speak the truth. Practise righteous conduct. Lead a sacred life. That is true living. Then your life will become meaningful.

Internalise Human Values And Redeem Your Life

Embodiments of Love!

Many of you have come from far off places, spending a lot of money. After making so much effort and spending so much money, you must take back with you what will really sanctify your life. All of you have assembled here. Share your love with others and receive their love in return. Understand the meaning of Sathya, dharma, Santhi and Prema. Fully internalize these values. Truth does not mean merely to repeat faithfully what you have seen. Truth is eternal; it does not change in all the three periods of time (past, present and future). You must speak the truth and practise righteousness. What is dharma? Dharayati Iti Dharmah (that which sustains you is dharma). Dharma is the true nature of man. Fire is that which burns. If it does not burn, it is mere coal. Only when dharma is well-established in a person, his humanness manifests. The principle of love must shine prominently in you.

In the coming few days, if you have any doubt, ask without hesitation. Bhagawan is ready to clear all your doubts. Make full use of Bhagawan's proximity. Ask and be satisfied. You are Mine and I am yours. I and you are one. We are not different from each other. Many say 'thank You,' 'thank You' to Bhagawan. It is a meaningless cliché. You thank only the third person.

Bhagawan is not a third person. He is the second person. You do not thank the second person. If your mother serves you good food, do you say 'thank you' to her? No, no, it is her duty. To love you all is the duty of Bhagawan. Don't ever say 'thank You' to Bhagawan. It is your right to ask. It is your right and Bhagawan's responsibility. When right and responsibility are balanced, bliss results.

When the Lord does not approach the devotee, the fault lies in the heart of the devotee; it is not pure enough. Purify the heart by being good and kind to all. Do not attempt to find fault with others. Look upon all with love, with respect, with faith in their sincerity. I would ask you to treat your servants kindly. Do not entertain hatred or contempt in your heart; show your resentment, if you must, through words, not action.

Repent for the errors that you commit and decide never to repeat them; pray for strength to carry out your resolution.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

The ancient sages proclaimed two eternal verities: "Sathyam Vada; Dharmam Chara" (Speak the Truth; Adhere to Righteousness). These were regarded as the two eyes of man. Today man has lost these eyes and is helpless.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

16. Educare Is Human Values

Date: 26 September 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam

True education is that which fosters pure feelings.
To have virtues is the true meaning of learning.
Only when man cultivates the feeling of love, can there be equality.
Good conduct is the hallmark of a true human being.
(Telugu Poem)

JHUM Sai made a mention of education and human values. You have to understand the true meaning of these two words, education and human values. Education has two aspects: The first is related to external and worldly education, which is nothing but acquiring bookish knowledge. In the modern world, we find many, well-versed and highly qualified in this aspect. The second aspect known as 'Educare,' is related to human values. The word 'Educare' means to bring out that which is within. Human values, namely, Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa (Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence) are hidden in every human being. One cannot acquire them from outside; they have to be elicited from within. But as man has forgotten his innate human values, he is unable to manifest them. 'Educare' means to bring out human values. 'To bring out' means to translate them into action.

Our Ancient Sages Had The Vision Of Truth

The Vedas call the life principle in man as 'Sathyam' (Truth). Without this power of Truth, man cannot exist. Our ancients could have the vision of Truth by proper investigation and experimentation. Truth is the direct manifestation of God for every human being. Our ancient sages and seers understood this Truth, had the vision of Truth and realized that it is present uniformly in every

being. Truth is one and the same in all and That is God.

Man is endowed with Pancha Pranas (five lifebreaths), namely, prana, apana, vyana, udana and samana. These are the divine powers latent in man.

The human values, namely, Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa are nothing but the manifestations of these five life breaths. But man is wasting his human birth, as he is unable to recognise these subtle principles. When truth is put into practice, it becomes righteousness. Truth is expressed in words, while righteousness is expressed in action. On this basis, the Vedas taught, Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara (speak Truth, practise righteousness). Hence righteousness is based on truth. Without truth, there is no righteousness. That is why the Vedas say, Sathyannasthi Paro Dharmaha (there is no dharma higher than adherence to Truth). Without the foundation of truth, the mansion of righteousness cannot be built. Sathyacharana (practice of truth) is true dharma. This dharma is uniform for all human beings. Peace is the reflection of dharma. Man prays for peace and performs various spiritual practices aspiring for peace. But so long as he has desires, he can never attain peace, though he may undertake sacred rituals like yagnas and yagas. Mind is the basis for desires. So, one has to control the mind in order to attain peace. When the mind is controlled, it remains silent. Such a state of thoughtlessness is true peace.

The Nine Qualities Of Love

The fourth human value is love. It has

originated from the principle of atma. Love is the manifestation of Truth. It is pure, steady, effulgent, attributeless, formless, ancient, eternal, immortal and nectarous. These are the nine qualities of Love. Love hates none, unites all. Ekatma Darshanam Prema (experience of non-dualism is love). Ahimsa shines as the undercurrent of the remaining four values, namely, truth, righteousness, love and peace. That which leads to violence cannot be truth, righteousness, love or peace. These five values are verily the five life-breaths of man. One who considers human values as his lifebreaths alone is a true

human being. These five values are the fundamental powers of human life. Forgetting these fundamental powers, man relies more on worldly power. Our ancients realized that these five values were meant for the peace and prosperity of the world. Without understanding the significance of these values, one cannot understand humanness at all.

In Treta Yuga, Lord Rama incarnated in order to foster truth and righteousness. He spent 14 years in exile to uphold the promise given to his father. He dedicated His life for the establishment of dharma. In those days, there were only a few wicked people. Rama annihilated them to uphold truth and righteousness. In the Dwapara Yuga, Lord Krishna incarnated to foster peace and love. He protected all those who sought refuge in Him and developed love in them.

Thus, the Rama Avatar fostered Sathya and dharma and the Krishna Avatar fostered Santhi and Prema. But in this Age of Kali, God has given necessary strength to every human being to foster all five values. It is the command of God that man should uphold the human values and safeguard the world. This is the inner significance of propagating the human values. Man need not wait for God to foster these values. He is endowed with the strength to do the same. These five values are your properties. It is your responsibility to protect them. Do not expect others to safeguard your property.

Manifestation Of Latent Human Values Is 'Educare'

In those days, God incarnated and destroyed demons, as there were only a few of them. But today, we find demonic nature in everyone. One has to cultivate purity to subdue demonic qualities. But purity cannot be attained without unity. Unity leads to purity, which in turn leads to divinity. But today, there is no unity, no purity, no divinity. We find only enmity and community, which are nothing but man's own creation. Once you install divinity in your heart, there will be no place for enmity because heart is a single chair, not a musical chair or a double sofa. In order to install divinity in the heart, you have to practise human values. Manifestation of latent human values is known as 'Educare.' If a question is put, what is education?

People say, it is the acquisition of knowledge. But it is not merely acquisition of knowledge; it must be in action. What is the end of education? Character is the end of education. What is the essence of education? Concentration is the essence of education. What is the aim of education? The aim of education is not only cultivating human qualities, but attaining divinity. Education is meant for life, not for a living. If education is meant for a living, don't we find birds and beasts, having no education whatsoever, doing the same? So, education should be for life. First of all, one should understand this truth.

'Educare' Confers Immortality

The word 'Educare' has a sacred inner meaning. That which is manifested by 'Educare' cannot be seen by the eyes, cannot be heard by the ears and cannot be felt by the mind. But all that education confers can be seen, heard and felt. Education fosters desires and leads to rebirth, whereas 'Educare' confers immortality. There will be no rebirth. The innate divine qualities like truth, righteousness peace, patience, forbearance and love cannot be seen by the naked eye and they lead to no birth. Modern education is giving rise to desires, which form the basis for rebirth. You need to develop detachment to control desires. Attachment leads to bondage and restlessness. The innate values alone can control the desires. Inner voice leads to detachment. You have to enquire into the difference between attachment and detachment. To attain detachment, you must obtain release from worldly bondage. Here is a small example. When you insert the key into the lock and turn it to the right, the lock opens; you turn it to left, it gets locked. The heart is the lock, the mind is the key. You get attachment, when your mind is turned towards the world. When it is turned towards God, you attain liberation. It is the same lock and the same key that are responsible for bondage and liberation. The mere change in the direction causes a change in the consequence, namely, bondage or liberation. Liberation is not some specific location - an air-conditioned paradise. It is a state of supreme peace. Where do you get the supreme peace? It is to be obtained in the realm of a pure heart. It is steady, sacred and utterly selfless. To enjoy supreme peace, you should achieve a supreme state. Unity, purity and Divinity, when these three principles are unified, it takes you to supreme state. Take, for instance, Rama and

Lakshmana. You know what kind of brothers they were? Lakshmana was totally loyal and followed the commands of his elder brother and thereby attained the supreme state. What is the condition of the Ramas and Lakshmanas today? Instead of attaining supreme state through unity, they go to Supreme Court to settle property disputes. Desires take you to Supreme Court. When there are no desires,

no quarrels, there will be no Supreme Court. You will be in the constant state of supreme peace.

Conscience, Conscious And Consciousness

What is our need today? It is not merely education. Education is mere bookish knowledge. There are four kinds of knowledge. The first is bookish knowledge, i.e., superficial knowledge. The second is general knowledge, the third is discriminatory knowledge, the fourth is practical knowledge. You have to arrive at the level of practical knowledge. But frequently, people fall into error even in discriminatory knowledge. There is individual discrimination and fundamental discrimination. Individual discrimination is based on selfish gains. It is not right. Fundamental discrimination is based on the well-being of all people. The marks that students get in the examination are not true marks. True marks arise from the heart. Your conscience should assert repeatedly and firmly what you are doing is right.

There are three terms to be discussed here. "Conscience" is one, the other is "conscious" and third is "consciousness." (1) This consciousness is the all-encompassing Divinity. From this all-pervasive consciousness, conscience enters the body.

(2) The atmic principle in your body is conscience.

(3) Conscious is the awareness related to the body and the senses.

Children play with balloons. These balloons keep blowing to larger and larger size until they burst and the air inside merges with the air outside. So long as

the air is in the balloon, it is conscience. When it exceeds the limit of the wall of the balloon and merges with the air outside, it becomes consciousness. These days people are merely in the body conscious state. The body is like a balloon, a water bubble. The mind is a mad monkey. Don't follow the body or the mind. Follow the dictates of the conscience. Today people are attached more to the body and less to the atmic principle. Absence of self-confidence is the main cause for all types of weakness. People depend on their wealth, possessions and power, but do not depend on the Self.

Self-realisation Through Self-confidence

Embodiments of Love!

Self-confidence is very essential. This is the foundation on which you must raise the walls of self-sacrifice. This mansion determines your life, i.e., self-realisation. You have to therefore lay, first of all, the foundation of self-confidence and build the mansion of self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice. Then you ultimately attain self-realisation. For self-realisation, self-confidence is most important. But people do not possess such steady self-confidence. What is the reason? Their mind is lost in worldly desires, dirty desires and useless desires. How long can the worldly things last? They come and go like passing clouds. Today students are trained in such education which fosters desires. Along with this education, you must foster human values. Human values are not something that you need to acquire anew. They are born with you and are innate in you. As they are hidden within, you are unaware of them. Just as valuable ornaments are hidden in iron safe, within man's body lie the valuable jewels of human values. You must protect these properly. They are covered by the doors of the heart. You must earn the key of love for it. When the safe vault of the heart is opened by the key of love, the valuable qualities of human values emerge.

Love Is God, Live In Love

Students, Teachers, Patrons of education and Administrators!

The point you have to notice is that all have to acquire this key of love that opens the doors of the heart. It is love that is the very form of purity. Love is God, live in love. This door of heart cannot be opened with any other key. To get this key of love, you have to have unity. Hate none. You should be averse to none. Place love in your heart. Share it freely with others. Realise that truth is the human life principle. From Truth emanates righteousness. The first child of righteousness is peace. The second child is love so they say. But the greatest of all is love. Once you acquire this power of love, all other powers follow.

Everything arises out of truth.
From Truth emanates all creation.
In truth everything dissolves.
There is no place where truth does not
permeate,
the unsullied primordial truth
(Telugu Poem)

Truth is the origin, sustainer and annihilator. Take Truth as the basis and practise Dharma. Only then Peace and Love will emanate from within.

Values Are Obtained From A Sacred Heart

Embodiments of Love!

These divine principles do not come to you from somewhere else. As Jhum Sai said the other day, we do not get human values from an air-conditioned room in a five-star hotel. Five-star or ten-star or a thousand-star - from nowhere do we get these values. These values are obtained from a sacred heart. Here you find pure, sacred and divine environment. Only in such a place can the human values blossom. Human values are not available in the market or in palaces

or in hotels. These hotels provide comforts only to the body. Your body may be in an air-conditioned room but the mind will get heated if there are no sacred feelings. In order to develop sacred feelings, you should be in sacred places. That is why it is said, good company confers detachment. Detachment leads to desirelessness, desirelessness confers steadiness. One who attains steadiness is verily liberated. Develop friendship with good company. Then alone can you attain peace and your heart will be purified. Today we find pollution everywhere. Only in the Divine proximity, will you find absolute purity. First of all, man has to purify his heart. Purity is Divinity. Where there is divinity, there can be no enmity. Where there is no enmity, there you find supreme peace. Outside there is no peace, we find only pieces. Where is peace? You are the embodiment of peace. So, search within. Know yourself. Then you will know everything. This is the teaching of Vedanta. Instead of questioning others, "who are you?" question yourself, "who am I?" Then you will realize the truth. When I say, this is my handkerchief, the handkerchief is separate from me. Similarly, when you say, this is my body, my mind, my buddhi, etc., you are separate from all these. Then, who are you? You are the embodiment of Peace. You are the embodiment of Truth. You are the embodiment of Love. You are the embodiment of Righteousness. You are the embodiment of Nonviolence. You are everything and everything is within you. Develop this broad-mindedness. Have expansion of love, not contraction of love. Unity can be achieved only through expansion of love.

Embodiments of Love!

Develop love, give up hatred, reduce desires. Cultivate the spirit of sacrifice. The Vedas say: Na karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaikena Amrutathwamanasuhu (immortality can be attained only through sacrifice; neither action nor progeny nor wealth can confer it). Happiness can be attained only through sacrifice. After having partaken of food if you do not excrete the waste material, your stomach will get upset. Once you breathe in air, if you do not breathe out, your lungs will get damaged. Likewise, sacrifice the wealth you have earned, for the welfare of others. The modern education system lays emphasis on wealth, strength and friendship. Then what about character? Character is three-fourths of life. So, you have to develop

character. Without character what for is wealth, strength and friendship? They come and go like passing clouds.

There are lots of things to be learnt. There are various ways to foster human values. I shall bring My discourse to a close as I don't want to cause any strain to you now. We shall discuss many more things later.

Teaching and learning have both become mechanical routines. They have lost the freshness and joy which vitality alone can give. The value of the teaching process lies in raising the level of consciousness of the learner, in heightening the sense of wonder and awe and in emphasising the unity of one with all. The destiny of a country is decided by the ideals implanted by the teachers in the minds of boys and girls entrusted to their care.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

17. The Source And Centre Of Values

Date: 29 September 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam

Trees teach the lesson of sacrifice in the sense that they not only bear fruits while they are alive, but also give away their body to be used as firewood once the life goes out of them.

Amongst teachers, a tree is the greatest.

(Telugu Poem)

EVERY house is a centre of human values. It is from the house that the human values originate, blossom and foster the sacred culture. The person presiding over the house is known as Grihastha (householder). Since ancient times, Indians have attached great significance to the stage of a householder among the four, namely, brahmacharya, grihastha, vanaprastha and sanyasa (celibate, householder, recluse and renunciant).

When a student takes to wrong path, he ruins himself, whereas if a teacher takes to wrong ways, he will be ruining the lives of hundreds of students. Hence a teacher, on whom lies the responsibility of moulding the careers of students, must cultivate virtues and lead an ideal life. Today, there is certainly no dearth of teachers, endowed with the spirit of sacrifice and leading ideal lives. But there are some teachers who have become slaves to vices like drinking and smoking. Naturally, the students emulate them and ruin their lives. If the country is to progress, teachers should mould the students as ideal citizens. The whole world will prosper, when students tread along the right path. Hence it is essential on the part of a teacher, whom the students are bound to emulate, to cultivate virtues.

The Teacher Must Have A Pure Heart And Virtues

A teacher can be compared to a water tank and students to taps connected to it. As is the water in the tank, so is the water that comes from the taps. Therefore, the teacher must have a pure heart and virtues like adherence to truth, good conduct, duty, devotion and discipline, so that he can impart the same to the students. He or she alone is a teacher in the true sense, who imparts these virtues to the students. He or she alone is a student in the true sense, who cultivates these sacred qualities. If the teachers are ideal, the system of education too would be ideal. If the teacher does not possess moral, ethical and spiritual values, the entire system of education will go astray. Today we find some instances wherein the husband and wife part ways with each other due to some differences of opinion though they may be highly educated and occupying positions of authority. The reason is that they are not educated in the true sense but merely have acquired bookish knowledge. Mere bookish knowledge is no knowledge at all. Students should learn true knowledge, which bestows divine energy; they should not be satisfied with mere bookish knowledge, which becomes 'allergy.' This divine energy fosters harmony, coordination and integration and makes the students ideal citizens.

Haste Makes Waste, Waste Makes Worry

In this world, only two things exist. One is energy; the other, matter. Einstein said, energy could be converted into matter and vice versa. This energy is all-powerful. By acquiring this energy, students can bring about transformation in this world. To acquire this energy, students should not go by mere bookish knowledge. Practical knowledge should be coupled with discrimination knowledge. Before undertaking any task, take time and discriminate whether it is good or bad, right or wrong. But the modern students act in haste. Consequently, the sacred qualities in them are subdued. Haste makes waste, waste makes worry. So, do not be in a hurry. What will be the fate of the house if the wife and husband take hasty decisions due to differences of opinion? The aged parents will be neglected or shifted to some home for the aged. The children will be admitted in boarding schools without adequate care being taken about their welfare and progress. As the husband and wife part ways with each other, there will be none to look after the children.

Consequently, the children join bad company, take to bad habits and ruin themselves. So, first of all, human values should be fostered in every house. Only then will each individual of the house make all round progress and lead an ideal life. Everyone should recognise the basic truth that house is the centre of human values. The modern people, more so in the case of those highly educated and occupying positions of authority, do not care much about their respective homes. They consider their homes as inns or hotels and come and go as and when they like. It is not proper on the part of the students and the educated to conduct themselves in this manner. Every householder should pledge to maintain sanctity in the house and set an ideal. Today in the name of modernity, the householders are leading a chaotic life entertaining low and mean feelings. You may live in the modern age but your feelings should be based on ancient and eternal values. Every householder and every housewife should make efforts to uphold human values.

A Teacher Should Have Steady Mind

A teacher is like a guidepost. He or she should guide the students in the proper direction. If the guidepost itself is loose, how can it point to the right direction? So, a teacher should have a steady mind. Only then can he guide the students along the right path. He should impart to the students, the human values of sathya, dhrama, santhi, prema and ahimsa. Many are confused as to what is the foremost value among these five. Love is of paramount importance among the human values. It is in us right from the time of our birth. Love and respect your parents, relatives, friends and your fellow-beings. When you do not respect others, how can you expect others to respect you? Give respect and take respect. It is not one-way traffic. There are a very few who would impart such sacred teachings to the students. Not only the teachers but also the parents should monitor the behaviour and activities of their children. Some students hide novels among textbooks and read them. The parents should take note of this and take necessary action. Parents have every right to punish their children if they take to wrong ways. The children should show gratitude to their parents as they owe their food, blood, head and dhuddu (money) to their parents. Due to the impact of Kali Age, such sense of gratitude is missing among students. The Vedas declare,

Mathrudevo Bhava, Pithrudevo Bhava, Acharyadevo Bhava and Athitidevo Bhava (revere mother, father, teacher and guest as God). These teachings are highly sacred. Today people are ready to believe all that they see on television and internet but do not repose their faith in the Vedic declarations. Internet is like a waste paper basket. Follow the 'innernet,' not the internet. Today the students are developing unsacred vision, thus polluting their minds. As is the seed, so is the sapling. As is the food, so is the belch. Likewise, as is the action, so is the result. So, you should think good, speak good, hear good, do good and experience good results.

See no evil, see what is good; Hear no evil, hear what is good; Talk no evil, talk what is good; Think no evil, think what is good; Do no evil, do what is good; This is the way to God.

Teachers should impart such sacred teachings to the students. They should inculcate the spirit of selfless love in them.

One Should Not Entertain Excessive Desires

Love everybody without expecting anything in return. One should not entertain excessive desires. Na Sreyo Niyamam Vina (no benefit accrues without adherence to proper discipline). Everything should be within certain limits. Our body is the best example for this. If the body temperature crosses the limit of 98.4 degrees Fahrenheit, fever sets in. 120/80 is the perfect blood pressure, crossing which the body will be subjected to ill-health. Even the eyes can see light only up to a particular level of intensity. The retina of the eye will get burnt if you try to see excessive light. Thus, God has set certain limits to everything in His creation. So, man should keep a check over his desires. Otherwise, he will be put to danger. Only when man leads a regulated life, can he enjoy health and happiness.

Understanding And Adjustment Are Very Essential

Each limb of the body has a specific role to perform. While accomplishing a bigger task, all limbs coordinate and work in unison. When the eyes spot a

fruit on the top of a tree, the legs will walk towards the tree; the hand picks up a stone and pelts at the fruit. When the fruit drops down, the fingers pick it up and put it in the mouth where it is masticated by the teeth and sent to the stomach. Thus we see that all limbs of the body have to work in a coordinated manner to perform even a small deed. With such unity prevailing in the house, anything can be achieved.

Understanding and adjustment between each other are very essential for the smooth functioning of any family. For example, when there is proper understanding between wife and husband, the wife will not mind even when the husband returns home very late from office. In fact, she will be anxiously waiting for him thinking that he may be busy in the office or is held up in a traffic jam. But if there is no proper understanding between the two, even if there is a delay of just five minutes, there will be a fight between them. Adjusting will become easy only when there is proper understanding. Whether it is among students, teachers or members of a family, understanding is very essential. When a teacher goes on leave, another teacher can engage his class. Such understanding and adjustment among teachers will help students to a great extent. Help ever, hurt never. This is the teaching of the ancient culture of Bharat - Paropakaraya Punyaya Papaya Parapeedanam (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them).

The Story Of Abraham Lincoln

You might have seen the play on Abraham Lincoln staged last night. He was born in a poor

family. His father was a carpenter and his mother used to stitch old clothes and earn some money. What they would earn was barely enough to make both ends meet. Lincoln used to go to the neighbouring village along with other children for studies. Most of the children would wear costly dresses as they belonged to well-to-do families. They used to make fun of Lincoln, as he had only old and ragged clothes to wear. He was eight years old at that time.

One day, he hugged his mother and cried saying that he wanted a new dress,

so that he could mix freely with other children. The mother consoled him saying, it was not possible for them to buy new clothes with their meagre resources. She told, "son, self-confidence is the highest wealth. So, develop selfconfidence. Don't compare yourself with others." After sometime, his father passed away. Lincoln started a new business, which began to flourish. But some of his so-called friends put obstacles in his path out of jealousy. Consequently, Lincoln suffered heavy loss in the business and sold whatever was left with him to repay the debts. He left the village and reached California. As advised by his mother, he developed self-confidence, strove hard day and night and acquired good education. Pleased with his noble qualities, his friends urged him to contest the parliamentary elections, expressing their solidarity. With their support he won the elections. In those days, racial discrimination was prevalent in America. He advocated that one should not give scope for differences based on colour of the skin as the blood flowing in everybody was the same. Since he had immense self-confidence, he ultimately rose to the level of the President of America. Self-confidence is very essential for everybody. One can accomplish any task through self-confidence. This was the lesson Lincoln taught to the world.

Truth Is God, Love Is God, Live In Love

Self-confidence and devotion to Godhead must be cultivated. Teachers should be respected. You must do your best to make your parents happy; in fact you should worship them. Only when you tread this sacred path can you attain the highest state of wealth. What is wealth? Who is the richest man in the world? The one who has contentment is the richest. Who is the poorest? The one who is full of unfulfilled desires is the poorest. Wealth or poverty is related to your desires. All worldly praise and blame pertain to the body only, not to the spirit. The body is impermanent. It is like a water bubble. The mind is a mad monkey. Don't follow either. Follow your conscience.

Lincoln was one replete with such self-confidence. We feel that some countries are not amenable to accept these values. What is the reason? When the principles are properly explained, everyone will accept them. Parrot like repetition of the words "Human Values" will not result in understanding. When

the inner significance is explained, everyone will accept them. Tell them - Truth is God, Love is God, live in love. When explained thus, everyone will accept. Will anybody say 'no,' to speak truth? Everyone has to accept the validity of these assertions. When you explain in detail the inner significance, humanity will accept it without reservation.

No matter whether it is India, America, Japan or Germany or Christian or Muslim; Truth is only one for all. Truth is one, Truth is God. You should attain this sacred state. This fact has to be accepted by any nation. We in India say $2+2=4$. Whether Pakistan or anywhere else, this will be the same. Is there any one in Pakistan who will say $2+2=3$? Will the Chinese say $2+2=1$? All will say $2+2=4$. This is fundamental truth. It is a pure truth. It is beyond time and place. It is in the same way that eternal values of Truth, Peace, Righteousness, Love and Non-violence are permanent and eternal. People come to Me and say, "Swami, I want peace." Where is that peace? They don't know. I tell them, "You are the embodiment of peace. There is no peace outside you, outside there are only pieces!" When this is explained, they realize the truth and actually attain peace.

Wherever You Go, Do Not Give Up Truth

When you express and explain thus properly, anybody from anywhere will agree. Human values are those, which are common to all people at all places, races and creeds. The very name is human values. If a human being will not accept human values, who else will? What sort of person is he who will say 'no' to this truth? There are valuable ideals within us. You have to develop them more. Wherever you go, you should not give up truth. Sometimes it may not be safe to speak the truth. Even then you should not speak lie. You must find clever ways to get out of such critical situations, without actually speaking a lie. These human values, you must adhere to with intelligence, self-confidence and the grace of God, and you will not go wrong. In any place, any time, or any circumstance one should adhere to this. You must see that your love is steady and constant. That is the state of constant awareness. That is wisdom. This is not mere textual knowledge. You need to possess that truth which gives constant understanding. The Vedas call this state Prajnanam

Brahma (constant-integrated-awareness). Everyone must seek this. No one will disagree with this.

A Weak Person Will Achieve Nothing

It is a self-created fear, whether others will agree with us. Don't fear! Then you will be on the right course. There was a great scientist who said, "never fear, follow me." Beset with fear, you can achieve nothing. When you are on the path of truth, you need fear nothing. With fear, you will be helpless, paralysed. If anybody says anything to the contrary, you can say 'no,' that is my way. One says he believes in God. Another believes there is no God. For the one who believes in God, He is and for the atheist He is not. If he says that he does not believe in God, you reply him, "You may not have your God, but I have mine right here in my heart." You must have that courage of conviction. Other peoples' opposition should not make you weak. A weak person will achieve nothing. If the entire world rises and says 'no', to the existence of God, you should still be able to assert 'no'. He is there right inside your heart. With such strong faith, you will be able to propagate your faith. That self-confidence is the source of your strength. Lacking this strength you become weak, so weak to hardly merit the name of a human being. The members of the Organisation are full of enthusiasm. They sincerely want the propagation of human values throughout the world. Keep expressing your beliefs with conviction and let those who agree accept them and those who do not, go their way. Human values have come out from inside the human beings and not from anywhere outside. They come out of the heart - that is what the term 'Educare' means.

'Educare' means 'elicit,' i.e., bring out from within. These should be manifested and realized. Such knowledge does not come out of books. Bookish knowledge of the first day becomes knowledge on the second day and allergy on the third day. Practical knowledge, internal knowledge, never becomes an allergy. It becomes energy. What we need is energy and not allergy.

Do Not Try To Manipulate Others

If human values are not there, humanity will be destroyed. Our life itself is human value. The organizers have been trying hard for the spread of human values in education. Please extend all your cooperation. Without encouragement they become weak. There are people from many countries assembled here. You will return. What is it that you are taking back with you? Carry with you at least one or two human values. If you go to the market, wander through it all and return empty-handed, is it a great thing? Having come to Prasanthi Nilayam, take back something valuable with you. There is Bliss here, enjoy it, take it with you and make others happy, make the whole world happy. Never be selfish. Share what you know with all you come in contact. Cooperate with everybody. Instead of cooperating, people merely operate, try to manipulate. Do not try to manipulate others.

Only co-operate. You can achieve your objectives.

There are some questions I would like to answer.

Q1. Swami, please enlighten us how to maintain balance of the five elements by the practice of human values in a practical way. What is the practical procedure?

In human values we have the term EHV. In these three letters I have already enlightened you on what is education. Consider it as 3 HV, i.e., Heart, Head and Hand. The harmony between these three is 3HV. We say Proper study of mankind is Man. Head, heart and hands should co-operate and function in harmony. There is no human value greater than this. This can be taught easily. It is like teaching physical drill. Do not try to mystify the expression EHV and indulge in elaborate propaganda. Thought, word and deed must be the same. If this is not, these human values will disappear. Hence this harmony, this unity is essential. Lincoln is the best example for this. He thought of what he said; adhered to what he professed; and, finally, achieved what he believed. Hence this threefold unity is essential; otherwise humanity is lost. Manas Anyath, Vachas Anyath, Karmani Anyath Duratmanam, (for wicked persons thought, word and deed differ). Manasyekam, Vachasyekam,

Karmanyekam, Mahatmanam. (for the righteous, mind, word and deed are the same) Hence, you must propagate this easy way. EHV is education in human values. All these are important. The thought, word and deed must be the same. Without this one ceases to be human. This is how you have to propagate.

Q2. Swami, you have said skill the education. How does one skill the education?

Education must be made into skill. (We have already explained that education is external while human values are internal; hence the blunt-edged education must be sharpened by the internal honing by human values). The imbalance caused by the external education is balanced by the skill of human values and thus the imbalance is corrected and balance restored. By skill Bhagawan means Naipunya Shakti (the keenness of the mind).

Education is the physical method. When skill and knowledge are joined, the scale becomes balanced. While walking you need balance. Life needs balance. Therefore education should also be balanced. This maintenance of balance is what we mean when we say skill. This is Naipunya Shakti, i.e., investigate, enquire and understand. A simple example: Scientists have understood the internal process of the sun, have studied and evolved many machines and devices from these processes. Understanding the solar process, they even manufactured bombs with similar reactions. How destructive are these bombs? They consider it a great achievement. No. The knowledge should have balance. This is what Bhagawan calls 'skill.' All your research should result in the welfare of humanity. Then only the beam of the balance is straight. If the research is lopsided concentrating on destruction only, it is imbalanced. We should consider pleasure and pain with equanimity. The results of research should maintain balance between benign and harmful effects. If only the destructive potentials of research are developed, there will be total imbalance. We should try to bring back some balance in all these new technologies, a balance between the harmful and benign consequences. Generation of electricity by various means, if employed for irrigation or village lighting, how beneficial is it! We are not exercising our mind properly on these

matters. Hence, we suffer from imbalance. Electricity is beneficial in many ways; lighting, heating, cooling etc. But, if we say to electricity 'you are such a fine friend of humanity' and go and touch a live wire, you will be burnt. Every development should be employed within limits, and given due respect. So, as I have explained, when education is united with skill, the balance is restored. When there is imbalance, you look outwards and your inner vision is lost. Insight is vital. When there is balance, this inner vision is restored. Therefore, develop an inner vision that creates the balance. The key words are education, skill and insight.

Even for meditation, skill is necessary. If you sit still in a quiet corner allowing your mind to wander all over, your meditation is worthless. If you cannot concentrate, you cannot meditate. Thus, for the inner processes, skill is necessary. Concentration has to be cultivated. Wisdom is the goal of concentration. Wisdom is achieved by the dedication of the fruits of action; by sacrifice, the ultimate is achieved. Hence, abhyasa, concentration, should be practised with effort. Constant practice therefore is the method..

Q3. Swami , the mass media like radio, video and internet are having more and more effect.....

I have already told you about internet, radio, video, etc. We have seen so many people who have been exposed to these media. But, what is their effect? All transient, passing clouds that come and go. It is an utter waste of time. It is all business-oriented. That is not our aim. Do not hanker after internet; turn to the innernet. Concentrate on inner vision. Sanctify your inner faculties. Then only can you unify and get access to human values. You must keep attempting toward unification; unity is the aim. When you achieve unity how much is your strength magnified? Look at this piece of cloth. It is not cloth, but a conglomeration of threads. The threads are a modification of cotton. Without cotton there is no thread. Without thread, there is no textile. The interwoven threads produce such a strong piece of cloth. When separated the threads are weak and can be snapped with a finger. Their great strength is unity. Human values, when internalized, become a sacred force and manifest as ideals.

Q4. Are devotion and spirituality necessary for a teacher?

Of course, without doubt. A teacher without devotion is worthless. Let him have faith in his chosen faith. Without devotion, he is no teacher. Devotion is necessary. He is in charge of several students. He has to set an ideal for all of them. For this, Divine grace is also necessary. All that you study is only material (inert). You have to convert it into energy. That is divine power. If one does not have this faith he is no teacher. A teacher has to be an ideal for several students. How can he be a model? Like a physical instructor who instructs by doing, he has to teach by being. Devotion has also to be taught by practice. Then it will be imprinted in the minds of the students.

Q5. Swami, increasingly the emphasis on education and academic achievement is gaining

importance. Please advise us as to how to bring 'spirituality' back into the main stream of education?

Yes, 'spirituality' is very necessary in education. This spirituality has to arise from confidence. You must have confidence. If there is no faith you can achieve nothing. Where there is confidence there is Love. Where there is Love, there is Peace. Where there is Peace, there is Truth. Where there is Truth there is Bliss. Where there is Bliss there is God. In fact, without faith you can have no faith even in your mother. There should be confidence. Once you have confidence that a person is your mother, you love her.

Confidence leads to love. Love takes you to peace. Peace produces truth and as soon as truth manifests, you achieve bliss. This Bliss is the very God-head itself. So, confidence is a necessary characteristic. It is this loss of confidence that is the cause of lack of spirituality in the world. Therefore this confidence is necessary.

18. Impact Of Mother's Thoughts On Children

Date: 19 November 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ladies Day

Embodiments of Love!

In this world, wife, children and other relations are not permanent; they come and go.

Truth alone is permanent.

Worldly power, high status and even kingdoms are transitory; the only eternal reality is truth. The path of truth bestows all prosperity and auspiciousness.

There is no greater opulence than truth in this world.

(Telugu Poem)

THIS day of 19th November is celebrated as Ladies' Day in order to delve into the sacred qualities of women and disseminate them. Women are the repositories of truth and culture. Though the earth is one, the plants vary depending upon the seeds sown. The womb of the mother symbolizes the mother earth. As is the seed of thought sown in it, so is the fruit that it yields. You cannot expect mangoes by sowing a neem seed. So, the mother should foster good thoughts, good words and good deeds. Only then can she beget virtuous children. Today we find many children having bad qualities and wicked conduct. The reason for this can be attributed to the bad thoughts of their mothers.

Some Noble And Virtuous Mothers

Aryamba was born in Kerala. She was a paragon of virtues. She spent all her time in the contemplation of God and in undertaking noble deeds. As a result, Sankaracharya was born to her. Sankaracharya could become Jagadguru

(world teacher) because of his mother's virtuous thoughts.

Noble souls like Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Paramahansa could attain exalted positions in their lives only due to the sacred feelings of their mothers.

Putlibai, the mother of Mahatma Gandhi, spent her life in the contemplation of God. She used to observe a vow wherein she would not partake of food unless she heard the singing of cuckoo. One day it so happened that the song of cuckoo was not heard. Gandhi, who was a small boy then, could not bear to see his mother fasting for a long time. He went behind the house and mimicked the singing of cuckoo. Putlibai felt very sad as she knew that her son was uttering a lie. She cried, "O God! What sin have I committed that I gave birth to a son who speaks untruth?" Realising that he had caused immense grief to his mother by uttering a lie, Gandhi took a vow that he would never indulge in falsehood thenceforth. So, it is imperative that the mother gives training in moral values to her children right from their childhood. She should not overlook the mistakes of her children. She should punish her children whenever they stray away from the right path and reward them for their good deeds. It is because of the feelings of the mother that the children become good or bad.

Gandhi's mother was a strict disciplinarian and pure-hearted. As the saying goes, "Yatha Raja, Thatha Praja" (as the king, so the subjects), she had a maidservant named Rambha, who used to look after the children with love and care. One day, Gandhi came running to her and told that he was haunted by fear. Rambha told him, "My dear one, where is the need to fear when all-protecting Ramachandra is with us always. Recite the Name of Rama whenever you are fear-stricken." From then onwards, Gandhi chanted the Name of Rama till his last breath. Can we find such noble-hearted women today? It is because of such women that the children take to the path of righteousness.

Story Of A Noble Son And A Noble Mother

Here is a small example. After the war for the liberation of Rangoon, a mother and her son somehow managed to reach Chennai, having lost their near and dear ones. They had no shelter over their head nor any food to eat. The mother would go begging for alms from house to house, give most of it to her son and partake of whatever little was left. When she would not get enough, she would give the entire food to her son and herself would go without food. She was put to many difficulties, but she bore everything for the sake of the well being of her son. Consequently, she became weak day by day. One day the son, unable to see her suffering, told her, "Mother, it is not proper on your part to feed me and starve yourself. From today, you take rest and I will fetch food for both of us." But the mother said she could not bear the sight of her son begging for alms. However, on a certain day, the mother was too weak even to walk. So, the son went to beg food. He stood in front of the house of an officer and cried, "O sir, I am hungry, I am hungry." The officer, who was relaxing in an easy chair in the verandah, brought food on a leaf and told him to sit and partake of it. But the boy said that he would take it home. The officer said, "I don't think you are really hungry, otherwise why should you take it home." When the officer was uttering these harsh words, the boy felt giddy and fell down. He was trying to say something, but could not say it loudly as he was very weak. The officer went close to the boy and tried to hear what he was saying. "Sir, I would like to give it to my mother first, only then I will eat. First, to my mother, to my mother..." and he breathed his last.

Can we find such noble sons today? We cannot find such mothers and sons today. It is not merely the effect of Kali age, but also the result of modern education system. Today's education is meant only for earning a living. The educated do not think of the welfare of society and the country at large.

Great Merit Lies In Fulfilling Your Mother's Wishes

You all know the story of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar. He was living with his mother in a village near Kolkata. They were very poor. She used to feed her son with whatever she could earn everyday and did not care much about herself. Her son's well being was uppermost in her mind. She wanted him to lead a peaceful and sacred life. Being a hard working student, Vidyasagar

used to study under street lights. He completed his postgraduation and took up a job. Initially, his salary was very less, just enough for his mother and himself. Gradually, he attained good position. Once a fair was held in the village. Vidyasagar's mother went to the fair wearing an old sari as she had no other good sari to wear. Seeing this, Vidyasagar felt very sad. That very evening, he bought a good sari for her. Once during the course of their conversation, Vidyasagar asked his mother if she had any desires. She said, "Son, the people of our village are facing hardship due to lack of drinking water. I feel pained to see them trekking long distances to fetch water. I will be happy if you can get a well dug in our village." Vidyasagar immediately got a well dug and fulfilled his mother's desire. Her joy knew no bounds. She said, "Son, water sustains life. You have quenched the thirst of the villagers. I am extremely happy that I have given birth to a noble son like you." On some other day, Vidyasagar asked his mother if she had any more desires. She said, "Son, the children of our village are going to the neighbouring village to attend school. I am pained to see children walking such a long distance everyday. So, please construct a small school in our village". Accordingly, Vidyasagar established a school in the village, giving immense joy to his mother. She said, "Son, you have set an ideal not merely to our village but to the entire nation. Your life is sanctified." After a few days, one evening, when Vidyasagar returned home from office, he found his mother in a pensive mood. On being asked for the reason, she said, "Son you have provided water to the village and also established a school for children. But, it is the lack of medical facilities in our village that is troubling my mind. Please build a small hospital here." As per her wish, he constructed a small hospital which had one doctor and one nurse. His mother was overjoyed at this. The reason for My telling you all this is to emphasise that the feelings of mothers are noble. Each one has to resolve to fulfil the sacred desires of his mother. One should never act in such a way as to cause pain to one's mother.

Sacred Desires Of Swami's Mother

Like the mother of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Swami's mother had also some sacred desires. One day, while I was having My food upstairs, Griham Ammayi (mother of Swami's physical body) came to Me. I asked, "Amma, what is the

reason for your coming here?" She said, "You finish your food first, then I will tell You." After I finished My food, she said, "Swami, ours is a very small village. Here people are put to a lot of suffering due to the absence of medical facilities. They have to run to Bukkapatnam even for a small problem." Then I assured her that I would build a hospital in the village. As promised, I got a small hospital built immediately.

On some other day, she again came upstairs and said, "Swami please don't think otherwise, I have one more desire". I asked her not to have too many desires. She said, "Swami, You are fulfilling the desires of thousands of people who are coming to You. Why can't You fulfil my one desire?" Then I said, "Tell Me your desire". She said, "Swami, the wells of our village have dried up. Please get a well dug in our village." As per her wish, I got a well dug in our Mandir itself. All the people of the village used to take water from this well. She said she was extremely happy but added that she had one more desire. She said, "Swami, the children of our village are going to Bukkapatnam for their studies. Poor children, they don't have the strength even to walk such a long distance. Please construct a school here". I fulfilled her that desire also. She felt very happy and said that she had no more desires left. Just as a small seed becomes a huge tree, the small school I established then has become a big university now. At that time, I constructed a small hospital. But now here is a big Super Speciality Hospital. The small well that I got dug here in the village has assumed gigantic proportions of a water project for the entire district. If the feelings of the mother are sacred, so too will be the feelings of the children.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu And His Noble Mother

If the thoughts are sacred, they will certainly fructify. One need not think that one does not have enough money or resources. If you resolve to do something good, you are bound to succeed. The power of noble thoughts will give you the necessary strength. Once Chaitanya Mahaprabhu went to a temple along with his mother Sachi Devi. He prayed, "O Lord, You are the master of the world. You are the master of the body, life and soul. You can grant any wish that I ask for. But I don't have any worldly desires. I do have

one desire. You are the embodiment of love. Love is our life. So, please grant me the strength to love You. I don't want anything else." Chaitanya Mahaprabhu developed such noble thoughts because of the noble feelings of his mother Sachi Devi. She always taught him that all the needs of a person were automatically taken care of once he became the recipient of God's grace.

Chaitanya used to go round the streets singing the glory of Krishna. Good and bad, auspiciousness and inauspiciousness co-exist. Where there is light, there is bound to be its shadow. Likewise, good people are bound to face difficulties. But those difficulties will enhance the goodness in them.

Pleasure and pain, good and bad co-exist, None can separate them.
You cannot find pleasure or pain,
Good or bad to the exclusion of the other. Pleasure results when difficulties fructify.
(Telugu Poem)

Once when Chaitanya was singing the glory of Krishna in the streets, some evil-minded people snatched away the cymbals from his hands. But he was least perturbed. He continued to sing the glory of Krishna with firm faith and devotion. Seeing Chaitanya, the children would get inspired and they too would join him in singing the divine name. Chaitanya used to make children sit around him and impart sacred teachings to them. Chaitanya became a noble soul because of the noble feelings of his mother. So, the mother should have pure thoughts and good conduct. Only then will she be blessed with ideal children.

Service To Villagers Is Dear To Swami

Since time immemorial, Bharat has been punya bhumi (the land of merit),

yoga bhumi (the land of spirituality) and thyaga bhumi (the land of sacrifice). The greater the sacrifice you do, the greater will be the tejas (effulgence) around you. I am giving you a small example.

I always have tejas around Me. But some people who came during the last fifteen days said, "Swami, Your tejas is ever increasing." Right from the beginning, welfare of the villagers has been dear to Me. But as I got involved with education, health and water projects, I could not pay much attention to this work. A month ago, while I was sitting in a chair, I happened to see a small piece of paper. When I picked it up, I found the photographs of dead bodies of a mother and her son. The mother could not bear the sight of her son suffering from hunger. Neither could she go out for alms as it was raining heavily. Seeing no possibility of stopping of the rain, she felt very dejected, mixed rat poison in water, gave it to her son and drank herself. As a result, both of them died. This incident took place last month only. This was published in a newspaper. Some newspapers usually ignore good news and publish such bad news items only. They are always in search of bad news. Their hands do not write and their intellects do not function when it comes to publishing good news. This is the effect of the sins accumulated over their past lives. I felt very sad that such an incident took place in this sacred land of Bharat which is known as Annapoorna (goddess of food). Immediately, I stopped all other activities and started village service programme. Food and clothes were distributed in various villages giving encouragement and happiness to people.

"My Bliss Is Ever Increasing Day After Day"

Our students are like gold. They worked hard right from morning till night with enthusiasm. They went to each and every house in the villages and distributed food. I felt very happy. If anybody does any noble act of sacrifice, I am prepared to do anything for him. The more one sacrifices, the greater will be one's tejas. Though I eat very little, My tejas is ever increasing. Everyday after the morning bhajan, I take a little ragi sankati (gruel made of a coarse grain) and chutney or curry made of leaves.

This is what I used to take earlier and it is the same now also. There has been no change in it. I eat a little food, yet I have tremendous tejas. The tejas comes not because of food but because of the spirit of sacrifice. One gets a lot of strength when one involves oneself in social welfare activities. When I walk slowly among the devotees, some people wonder if I have pain in My legs. Neither I have pain in My legs nor I get any disease. I walk slowly among the devotees only to give them darshan for a longer duration of time. I have no pain whatsoever nor any disability. I am always blissful. My bliss is ever increasing day after day. Consider service to humanity as your very life breath. Then you too will have divine effulgence.

Make God's Name As Your Pulse Beat

God is not separate from you. Donot be under the impression that God is present only in temples. Deho Devalaya Prokto Jeevo Deva Sanathana (body is the temple and the indweller is God). So, you do not need to go in search of God elsewhere. Turn your vision inward and you will find God. He is the embodiment of bliss. You are getting drowned in illusion on account of excessive attachment to the body. Get rid of body attachment and develop attachment towards God. Then you will become God yourself. God and man are not separate from each other. God is everybody. This temple of body is able to move around because God is within. It is said, Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma (Brahman is truth, wisdom and eternity). One has to tread the path of truth in order to understand the principle of Brahman. To know the principle of Brahman you need not go here and there. Have total faith that the body is the temple of God. Then you will get infinite bliss and tremendous strength.

Consider every work as God's work. Some people may wonder how going to office can be God's work. That is also God's work because God is allpervasive. Sarvata Pani-padam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthati (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). You may undertake any action but do it as an offering to God. Since ancient times, Bharatiyas fostered such noble feelings. That is why Bharat attained the exalted position

of the teacher to the rest of the world.

Some Noble Women Of Bharat

This land of Bharat has given birth to many noble women like Savitri, who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati, who extinguished wild fire with the power of truth; Sita, who proved her chastity by coming out of blazing fire unscathed and Damayanthi, who reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity.

It was because of such women of character that Bharat attained the reputation of being

The land of plenty, prosperity and opulence, and Became the teacher of all the nations of the world.

(Telugu Poem)

There are many scholars, intellectuals and educated people in this country. But all their learning and intelligence is proving futile because they are immersed in selfishness and self-interest.

Embodiments of Love!

Foster love, speak the truth. Do not waste time in acquiring merely bookish knowledge. One cannot be called educated in the true sense just because one acquires degrees. True education is that which confers good intellect and noble qualities like adherence to truth, duty, devotion and discipline. You have to sanctify your life with good thoughts, good words and good deeds. Only then will the ancient culture of Bharat be revived.

Chant the Name of God incessantly. It should be like your pulse beat. Body becomes lifeless if there is no pulse beat. Likewise, you will become a living corpse if you do not chant Divine Name. Consider whatever happens as good

for you. When you foster such good thoughts, they will naturally turn into good actions, which will set an ideal to others.

Embodiments of Love!

Today people are prepared to undergo many difficulties in pursuit of Sri (wealth). But Chaitanya Mahaprabhu considered Hari (Lord Vishnu) as his only wealth. He gave up Sri and contemplated on Hari. That is why I often sing, Hari Nama Bina Anand Nahin (one cannot have bliss without chanting the Divine Name). So, chant the Divine Name, take to the service of society. Do not make distinctions between your people and other people. Consider everybody as a member of the universal divine family. Experience bliss by cultivating the spirit of unity. Do not entertain any differences whatsoever. Treat each body as a temple and offer your salutations. Have the firm conviction that God is present in all. When you cultivate such noble thoughts, God will certainly become manifest in you.

19. God Incarnates To Serve Mankind

Date: 20 November 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Inaugural Discourse of the 7th World Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations

Embodiments of Love!

Just as the birds have two wings which help them to fly,
Love and service are the two wings which enable man to reach his goal of
life quickly.

(Telugu Poem)

MAN is born to render selfless service and not to indulge in selfishness. Selfless service alone can achieve unity of mankind. Only through unity can humanity attain divinity. Hence service is very essential to understand this unity in humanity. People are under the impression that service means merely to help the poor, the weak and the forlorn. It is a big mistake to think that you are rendering service to others. In fact, you are serving yourself because the same principle of the atma, the same principle of love is present in all. All men are essentially one. The differences lie only in their feelings. So, man should change his feelings and try to recognise the truth that the same divinity is immanent in all. Only then can there be transformation in man.

Selfless Service Kills Ego

The hands do the work, the tongue performs the task of talking and the head enquires. All these limbs of the body may be different from each other but the divine power that exists in them is one and the same. Likewise, the same divinity exists in all beings. Once you understand this truth, the service you render will become divine. One should not become egoistic thinking that one is doing great service. Actually, service is meant to kill ego. You cannot call it service if it is rendered with ego. First of all, ego has to be subdued. Body

attachment is the root cause of ego. Ego will vanish once the body attachment is given up. The spirit of oneness will develop once the ego is annihilated.

Just as hands, eyes, nose, mouth, etc., are the limbs of the body, likewise all human beings are the limbs of society. Society is the limb of Nature and Nature is the limb of God. Seeing this vast Nature, one should not think that it is different from God. One should understand the fundamental truth that divinity pervades the entire creation. Bulbs, their colours and wattage may vary, but the current in all of them is one and the same. Likewise, names and forms of individuals may be different but the principle of the atma that exists in all of them is one and the same. The service you render will become meaningful only when you understand this truth. You should not think that you are different from the one whom you are serving. This kind of dualistic feeling gives rise to evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, etc. In fact, all evil qualities like desire, anger, greed, etc., are of man's own making. They arise from the head, whereas noble qualities like love, compassion, forbearance, originate from the heart. Head sees unity as diversity, whereas heart proves unity in diversity. Hence, head symbolizes pravritti (outward path) and heart stands for nivritti (inward path).' Never think that society cannot progress if you do not render service. Society does not depend on you. If not you, someone else will do the needful. God governs everything. In the first instance, try to understand the meaning of the word "service". It is possible to understand this once you understand who you are. You are a manava (human being). Manava does not mean the physical form alone. It is synonymous with the principle of the atma. Human being is the manifestation of the five elements. The ancient sages had total control over the five elements and thus could enjoy peace and security. Man will shine forth as atmaswarupa (embodiment of the atma) once he becomes the master of the five elements.

Levels Of The Mind

There are different levels of the mind, namely, Super Mind, Higher Mind, Illumination Mind and Over Mind. Man will reach the stage of totality only when he attains the level of Over Mind.

Super Mind is related to body consciousness. The source of body consciousness is the principle of the atma that pervades the entire body. Body consciousness becomes thought consciousness when one reaches the level of Higher Mind. Body consciousness is limited to physical level, whereas thought consciousness has no such limits and can travel up to any distance. That is why thought consciousness is termed as Higher Mind. Higher Mind transcends the five elements. To reach this transcendental state, one has to begin with Super Mind. Higher Mind however does not signify the highest state. Illumination Mind is, in fact, beyond Higher Mind.

The Power Of Illumination Mind

There is current in the human body from top to toe. The body itself is a big generator. Illumination Mind, which is related to the current in the body, is very powerful. When one attains this level, one will have current even in one's nails and hair. A worldly person will not feel any pain when his nails are clipped, but after attaining the level of illumination Mind, one will get a shock when one tries to clip the nails. Modern youth may attribute this to nonavailability of nail cutters in those days. But one need not have a nail cutter to clip one's nails. One nail can cut the other. But the person at the level of Illumination Mind will feel the shock when his nails are clipped. The thoughts, words and deeds of one with Illumination Mind are suffused with divinity. That gives rise to a very powerful 'three phase' current in the body. Such people will have current even in their hair. You can feel the shock when you touch their hair. Even in an ordinary individual, there is electric current in the body.

The electricity present within spreads in the entire body because of the pumping of the heart. The doctors say that the lungs purify the blood with oxygen and send it to the heart. But actually, the life-force present in the lungs becomes current through vibration. This current can travel a long distance. Each time the heart pumps, the blood travels a distance of 12,000 miles in the body. How can we say this? When we join all the blood vessels in the body, both small and big (arteries, veins, capillaries, etc.), they cover a length of 12,000 miles. Just as a generator can illumine a bulb connected to it

even at a distance of 100 miles, likewise the current originating from the sacred feelings in the heart can travel up to any distance. This is the power of Illumination Mind.

God's Creation Is The Most Mysterious

At the level of Illumination Mind, one's mind undergoes a great change and becomes the subtle force. This subtle force has three powers - prana shakti, mano shakti and vijnana shakti. No scientist, doctor or engineer can understand this. You can give rest to any limb of the body but not to the heart. The heart continues to function even in your sleep. Which doctor or scientist can understand this? The eye looks so small but there are 13 lakh light rays in it. Who has made it? All this is God's creation. God's creation is the most mysterious, sacred and wonderful. All that is seen outside is nothing but the reflection, reaction and resound of the inner being. You go to a temple in order to have the vision of God. But when you stand in front of the idol, you close your eyes and pray. The inner meaning of this is that one has to see God not with the physical eyes, but with the eyes of wisdom. You will get the eyes of wisdom only when you turn your vision inward. That is the reason people meditate with their eyes closed and visualize God within. The whole world is just the reflection, reaction and resound. You desire for the reflection forgetting the reality.

The gross body is made up of food. The mind, the intellect, the chitta and the ahamkara constitute the subtle body. It is the subtle body that experiences pain and pleasure. The Illumination Mind comprises the causal body. It transcends worldly thoughts and feelings. There is no trace of desire, anger, greed, ego, pride and jealousy in it. The level of Illumination Mind is reached only when all the worldly thoughts are subdued. In order to control worldly thoughts, one has to reach the level of Super Mind. Super Mind is nothing but superior mind, that which transcends the ordinary mind. The fundamental basis to attain Super Mind is to cultivate super love, i.e., love without any desire. That is why I often tell you, love is God, live in love. Start the day with love, spend the day with love, fill the day with love and end the day with love. This is the way to God. When you wake up in the morning, do not think of

your mundane activities. Wake up with the feelings of pure love. But today, man does not have such feelings of pure love. The reason for this, as I told you yesterday, is that the parents themselves have no sacred feelings. If the parents wake up in the morning abusing each other, the children go a step further and fight with each other as soon as they wake up.

Man Should Fill His Mind With Love For God

At the time of birth, man has no desires. But as he grows up, he acquires many desires which lead to bondage. Man should fill his mind with love for God. He should forget all his worries and contemplate on Him. This is possible only through practice. Reading, writing, walking, talking, all these are learnt only through practice. Likewise, even in the path of spirituality, practice is very essential. Start practising love. That is the correct spiritual practice. Share your love with more and more people. You will experience oneness. Once you start sharing your love with everybody, then the whole world will become one family. After expanding your love in this manner, control your external thoughts and turn inward. Then you will attain the state of Illumination Mind where there are absolutely no thoughts and no action. Even the iron is melted by the power of electric current. Likewise, the duality of good and bad is annihilated by the Illumination Mind. In spiritual parlance, this is called samadhi state. samadhi means sama+dhi (equalmindedness). The Illumination Mind unifies good and bad and develops the spirit of oneness. What is it that you have to do in order to attain this state? Serve all with love. Consider service to man as service to God.

When it comes to rendering service, do not observe any differences. Do not consider that you are rich and the other man is poor. Who is the richest man in the world? The one who has contentment is the richest man in the world. Who is the poorest man? The one who has many desires is the poorest man. Cut short your desires. It is said, "Less luggage more comfort make travel a pleasure." You can have a comfortable journey of life only when you reduce the luggage of your desires. The lesser the desires, the greater will be the will power. The body has death but not the mind. The mind is responsible for everything. So, fill your mind with pure and selfless thoughts. Then you will

attain the state of Illumination Mind. Gradually, you will cross Illumination Mind and attain Over Mind. In Vedantic parlance, this is known as the state of amanaska (non-existence of mind). Once the mind is withdrawn, only the principle of the atma, i.e., the Superconsciousness exists.

Develop Purity Through Service

Man has the capacity to attain any exalted position. Any task can be accomplished through practice. A small ant can travel hundreds of miles if it decides to do so. But even an eagle, endowed with strong wings, cannot move an inch without effort. Love and service are like two wings for man. He can attain any exalted position with the help of these two wings. The lives of many noble souls bear testimony to this fact.

Divinity Is Present In Every Cell Of The Human Body

Today man finds it difficult to sit quietly and steadily even for a few minutes. But our ancients could keep their body steady in one posture for any number of days. People think that the body is able to move because of the circulation of blood and the functioning of nerves. But when one reaches the state of Illumination Mind, blood circulation stops. You may think that the body becomes lifeless without blood circulation, but super blood starts circulating and makes the body function. When super blood starts circulating in the body, it becomes superior in nature.

In this connection, the Upanishads declare: "Raso Vai Saha" (God pervades the body in the form of essence). Then all that one sees, does and experiences becomes divine. Just as sugar is present in every drop of syrup, Supreme Power (Divinity) is present in every cell of the human body. But today, man considers himself to be weak. He alone can experience bliss who understands the truth that everything is within.

All that man learns from books is nothing but the reflection, reaction and resound of the inner being. Man's speech is decided by the feelings of the inner being. Speech is resound and heart is the real sound. This real sound

leads to resound. In the path of spirituality, there are many such subtle secrets. Without understanding these secrets, man undertakes various spiritual practices and wastes his time. You need not undertake any spiritual practice once you understand the fundamental truth.

Neither by penance nor by pilgrimage nor by study of scriptures nor by Japa can
one cross the ocean of life.
One can achieve it only by serving the pious.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

When you serve others, your power will also increase. The power of attraction is present in everybody. The purer you become, the greater will be your power of attraction and so, you will absorb more power. All the powers that are present in the earth are latent in man. Man, in fact, is the reservoir of all powers - electrical, magnetic and laser. Thus, man is very powerful. Then why should he consider himself weak?

For Everything Service Is Important

Some people come to Me and complain that they are unable to control their mind. How can you control your mind ? You can control your mind only through love and not merely by sitting in meditation. When you develop love, there will be no scope for evil qualities like anger and hatred. You will be able to love even your enemies. You will not consider anybody as your enemy; you will see oneness in all. That is blissful life. Bliss sheath is the last of five sheaths present in man, namely, annamaya kosha (food sheath), pranamaya kosha (life sheath), manomaya kosha (mind sheath), vijnanamaya kosha (wisdom sheath) and anandamaya kosha (bliss sheath). Today man is able to travel only upto mind sheath. Thereafter, he does not have the ticket nor does he have the chariot to reach bliss sheath. People are under the mistaken

notion that vijnanamaya kosha is related to science. But, in fact, it has nothing to do with science. There is a gulf of difference between wisdom and science. Science is related to the power of the mind and machine, whereas wisdom originates from the power of the atma. For everything service is important.

Duty Relates To Duality Whereas Service To Oneness

When the Pandavas were making arrangements

to perform Rajasuya Yajna, Lord Krishna approached Dharmaraja and asked if everything was ready. Dharmaraja replied that all arrangements were over and he had allotted various duties to others. Then Krishna requested for an opportunity to render some service. He used the word service and not duty because duty relates to duality, whereas service to oneness. Dharmaraja said, "Swami, what service can I assign to You? Instead give us an opportunity to serve You". Krishna said, "I don't require others' service. I serve everybody". God assumes human form to serve and sustain humanity. I am your servant, not the master. Understand this truth. I come to you to give darshan, wherever you are seated. I never say that you should come to Me. It is said, God always stands at the entrance of your puja room ready to give whatever you ask for. God is always ready to grant the wishes of His devotees. God is always with you, in you, around you. God renders service to man, so that he may serve his fellow-beings. Dharmaraja asked Krishna as to what service He would like to do. Krishna said, He would remove the plantain leaves after everyone finishes partaking of food in them. By this act of His, Krishna demonstrated the ideal of service to mankind.

Human body may be compared to a tender plantain leaf. The five senses of man are like the delicious items served on the leaf. One should offer the food to God before partaking of it. But man in his foolishness is offering the 'delicious items' to the demons of desire, anger, greed, pride and jealousy. After the demons consume the 'delicious items' and spoil the leaf, the leftover is offered to God! First and foremost, these 'delicious items' should be offered to God who is present within in the form of Vaishvanara. You offer food to God

by chanting the sloka:

Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir Brahmagnou Brahmanahutam Brahmaiva
Thena Ganthavyam Brahma Karma Samadhina.

Immediately God replies from within:

Aham Vaishvanaro Bhutva Praninam Dehamastrita Pranapana Samayukta
Pachamyannam Chaturvidham.

God is present in everybody in the form of Vaishvanara. So, whomsoever you serve, consider that you are serving God.

Experience Unity In Totality

Love has no form; it has only name. Gold by itself has no form. But people mould it in the shape of a ring or a chain, thereby giving it a form. Likewise, many forms are attributed to the formless Divinity.

Divinity is pure, immortal, attributeless, formless, ancient and eternal. But people worship a form for their own satisfaction. That is why God incarnates. He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer. But you think different gods exist for creation, sustenance and destruction. They are all like ministers of God. Everything is under His control. So, when you offer something to God, it amounts to offering to all gods.

Easwara Sarva Bhutanam (God is present in all beings). Formless God can be visualized in the form of all beings. He is the Reality and all the forms are His reflections. He is one, but you see many reflections. You may find the projection of earthquakes, floods and volcano eruptions on the cinema screen but the screen is unaffected by all this. You may find a river on the screen but the screen does not get wet. Likewise, all the multiplicity appears only to the external vision; the Illumination Mind sees only oneness. That oneness is the Divine Power. It is present in one and all. You search for God at various places as you are unable to understand this truth. To know this truth, love all. Then

you can visualize unity in diversity. Lord Krishna declared, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being). Do not get deluded by the differences in physical form. Treat everyone alike. Consider all that you see as your own reflection.

When you cultivate this feeling of oneness, you will attain the level of Illumination Mind. When you are at the level of Super Mind, you think that you are different from others. This is dualism. It is said, "A man with dual mind is half blind." Gradually, go up to the Higher Mind where you understand your true nature. Then you reach Illumination Mind. Once you experience this unity to totality, you attain Over Mind. That is your goal. That is everything for you. All the spiritual practices are meant to attain this goal. Practices that are done with the physical body cannot improve the state of the mind. What is essential is the purity of the mind.

Speaking Softly Is Also Service

Remember Swami's words whenever you participate in service activities. Some rich people feel that they are unable to serve the community and participate in service activities. Service does not mean helping with hands alone. Talk softly and sweetly. Speak good words. That is also a form of service. Give food and money to the needy and work for their welfare. That is also a form of service. Cleaning the streets or serving the patients is not the only means of service. But those who get the opportunity can certainly do it as per their capacity.

The other day, Anantapur College girls came to Me and said, "Swami, boys are going to each and every house in the villages distributing food packets. Once we finish packing the food, we have no other work. Please give us some work." I told them to go to the villages, clean the temples and whitewash them. Body itself is the temple of God. When you white wash the temples outside, think that you are painting the temple of body with love. That is true service. Never use harsh words. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly. Bodily wounds can be cured by the use of medicines. But the wounds inflicted by the tongue can never be healed. That is why I

repeatedly tell you to cultivate love and talk with love. I never use harsh words even when I appear to be angry. I always speak lovingly. You too will become divine when you cultivate such Divine Love.

Cultivate good thoughts. Good thoughts lead to good actions. Good actions lead to sathsanga (good company). Cultivate love. Everything is based on love and love alone. Man is born in love, is sustained in love and ultimately merges in love. Love is the basis of human life. But you are forgetting such true love and are getting carried away by the worldly and physical love, which is not love in the true sense.

The dhobi beats the clothes on the hard stone and draws over it the hot iron to straighten the folds. So, you too, will have to pass through a terrain of travail in order to become fit to approach God. See Me as resident in everyone. Give them all the help you can, all the service they need. Do not withhold the sweet word, the supporting hand, the assuring smile, the comforting company, the consoling conversation.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

20. Education For Supreme Bliss

Date: 22 November 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Convocation - 19

Embodiments of Divine Love, Students-Boys and Girls! Patrons of Education and Educational Administrators!

True education is that which teaches us
The way to achieve world peace
By removing narrow-mindedness
And inculcating unity, fraternity and
equality.
(Telugu Poem)

TODAY what the world needs is neither wealth nor any materialistic advancement. It needs students who are ideal and who work for the welfare of society. The field of education today is plagued by problems which confuse everybody. We rarely find students working for the welfare of society and strengthening its moral fabric. Today students struggle to acquire power, position and wealth. They do not put in any effort to inculcate virtues in themselves. It is a mistake to think that service is for someone else. In fact, it is service to oneself and to God. Sarvata Pani-Padam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthati (with hands, feet, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe).

Recognise The Truth Of Your Divinity

There is one power that pervades both microcosm and macrocosm. That power is the Cosmic Divine. The divine consciousness present in you is the same as that present in all. The whole world is filled with this divine consciousness. People who realize this eternal truth will not tread the wrong

path. Forms are many but the divine power is one. Therefore, man should endeavour to recognise his innate divinity. Today there are millions of scholars and intellectuals. Have they done anything good for society? They promote only their selfishness and self-interest. Rarely do we find such people working for the welfare of the country. Only when selfishness is removed completely from the nature of men will there be purity in the country.

The body, mind and intellect alone do not make a man. They are the vestures put on by man. The body is inert. The mind is negative. Man considers himself to be a combination of the inert body and negative mind. But man is eternal and changeless. 'Man' lives eternally at all times and in all states of existence. Whatever you hear, talk, think and act is the reflection of the inner being. You may consider yourself to be highly educated. It is merely the reflection of the inner divine. The studies you undertake are merely reflection, reaction and resound and cannot be considered as true education. All these shall diminish in their value in course of time. Humanness is permanent and has no birth or death. This body is bound to change but the 'man' never dies. You take man to be the embodied being who is subject to birth and death. The permanent man lies in humanness and is imperishable. The other name of man is 'Nara' (one who does not perish). The atma does not change.

Why then do you fear death when you are the embodiment of the Self? You are the eternal truth. Being the embodiment of truth and eternity, why do you go after these changing and temporary things? Today's education can confer only worldly comforts. Besides secular education, one should acquire the knowledge of the atma. You can experience the divine power, which is all-pervasive. This is called the Cosmic Divine. Many scientists have experimented a lot to discover this power. But what is the outcome? They tend to discover what is transient and worldly. You should try to recognise the oneness of the divine power that pervades the entire universe. Once you recognise this truth, you will never be subjected to worries.

The power that pervades the whole universe is also in your little finger. You doubt this fact, go by the name and form and enfeeble yourself. Once you transcend the name and form and realize the divine energy, you get

enormous strength.

Divine Energy Is The Basis Of Life

Embodiments of Love!

Love is the basis of life in this world.

There is nothing which you cannot accomplish with love.

It is the power of love that makes the earth revolve without the support of any axle.

It is the power of love that holds the stars in their positions without falling down. It is the power of love that withholds the oceans from submerging the earth.

It is the power of love that makes the wind blow over the seven worlds.

This sacred love is eternal, most amazing and indivisible.

That love is the life-breath of man.

(Telugu poem)

Without love, mankind cannot exist. Humanness is not based on the form alone. In fact, we can consider all beings to be divine. But man is carried away by the differences in form. When you realize the oneness of all these forms, you can enjoy eternal bliss. Therefore, it is important to start practising this principle of unity in your lives.

What is the use of all your learning when it does not help you to change your destiny?

When bad thoughts enter your mind, All your education and intelligence become futile and meaningless.

(Telugu Poem)

No Difference Between Manava And Madhava

Therefore, you should never entertain bad thoughts. You should recognise the purity present in humanity. Fire burns everything. Cosmic Divine is like fire. It is present everywhere and incinerates all evil to ashes. Mind makes the man. But man can be transformed into the divine. Thus, there is no difference between manava (man) and madhava (divinity). The power latent in you is the same as in God. Because of his physical form, man appears to be different. Never be carried away by these forms. Put your faith in the divine power. The manas (mind), the buddhi (intellect), the chitta (limited human consciousness) and the antahkarana (inner instrument) appear to be different. But the energy that activates them all is one. All are nothing but consciousness. Because of his narrow vision, man is unable to perceive these verities.

Men Are Many, But The Consciousness Is One

Embodiments of Love!

Never hate anyone, because the principle of love is immanent in all. Divine energy too is present in all. Never criticize or denigrate anyone. Love all. That itself is divine consciousness which transforms into divine power. Therefore, never give scope to bad thoughts. With pure conviction declare that you are the Cosmic Divine present in all. Many people take recourse to many spiritual practices without understanding their own innate divinity.

Neither by penance nor by pilgrimage
nor by study of scriptures nor by Japa can one cross the ocean of life.
One can achieve it only by serving the pious

(Sanskrit Verse)

So, enter the path of service. Divinity is the same in all. There is no duality in the universe. The Vedas proclaim: "Ekam Sath Viprah bahudha vadanti." (truth is one, but scholars refer to it by many names). Though the bulbs are many, the current is one. Dresses may be many but the cloth is one. Men are many, but the consciousness is one. This is universal consciousness or the Cosmic Divine. Universal consciousness gets limited to individual consciousness by man's attachment to the physical form. Consciousness is one, but man is cultivating differences on the basis of forms.

Jewels are many, but gold is one; Cows are many, but milk is one; Beings are many, but the breath is one; Castes are many, humanity is one;
(Telugu Poem)

Science has also to recognise this oneness of universal consciousness. There is only unity in this universe. Man sees plurality on the basis of names and forms. Once he transcends names and forms, he can experience unity. Since he has been experiencing duality on the basis of names and forms, he sees plurality and gets deluded. There should be no scope for doubt, hatred or anger. Realise that everything is love. Imbibing in yourself this principle of love, you should serve others with the feeling that you are serving God Himself. Lead your life inspired by such sacred ideals.

Transcend The Mind To Attain Equanimity

There is an inner being in man which is his subtle body. Body consciousness is related to the gross body; it can overshadow the inner subtle body which comprises the mind, the intellect, the chitta and the antahkarana. One has to

transcend this body consciousness and rise to the level of Higher Consciousness which is also termed as Over Mind. This Higher Consciousness experiences everything but is not attached to anything. As long as the mind exists, it is not possible to enter the realms of Higher Consciousness.

It is said, "Mano Moolam Idam Jagat" (the mind is the basis for the universe). The mind pervades the entire universe. It sees names and forms and the duality of the material world. If you go beyond the material life, you can experience what is called 'vibration life.' This higher state is also termed as Super Mind. In this state of Super Mind, you experience equanimity. The state of equanimity is true Vedanta. There can be no happiness without equanimity.

The Vedas declare:

Saha Navavathu Saha Nau Bhunakthu Saha Veeryam Karavavahai
Tejaswi Navadheethamasthu Ma Vidvisavahai"

(May the Lord protect and nourish us! May we grow in intelligence and valour working together! May we live in friendship without hatred!)

The primary teaching of the Vedas is cultivation of unity. The Vedas teach the principle of oneness. But there is no unity in the world today.

Students!

Today is the day of Convocation when you all receive degrees. These degrees are also some kind of titles. Of what use are such titles if you have to beg in order to live? Your education is not for this. Secular knowledge is for earning your livelihood. It is through spiritual knowledge that you attain the supreme bliss. But as long as you live at the level of the mind, you have to pursue secular studies. The moment you transcend the mind, this education can be

overlooked. Man ascends to the Divine by transcending his mind.

One should cultivate the Cosmic Mind. Westerners refer to it as the Cosmic Power. They have come upon this truth now, while the Bharatiyas have known it for centuries. But having known the truth, they have not been able to put it into practice. Man has become zero in practice. Only through practice can you realize the atma.

Divine Energy Pervades Everything

Everything is governed by the Divine Will. Whatever happens in this world is only the Divine Drama. He who understands this is truly a man of wisdom. The atma is the true nature of man. What is the atma? What is chaitanya? They are all aspects of energy, which has no form. While the current is without any form, a bulb, a fan or an electric stove has a definite form. In each appliance, it does have a different function. If you say, "Oh current, how helpful you have been to me!" and touch it, you get a shock. Current has that energy and hence it is a form of the Cosmic Divine.

This is also illustrated in the story of Bhasmasura who could reduce anything to ashes through the power he had acquired from the Divine by penance. This inner energy expresses itself in the form of knowledge. Knowledge has to be transformed into skill to achieve balance in life. But people today are killing this knowledge thereby losing their balance. By losing balance in their lives, they acquire only outward vision and do not cultivate inner vision or insight. When your outlook is projected outwards, your mind starts wavering. You should maintain balance in life. It is possible only when you transform your knowledge into skill. For this, you should get rid of all bad feelings and shun body attachment. All the suffering in the world is due to body attachment. You should cultivate attachment to the atma. Many people may feel why Bhagawan teaches all these to the youngsters. Actually, it is very important to everyone - be it a youngster, middle-aged man or an old one.

Start Early, Drive Slowly And Reach Safely

Man wastes his childhood in fun and frolic.

In youth, his life is wasted by indulging in sensual pleasures.

In middle age, man submerges himself in materialistic pursuits and struggles all the time to earn wealth.

In old age, he laments over the lack of this or that and does not think of God.

Without any interest in the path of devotion,

He is bogged down in the cycle of cause and effect and thus ruins his life.

(Telugu Poem)

Start early, drive slowly and reach safely. Start making efforts even when you are still young. What will you gain if you waste all your energy in your youth and then start thinking about God in old age?

Everything Is Reflection, Reaction And Resound

Students! Boys and Girls!

Realise that the cosmic energy present in everyone is the same. Everything is Universal Cosmic Power. This is referred to as Divine Cosmic Power. This Divine Cosmic Power is present within ourselves and we need not seek it outside. In this world, all the energy that we see, all the energy that we study and all the energy that we hear of, is within us. Anything that you do not have within yourselves does not exist anywhere else. Everything is reflection, reaction and resound. Every human is divine. When you realize this truth, all your troubles and worries vanish. When body attachment increases, worries also increase. On this basis it is said - 'Less luggage, more comfort, make travel a pleasure'. Vedanta refers to this as 'renunciation'. Renunciation does not mean giving up home and hearth and going to forest. It means experiencing the unity of all beings. You imagine all the differences. They do not exist really. All that you study is borrowed knowledge. All this education is

required in the material world. You should acquire it only as much as is necessary.

Can you call a person educated just because he knows how to read and write? Are you an educated person just because you have acquired a college degree? No. Can education without good feelings and good mind be called 'true education?' If education is merely for a living, then are not the animals and birds living? Education is for life, it is not for a living. Without realizing this truth, men put themselves in many snares for the sake of eking out a livelihood.

Secular Education And Spiritual Knowledge

Embodiments of Love!

Having been born as human, we should recognise the divine energy within us. We should experience this divine energy. Today what we have to share and spread is bliss and not misery. Human life is highly sacred. Secular education is also important. You should try to acquire it with certain limits. Otherwise, why should we establish colleges and educational institutions?

Secular knowledge is essential for your welfare in this world. But for the welfare hereafter, the knowledge of Brahman is essential. Secular education is merely for the body and not for life. It cannot help you to understand the nature of the atma. There is no greater education than the one which helps you to understand the nature of the atma.

Why can't you recognise your own truth instead of knowing so much about others? You enquire of others 'who are you?' Instead of that, you should enquire 'who am I?' Of what use is knowing about others when you do not know who you are? When you know yourself, you will easily understand others. The same principle is immanent in you and others. It is the all-pervading universal consciousness. You should recognise this divine energy. Then you will not have any suffering or misery. Bhagawan states this from His own experience. My life is My message. I am always blissful. I have no

worries. People greet me 'Happy Birthday.' Greet others who are not happy. Worries come and go. They are like passing clouds. Why then do you fear? Body is bound to perish one day or the other. It is like a water bubble. Mind is like a mad monkey. Why do you follow it? Follow the conscience, which is eternal. That is the goal of your life. Everyone in this world seeks happiness. This bliss is within you. Human body is made up of five sheaths. Annamaya kosha (food sheath) relates to the physical body. The subtle body comprises pranamaya kosha (life sheath), manomaya kosha (mind sheath) and vijnanamaya kosha (wisdom sheath). Anandamaya kosha (The ultimate sheath of bliss) is one's goal of life. The vijnanamaya kosha should not be confused with science.

When Ego Enters, Love Vanishes

The body undergoes changes in four stages: childhood, youth, middleage and old age. But you remain unchanged. You introduce yourself as 'I' when enquired by others in all the stages of your life. This 'I' is a single letter. You attach many decorations to it. Cross the 'I,' i.e., feeling of body consciousness or ego. The Christian Cross is a symbol for the elimination of ego. When the feeling of 'I' is eliminated, the ego vanishes and you become God. You should understand and experience the real nature of 'I'.

Your life is full of love. Anything may change but love does not change. Being born and brought up in love, we are full of love. Cut your ego and cultivate love. When ego enters, love vanishes. Do not give any scope for ego to enter. When you recognise the purity of love, you will get rid of your faults. Everything is based on pure and selfless love. In fact, love is divine. But you ignore this divinity. This is the biggest mistake.

Human body will perish one day or the other. Don't go by the body. It is only an instrument. The strength that lies in the body is yours. When you recognise this power, you will become divine. "Master the mind and be a mastermind." Do not become a slave, but become the master.

Students have to pursue secular education as it helps them to earn their

livelihood. You also have to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of your parents and make them happy.

Along with secular education, spiritual education is also necessary. This type of education confers happiness and peace on you. Develop sacred and good feelings and live a noble life. Make your parents happy. Never trouble them. It is they who gave you life and brought you up. If possible, try to explain to your parents the noble and good things you have learnt here. The Vedas say, "Mathru Devo Bhava, Pithru Devo Bhava..." So, consider your parents as God. With good conduct and behaviour earn a good name in this world.

There Is Only One Reality That Exists

The knowledge acquired by you should make

you recognise your inner being. Secular education is like a passing cloud. It comes and goes. The reality which is within is eternal principle. Hold on to it and strengthen your faith. You have already acquired good and high education. On this Convocation day, my only advice to you is to put it into practice. Share with others what you have learnt and derive happiness therefrom. The Union Minister, Dr. Murali Manohar Joshi, is a highly educated and knowledgeable person. He has told you many good things. How far have you understood them? If you are able to understand even one principle mentioned by him, it will transform your life. A single matchstick is enough to burn any quantity of matter.

There is only one reality that exists. If you realize this, you can achieve anything. It is only the body attachment that obstructs your vision. In a house you have different rooms like drawing room, dining room, bathroom, kitchen, etc. Each room is separated from the other by a wall existing between them. If you remove these walls, you will find only one big hall. Similarly, when you remove the walls of body consciousness, you will develop a broad mind.

Education Should Be Free

You have studied in this institute for many years. When you go out, teach others what you have learnt here and be a role model. Lead an exemplary life and be happy. Your happiness is My happiness. I do not expect anything other than this from you.

The Minister has said that there is only one way to keep the students on the right path. I too agree with him. That is purity. It alone guides you in the right way. Our students are not paying any tuition fee, laboratory fee or examination fee. They come here empty-handed and go out with immense wealth of education. They learn here humility, discipline and faith. Education should confer humility. In other institutions, many students do not possess this quality of humility. Those students pay fees. So, the teachers and authorities are not able to question the students and correct them. Since the authorities are collecting money for providing education, they are afraid of taking any disciplinary action against the students. Educational institutions, which are supposed to be Saraswati Mandirs (centres of learning) have turned into Lakshmi Mandirs (centres of money). Money is able to purchase even degrees. Admission, attendance and, it is said, even promotion to a higher class is possible on payment of money.

In My opinion, Government should provide free education to all students. It is spending crores or rupees on many programmes. Collection of fees from students cannot add to Government revenue much.

Provide free education to the children and they will be good. Education which is purchased can lead only to agitation. Unable to secure jobs with purchased degrees, some students even put an end to their lives. The Government is responsible for this. Only free education will develop good relationship between the people and the Government.

Our Students Are Like Pure Unalloyed Gold

We at Prasanthi Nilayam do not collect even a paisa from any student in our institutes. Not only do we provide free education, scholarships are also given to our students as an encouragement and reward. Our students develop an

unwavering mind and make their parents happy. They lead a happy life. They are pure at heart. They do not possess any evil feelings. Leaving aside a negligible minority, they are like pure unalloyed gold. They do not like to leave the Institute and Swami even after they finish their education.

But some students have to leave the Institute after finishing their education. Parents wish to live with their children. So, they have to obey them and fulfil their wishes also. Many of our students, even after completing M.Sc. or MBA, again apply for Ph.D. Their intention is to stay with Swami for a few more years. They desire for all these degrees only to be with Swami. On the other hand, those students who purchase education (in other places) long to leave their institutes and go in search of jobs as soon as they receive a degree. Our students are not like that. Along with degrees, they also possess good character. They conduct themselves in a befitting way.

Silence is the only language of the realised. Practice moderation in speech. That will help you in many ways. It will develop Prema, for most misunderstandings and factions arise out of carelessly spoken words. When the foot slips, the wound it causes in the heart of another will fester for life. The tongue is liable to four big errors; uttering falsehood, scandalising, finding fault with others, and excessive speech. All these have to be avoided if there is to be Santhi for the individual as well as for society.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

21. Love Is My Only Wealth

Date: 23 November 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Birthday - 75

Embodiments of Love!

THERE are many persons who analyse and investigate into the nature of divinity, but very few understand it in its true spirit. Those who perceive it are truly fortunate ones. In fact, it is not possible to comprehend divinity in its fullness. However, the man who realizes the same atmic principle in others as he experiences it in himself can understand divinity, irrespective of the fact whether he is a householder or a renunciant. In such a person, divinity is firmly established. He becomes divinity itself.

A millionaire can eat food only and not gold. This is the principle of equality of mankind. God is in everybody. Divinity is immanent in equal measure in everything - good or bad, righteous or unrighteous,

sacred or unsacred. Since ancient times, sages have been trying to investigate this mystery. The Vedic sage declared: Vedahametam Aditya varnam Tamasa Parastat (I know the Cosmic Being who shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond darkness). In modern times, scholars investigate into the nature of divinity according to their own perceptions and propound manifold theories.

Divinity Permeates The Entire Universe

The universe is subject to three processes: creation, sustenance and destruction or dissolution. None can deny this truth; scientists also cannot negate it. This is a universal truth perceived by everybody. That which is born is sustained and is eventually destroyed. This is the direct proof of divinity. When you enquire into these three fundamental facts, the existence of divinity becomes evident. In daily life also, this divinity is experienced. For example, you have seen the dancing lions from Malaysia (a Malaysian troupe presented their traditional lion dance before Swami's Discourse in Hill View

Stadium on 23 November 2000). However, these are not real lions. But on seeing them, you can surmise that there exist real creatures called lions. In a similar manner, almost every object of daily life points towards divinity. The sweetness in the sugarcane or the hot taste of chillies, the sour taste in tamarind or the bitter taste of neem, all these are indicators of divinity. The stars in the sky, the brightness of the sun, the coolness of the moon and the rise and fall of sea waves are also pointers towards the divine principle. Though all these do not directly show you God per se, they produce positive evidence of the existence of the divine principle.

In society, there are different functionaries like a minister for education, a collector for revenue and the police for law and order, etc., and above all of them is the Prime Minister. In the same way, in the universe, there is Brahma for creation, Vishnu for protection and Shiva for dissolution. But, for all these functions, the supreme head is divinity. The Muslims call this principle, Allah. Every religious denomination has its own name for divinity. The Bharatiyas and Westerners have a common term in English, God. In this word, G stands for generation, i.e., creation, O for organization, i.e. sustenance and D for dissolution. Thus in this word God, all these three aspects, namely, creation, sustenance and dissolution are implied. Taking such evidence, people have been propagating the principle of divinity. Stated or unstated, truth is truth. God exists. Where is He? He is omnipresent. He is in all forms. The divinity present in humanity is self-evident. The very fact that lakhs of you have come here today is the evidence of your love for God. Love is the proof of divinity. You have filled your hearts with love for Bhagawan. There is no greater bliss than this.

Experience Your Inner Reality

Embodiments of Love!

Any task undertaken with self-confidence is absolutely essential for every person. If you expect others to respect and love you, you should first respect and love them. Without respecting or loving others, you cannot expect any reciprocal feeling from them. In the same way, if you love God, God loves

you. Life consists of reaction, resound and reflection. You get back exactly what you do to others.

What message can I give you for the day? As I see you, My heart overflows with love. When I see so many of you expressing your love for Me, there is no limit to My joy. I have not sent out invitations to any of you. My love has drawn you here. Your love for God and God's love for you is the true message. What can one say as a message? I give and you receive, and you give and I receive. This exchange is the true relationship between man and God. Be happy and blissful. Increase your spiritual dimensions. Live with the firm conviction that there is one Divinity resident in all.

Why does a Government set up law enforcing agencies like the police and military? It is solely for the sake of protecting the country. The police punishes the guilty. If there is no lawbreaker, there is no need for police at all. In the same manner, your bad actions attract punishment and your good actions, reward. This is the theory of karma. But one blames God, if one is punished. This is a big mistake. Ensure that there is no trace of evil within you. Then you need not worry about any punishment. The very persons designated for punishing you will come and protect you.

"Have Faith In Yourself"

I have said that man is the embodiment of the atma. I have also told you that the atma is imperishable. This eternal entity indicates your eternity. Creation, sustenance, and dissolution are all ordained by God. He manifests in all the elements. With this firm conviction, wherever you go, to whatever country you travel, you will attain success. Spiritual precept insists, "Have faith in yourself." That is, first of all, know yourself. Everybody asks the question, "Who are you?" There is none to ask, "Who am I?" When the question, "Who are you?" is asked, a reply that you are so and so or you are from such and such place or you are doing such and such job is not the proper answer. "I am the atma," is the only right answer. The body and the mind are impermanent. To imagine that you are any of these is a serious mistake. Get rid of the feeling that you are the body and the mind and recognise the atma, which

alone gives power to both the body and the mind to function. Everyone is a manifestation of the atma. This manifestation has expanded all over. This all-pervading atmic principle is the cosmic principle. You should attempt to recognise this Cosmic Power. You may feel that this is very difficult, but it is extremely simple. Your body attachment is what makes it appear difficult. Sarva Bhuta Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchati (salutations to all beings ultimately reach God) because God is present in everyone. In the Bhagavadgita, lord Krishna says, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being).

Unity In Creation; Duality Is In Perception

If the bird enters a hall of mirrors, it sees many reflections of its own form. It imagines that there are a multitude of birds and they are its competitors. So, it keeps dashing against the mirrors and the mirrors are broken into pieces. Now, it sees as many birds as there are pieces of mirrors. When the mirrors are all shattered to tiny bits, no image is visible and the bird flies away. This is a state of ignorance. On the contrary, when a man of wisdom enters the room, he recognises that these are all his own images and feels happy.

In the same manner, the one who sees himself in all other persons and looks on them as his own images is a true human being. The manifest principle that is visible in the external world is the same as that which exists in an individual. Names, forms and abilities are cognized as separate, but these are mere reflections. The truth is that I and you are one. Divinity is right inside you and is not separate. Nor is it specially located in a temple or a mosque or any other place of worship. What you try to see in a mosque or a temple is inside you. All sadhana is undertaken to experience this inner reality.

Every man is prone to birth and death. The period between birth and death is man's life-span. The individual grows and wears away but his inner spirit does not undergo any change. It is only the body which undergoes changes. A child grows up to become an adult and a grandfather. Descriptions are different, but the individual is the same. In the same manner, God has many names and forms but divinity is only one. Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanti (truth

is one but scholars refer to it by many names). Realising this truth, you should respect and love all and give joy to all. Then you become God yourself. Once you recognise the fact that the divinity in all is the same, there will be no sense of duality. You may think that it is very difficult but is extremely simple. Your inability to recognise this truth is due to the fault of your vision and not the fault of creation. Without correcting your faulty vision, you blame the creation. There are no flaws in creation. There is unity in creation; duality is in your perception.

Self-confidence Is The Key To Success In Life

With self-confidence, any task can be performed successfully; a small example. Abraham Lincoln was born in an extremely poor family in America. His father was a carpenter. His mother Nancy worked hard to educate him. When Lincoln went to school, other children made fun of him for his dress and poverty. Lincoln could not bear this and told his mother, "Mother, I am subjected to a lot of ridicule by fellow-students. Please get me a good dress." Taking him close, his mother said, "Son, you must see our condition first. We are not well-to-do. Feeding all of us itself is a problem. In this condition, how can you expect fancy clothes? Act according to your condition. Sooner or later, you will reach the level of your deservedness. Don't be deterred by other people's taunts. Live with self-confidence. Self-confidence is the source of all success." Thus, she encouraged him. From that moment, Lincoln became a person of great self-confidence and pursued his studies and activities with honest effort. He was never upset over anything.

Self-confidence was his armour. Devoid of material wealth and comforts, he was endowed with plenty of self-confidence.

The Difficult Days Of Young Lincoln

His mother passed away after sometime. But her words of wisdom were firmly entrenched in his heart. His father married again. It is quite common amongst Westerners. His stepmother was also quite affectionate towards Lincoln and encouraged him to persevere on the path shown by his mother. Life was

difficult for him throughout. He wanted to have some employment. However, he thought that self-reliance was better than serving others and started a business of his own. He conducted his business in the most upright manner. But his difficulties went on increasing and his debts accumulated. Lincoln carried on with the strength of his mother's advice regardless of all difficulties. He had a severe setback in his business. Ultimately, he had to sell everything. He worked hard to clear all his debts.

There is no disease like being debtor, There is no charity greater than feeding
the hungry,
There is no grater god than parents,
There is no greater Dharma than compassion,
There is no greater gain than the company of the good,
There is no enemy greater than anger,
There is no wealth greater than good reputa-
tion,
Bad reputation is death itself.
There is no ornament better than the
chanting of God's name.
(Telugu Poem)

Lincoln strictly lived in this manner. Seeing his upright character, some of his friends felt that he could very easily be elected to the state legislature. They advised him to stand for election and promised their help. Lincoln stood for election and won with a thumping majority. By his honesty and hard work, he rose to become the President of the United States of America. At the moment of his success, he recollected his mother's words. He fully realized the importance of self-confidence.

The slaves were treated in a very harsh manner by the Whites in those days.

Abraham Lincoln wanted to ameliorate their condition and secure equal rights for them. He was of the firm conviction that all human beings were equal and any differences on the basis of colour or race were improper. He tirelessly worked for the cause of the slaves. Eventually, he succeeded in the abolition of slavery in the United States. He is still held in high esteem for this noble work.

Do Not Attach Any Importance To Any Criticism

In the world, there is a constant strife between good and evil. There are many people who are jealous of others and subject them to slander. But one should not attach any importance to such criticism. Praise and abuse are common to mankind. In Bharat also several famous people faced similar difficulties but they overcame these with fortitude. If you live in truth and love, you will not come to harm. The body is bound to fall some time or the other. Merely to safeguard it, one should not take to bad ways. Body is perishable while truth is eternal. Hence, strive for truth. There is nothing greater than truth.

The creation emerges from Truth and it merges into Truth,
Is there a place where truth does not exist?
This alone is Absolute Truth.
(Telugu Poem)

The Four Kinds Of People Who Oppose God

There are some, who turn away from the path of goodness and start opposing God when their desires are not fulfilled. But the mistake lies with them and not with God. There are four kinds of people who oppose God.

The first type of people are atheists, who profess that there is no God. In the second category come those people who speak against God out of jealousy

because others are better off than them. The third, those who lament at the high reputation and fame of others which they are unable to achieve themselves. The fourth type are those who are disillusioned when their desires are not fulfilled. They resort to improper and mean ways to attain their ends. They ask, "Swami, I am starting a school or a society and I need so much money." I tell them the truth, "Son, this is a different country from yours. The currency of this country cannot be carried in your country. If you resort to illegal methods and cheat the Government, I shall never permit such a practice." Under such circumstances, they go back to their places and make all kinds of false allegations against Me. Whatever others may say, I will never deviate from the path of Truth. Do not pay any attention to praise or slander. Divinity is based on faith. Faith is something which cannot be bestowed on you. Everyone has his own faith.

There are a few who say that God does not exist.
For those who refuse to believe, there is no God.
For those with faith, there is God.
'Yes' and 'No' belong to others;
For Bhagawan, it is always 'yes, yes, yes.'
(Telugu Poem)

Welfare Of Humanity Is Bhagawan's Primary Concern

Each individual's conscience is his own witness. Do not waste your energy on negative criticism. You should never abandon your faith and your self-confidence. Some people become jealous at the growth and prosperity of others. Jealousy is a dangerous pest. If a pest enters the root of a tree full of leaves, fruits and flowers, the entire tree dies quickly. The pest is not visible to the eye and works insidiously.

A jealous person conceals his jealousy and harms others like a pest. These

are evil ways. However, in My view, there are no evil persons. All evil behaviour changes sooner or later. My truth is one. All belong to Me and I belong to all. My only wealth is love. I embrace all with love. Even people who come to Me with hatred in their hearts are dear to Me. I do not search for your faults. I go by the principle of love. All should take note of My equanimity and follow this principle of unity. Purity follows unity and from purity, divinity is attained. To attain divinity, you have to cultivate purity and for purity you should live in harmony with all. Only then will you get positive results.

Embodiments of Love!

Today marks the 75th year of the Advent of this body. Age does not concern Me. Welfare of humanity is My only concern. More particularly, I am concerned about the welfare of the distressed and the poor. My primary objective of life is to remove the difficulties of the helpless. Irrespective of any comments, adverse or otherwise, My resolve is the same. You should also make a resolution on these lines.

Having asked what ought to be asked, Hold on till you obtain what you had asked for.

Having thought what ought to be thought, Hold on till you succeed.

Either God should yield to your prayer
or you should ask wholeheartedly with intensity.

This is the path a true devotee should pursue.

(Telugu Poem)

True Qualities Of A Good Individual

Have perseverance until your resolve is fulfilled. This is the vow of a bhakta (devotee). This is what can be called as true tapas. Tapas does not mean going to the forest or standing upside down and doing some meditation or the

other. Keep your word, adhere to truth, show gratitude where due and stay firm in your self-confidence. These are the true qualities of a good individual. If you adhere to these tenets, you will overcome with ease any obstacle that may come your way. Hold on to your self-confidence and self-respect and be ready for any sacrifice. As I have already reiterated, the atma in everyone is the same. Therefore, do not be swayed by such considerations as somebody being small and somebody being great, etc. Selfconfidence is not related to age. Quantity may vary between individuals, but quality is the same.

Unity Safeguards Independence

Embodiments of Love!

If Bharat is to progress in the proper direction,

there should be complete unity amongst all its people. Our great leaders made great sacrifices and secured freedom for us. While we have attained Independence, we have not achieved unity. What is the use of freedom without unity? It is due to lack of unity that people of this country are reduced to a sorry state of affairs. There is hatred everywhere. There are ten factions in one party. People of one house go in four different directions. If this kind of disunity persists, how can freedom be safeguarded? People are not going on the right path. You have to adopt the path of complete unity, so that every Bharatiya must be able to say proudly: "This is my beloved country, this is my mother tongue and my religion." You should also uphold the reputation and traditions of your family.

People today have lost faith. A man without faith is verily blind. If you do not have faith in others, at least have faith in yourself. Develop faith in yourself and faith in God. This is the secret of greatness. Only then will you be able to experience divinity. God does not have a separate form. 'I,' the atma, is God. You must have this kind of faith. Only then can you accomplish spiritual growth.

Bharat is a sacred land. Such sacredness is hardly found anywhere else in the

world. That is why many avatars have taken birth in this land: Bharat is like a mother of all other nations. Rama said, "Janani Janma Bhumishcha Swargadapi Gareeyasi" (mother and motherland are greater than even paradise). You must recognise this truth. There are many who chant the Name of Rama, but is there anyone who actually practises the virtues represented by Rama? People are heroes in chanting but zeros in practice.

The Vedas have given four Mahavakyas: Tattwam Asi (That thou art), Prajnanam Brahma (constant integrated awareness is Brahman), Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman) and Ayam Atma Brahma (this Atma is Brahman). You are constantly chanting these words but are not putting them into practice. Mere chanting without action is pure exhibitionism. While saying all are Brahman, you hate others. This is sheer hypocrisy. If you have aversion to any individual, quietly keep away from him. Do not hate him; try to develop love for him. Do not criticize or hate anybody. This is My message today. This is the course to be adopted by you. I love everybody. I have no dislike for anybody. All are My devotees, friends and children. For Me, all are one. This universe is a big book. Antaratma (conscience) is your Guru. God is your friend. Time is also the very form of God. Therefore, do not waste time. Time wasted is life wasted. To make your time pure is true sadhana.

My Love Is The Purest

Embodiments of Love!

The love in you and the love in Me are one and the same. But your love is contaminated by desires for material things. I have no desire for any material wealth. My love is the purest. The love immanent in you turns negative because of the contamination of desires. There is no negative quality in Me, it is entirely positive. So, combine the negative 'I' in you with the positive in Me and attain unity. With this understanding, you will be able to experience indescribable bliss. What sort of bliss? That is Brahmananda. When you experience this Brahmananda, you become one with Brahman. In this state, there is no need for any sadhana on your part. All the sadhanas that you do are for your mental satisfaction. Consider all as one and love all. That is the

true sadhana. Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Nam (God has many names but He is One). While performing the Sahasranama Archana (chanting 1000 names of God), you repeat the various names, Keshava, Madhava, Narayana, Govinda, but it is to the same form that you make your offerings.

Transform Negative Thoughts Into Positive Ones

While doing Anga Puja, you place the flower on your eye and then offer the flower to the deity in front with the Mantra, "Nethra Pushpam Samarpayami" (I offer the flower of my eye). Symbolically, you are offering a flower in place of the eye. You say eye, but offer a flower. This amounts to cheating God Himself. What is the point of offering to God what has been provided by God Himself? You should pray, "O God, everything is Yours, this whole body is Yours, all the limbs and organs are Yours. I am Yours and You are mine." When this kind of identity is established, there is no further need for any external form of worship. But, for those who have not yet reached this exalted state, these various physical forms of sadhana such as japa, tapa and dhyana are suitable. All these require constant practice. Gradually remove all negative thoughts and inculcate positive thoughts. Transform negative thoughts into positive ones.

If anybody abuses you, take no note, for the abuser is abusing only the body and not your Self. If somebody calls you a bad man, do you become a bad man by the mere calling? If, in fact, you have something bad in you, try to destroy it. There are a large number of people in this Kali Yuga who abuse God because their wishes are not fulfilled. This is a universal habit common to all countries. You should not succumb to such mean and unholy feelings. Thyagaraja, for example, says that God will reveal Himself to you only to the extent and manner in which you approach Him. Whichever way you think of Him, God assumes the same form. If your feelings are good, you will get good results.

Embodiments of Love!

I have no desire to have such elaborate Birthday celebrations, not in the

least. I go through all these because it pleases My devotees. I am not particularly enamoured of anything. The happiness of the devotees is My happiness. Dedicate your life to divine love.

Love is the very form of Brahman.
Try to merge love in love.
If you have steady love, you will achieve
the ultimate merger which is true non-duality.
(Telugu Poem)

All That Happens Is For Your Good

Hatred, jealousy and ostentation have become widespread these days. Get rid of all these and adopt the path of love. Whether your desires are fulfilled or not, think that all that happens is for your good. When you encounter difficulties, always think that better days are ahead. Good and bad always go together. Therefore, take both of them with the same attitude. The Gita says, "Sukhadukhe Samekruthwa Labhalabhau Jayajayau" (treat happiness and sorrow, loss and gain, victory and defeat with complete equanimity). Pleasure is an interval between two pains. Reduce your worldly desires. Develop desire for God. Inculcate love for God and thereby increase your happiness. If desires increase, your suffering also increases, and happiness too decreases proportionately.

Bhagawan Wants Only Your Love

You cannot attain God by your wealth. He is to be attained only through devotion. Sathyabhama in her pride hoped to possess Krishna all for herself by her wealth. She wanted to weigh Him against the huge amount of gold she possessed. But she failed. Narada made her realize her folly by showing that a single leaf of Tulasi (basil) offered by Rukmini with real devotion exceeded

all the wealth of Sathyabhama. Sathyabhama symbolises desire while Rukmini represents devotion. Krishna says that He is pleased with the offering of a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water. Do not take this literally. The body is the leaf; the flower, the flower of your heart; your mind, the fruit; and the tears of joy, the water, which is the acceptable offering to God.

Embodiments of Love!

You will have everything in life if you have love in you. Do not hate anybody. This should be the main ideal of your life. This is My message for you. Love is My only wealth. All these magnificent edifices are not Mine; they all belong to the devotees. The only property I own is unbounded love for all of you. I am ready to sacrifice even my very body for the sake of my devotees. You live happily and spend your life in a state of bliss. I want only your love. Your love makes me happy. My love is your greatest wealth and good fortune. This is My greatest gift for you. Take good care of this precious gift. This is My blessing to you on this day. May you all have steady devotion, and sacred, long, happy life! May you have all this! May all your difficulties be removed! May you experience unalloyed bliss!

22. Righteous Practice The True Sadhana

Date: 24 November 2000 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Valedictory Discourse of 7th World Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations

Goodness, humanness, morality and one's own culture should be made evident by practice.

The one who who practises them is the true Sadhaka.

This is the truth which Bhagawan is emphasizing

(Telugu Poem)

THE world is replete with sacred qualities. Time is of prime importance. The heart is tender, the mind is sweet like nectar. Living in such a brilliant country with multifold virtues, you fail to recognize these. People living in families do not realize that such a soft heart and sweet mind are readily available to them. The family is like a pair of spectacles in front of your eyes. While it may appear to be an obstacle in front of the eyes, the glasses actually help to improve one's vision. You should not be deterred by every obstacle or hardship that confronts you. These are only aids to your sadhana and not impediments. Sadhakas should hold this truth firmly in mind. As is the fire, so is the smoke (cloud). As is the cloud, so is the rain. As is the rain, so is the crop. As is the crop, so is the food. One can interpret that the tasty food actually emanates from the heat of the heart. The clouds form in conformity with your own feelings of the heart. Rains are dependent on the clouds. You perform actions in accordance with the thoughts in your minds. The fruits correspond to the actions performed. A small example: If you take a small stone and drop into a well, waves form and spread out to cover almost the entire surface of water. They expand so far as to become invisible to your sight. In the same way, a small thought in your mind like the stone dropped in the well produces disturbances pervading the whole mind and from there pervades the whole body. The entire body is affected by the nature of the thought. Your eyes seek such sights as prompted by the thought. Your hands

perform acts of a similar nature under the influence of the thought waves. Similarly, your legs are affected and you go to such places as are prompted by the thought in your mind.

It Is Important To Cultivate Sacred Thoughts

Therefore, you should cultivate pure and sacred thoughts in your mind. When the pure thoughts enter the heart from the mind, they spread to all the limbs and make the entire body pure. On the other hand, if your thoughts are impure, your whole body is similarly affected adversely with impurity. If everyone in a country has pure thoughts, the entire nation becomes sacred. Therefore, it is important to cultivate sacred thoughts. Humanity is rendered humane if good thoughts are in all hearts. Similarly, human life becomes sweet. In these days mankind is filled with impure thoughts both in mind and heart. What is the cause for this pervasive impurity? It is bad thought that is the source of evil. While exercising your mind, always enquire first whether the thought is right or wrong, it is pure or impure.

Cultivate A Tender Heart

It is said that the heart is tender, the mind is sweet and the time is sacred. Under these circumstances wherefrom does the defect arise? It is necessary to ensure that your mind is filled with sacred and pure, soft and sweet thoughts. Even the great sadhakas should first of all cultivate a tender heart. This human life, which is God's gift, should not be wasted. God has His own plans for which He has given life to all of you. God intends that each individual should be an ideal for the rest of humanity. You should try to recognize this ideal. These ideals are pure and sacred. The importance of the human heart lies in the presence of such purity and sanctity. When impure thoughts enter, our hearts become impure and our actions become perverted. Do not all your thoughts and desires pervade your entire body? Is it proper to say one thing and act differently?

There are no separate sources for speech and thought. There is only one single source for the flow of fluids to all parts of the body, which is the heart.

When you fill your heart with love, your speech and your actions become pure and sacred. The five indriyas are like so many taps fed from the central tank. If the central tank is filled with the water of pure thought, how can any impure thought or action arise? When the heart is filled with pure love, the tongue will not utter impure words, the eyes will not see any obscene sights and the ears will avoid hearing profane sounds. Everyone should enquire into how he is wasting his valuable life. You should cultivate good thoughts. If by chance an evil thought has entered your heart, empty it out, clean it with the water of sacred thoughts and fill it up with pure thoughts. In fact, it is not possible for evil thoughts to enter your heart because your heart is the very temple of divinity. That is why we say, God is Hridayavasi (resident of the heart). In everyman, the reflection of divinity is present in the heart. The Gita says, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhutha Sanathanaha (in the created world all are sparks of My Being. Born as such divine entities, why should you allow evil thoughts to enter your mind?)

Tongue Is The Most Important Organ

Your very speech should be soft. Not only soft and sweet but also truthful. What is the use of uttering blatant lies softly? Tongue is perhaps the most important limb of the human body. Not only is it capable of tasting sweetness, it exudes sweetness in chanting the nectarous names, Govinda, Madhava, Domodara. The divine names of God have been gifted to you. The full potentialities of the tongue are achieved while chanting the sweet names of the Lord. It is also possible to visualize the divine form. There is no part of the body which is more important than the tongue. Since the entire creation emanates from and is sustained by Truth, the organ for speech has to constantly adhere to truth.

The water bubble which arises in the water exists in it for a short time and then dissolves in the same water; Nara is the bubble and Narayana, the water. Such an existence arising from divine purity existing in it, persisting in it and finally dissolving in the same mass of water, how can anything evil enter it?

All water bubbles arise from the water, but it is a mistake to consider that the bubbles are distinct from the water. Recognize the close relationship between the water bubble and the source of water. None is enquiring into this fact of nature. Just as the water bubble that emanates from water eventually merges in it, man who emanated from divinity (Narayana) should eventually merge in divinity itself. Just as the water bubble shares many properties with its source, that is water, man emanating from divinity shares the qualities of divinity in him. One may ask wherefrom do these evil thoughts arise? They arise out of the physical, external and worldly life. Therefore, one should avoid at all cost the negative aspects of Prakriti.

Beings Are Many But Breath Is One

Our Srinivasan (Member, Central Trust) has reported that delegates from 165 countries have come for this conference. Countries are many but the earth is one. The quantity of the number of countries is of little importance. Jewels are many but gold is one. Stars are many but sky is one. Beings are many but breath is one. Only when you recognize this unity amongst diverse objects and phenomena, can you realize divinity. Be it Allah or Jesus or Zoroaster or any other name, it all points to only one divinity. You should not criticize other people's religious beliefs. Each has its own method and the consequent realization of bliss is according to his or her understanding. First of all, you get rid of all evil qualities and desires. This is what the Vedas proclaimed in the following words : Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaike Amrutathwamanasuhu (immortality is attained not by wealth, progeny or position, it is attainable only by self-sacrifice). These days one finds only an increasing load of desires with people but no inclination towards self-sacrifice. People forget the interests of their country and increase their personal wants. They ignore unity and enjoy multi-plicity. Consider your motherland as your very body. One should rise to such a broadminded approach.

Of course, there are people who involve themselves in sacrifice of part of their wealth, but in all such actions, there is an element of selfishness. True sacrifice is that which is made towards divinity. This vast Hall has been constructed and the people responsible for that have sacrificed substantially. It

is because of their sacrifice that such a pure and sacred place is available for such a vast assembly of devotees. The assembly in this Hall represents people of diverse countries, diverse religious beliefs and diverse languages. One should sacrifice one's wealth towards such righteous activities. Your act of sacrifice should not result in evil consequences. Ensure that your sacrifice is always in the righteous path.

God Is A Lover Of Music

You know a music college has been constructed. This is also useful for the entire world. God is a lover of music and He is charmed by it. It is for the encouragement of such divine music only, have we established this musical institution. Just imagine, some individual living in some foreign country has come forward to construct this institution in Prasanthi Nilayam. How fortunate is he! Do not misunderstand that Swami is indulging in boasting or self-aggrandizement. Elsewhere, you find an element of selfinterest in all acts of charity all over the world; but in the Sai Institutions, there is no trace of self-interest. In such sacred activities, you may help to any extent. Swami is not soliciting any such help from you. Swami is capable of transforming the entire universe if He so desires. But why Swami is doing all this is to give an opportunity to all of you for making your lives meaningful. There are many wealthy people in the world, not all of them get this thought or idea for sacrifice. Theirs is a misfortune accumulated over several births. What is the use of any amount of wealth, if one cannot carry with him even a fistful of earth! Accumulating wealth with diligence and depositing it all in banks and even accumulating black money, none feels impelled to sacrifice his wealth for sacred purposes. Hidden wealth is no better than dirt. There is no need for such wealth. The heart should be pure and sacred. For this, your sacrifice should be to God.

Reduce Your Desire For Wealth

If you go to a shop and buy a handkerchief, you pay ten rupees. In the same manner, only when you surrender some of your belongings to God, it is possible for you to gain love or grace or peace. God does not demand

anything from you but you have to perform your own duties. From the omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent God, if you give a little, you will receive manifold benefits back. There is no need to give any material things; it is enough if you sur-render your pure, unsullied love. Reduce your desire for wealth.

Even a millionaire cannot digest gold as food,
If you are beset with misfortune,
even a stick will turn into a snake,
If you are blessed with good fortune, even dirt turns into gold,
A scholar may degrade into an animal,
and a dullard can become a great sage,
It is possible that the goddess of misfortune may develop an attraction
toward a rich man.
If you are not ordained by destiny, you will not get even naya paisa.
No, no my friend, keep your desires within bounds,
Join the company of Sai and cultivate a healthy mind.
(Telugu Poem)

If Your Desires Are More, Sacrifice More

Discharge your duties with proper attention. To the extent possible, help others. Once there was an elderly lady, probably on a pilgrimage, travelling by train. As the train was passing over the river Krishna, she threw a few coins into the river. Another well-to-do person in the compartment commented. "What fools these Hindus are, they waste their money by throwing it into the river!" The lady addressed the person, "My son, I am not the fool, but you are. Just imagine how much money you are wasting on tobacco, stimulants and other drinks. I have merely sacrificed two paise for pleasing God. Do you consider my small sacrifice for pleasing God as foolishness? Remember, rivers are the very life-sustaining features. The pure

water of these sacred rivers cleanses us, quenches our thirst and makes us pure. Imagine, if mere water can confer so many benefits, what benefits God cannot confer. Since you do not have this faith, you do not make any offerings to God." The mindset of the Kali Yuga is to give a little and expect in return big rewards like buying a tiny brinjal and asking for a pumpkin free of cost. If your desires are more, you should sacrifice more. We see several beggars outside. Do not give any money to beggars. They may misuse the money given by you for bad purposes. You should first ask, "Friend, what is it you need? If they are hungry, feed them. You should only give what is necessary. Excessive generosity leads to danger. Athi Sarvathra Varjayeth (always avoid extravagance). You need air to breathe but excessive intake of air will lead to all kinds of complications. When you are thirsty, you must drink water, may be a glassful. Is it possible for you to drink up the waters of the entire Ganga? Therefore, do not indulge in excess nor should you waste. Consume the absolute minimum of whatever is required. Holding your breath without exhaling for too long will ruin your lungs. If the digested food is not excreted, the stomach is spoiled.

Thyaga Is Yoga And Yoga Is Bhoga

While you earn, you must also sacrifice a part of it. There is a lot of joy in sacrifice. If anyone is accumulating wealth without any sacrifice, sooner or later, he will be involved in great danger. Thyaga is yoga and yoga is Bhoga. Such a yoga is true enjoyment. All people connected with Sathya Sai movement should sacrifice to the maximum extent possible. Do not misuse any money in your care. If you come across someone in trouble, find out the cause and then help him to the extent necessary. For the homeless, you can build small houses. For those without an earning even to feed themselves, try to provide them with some means of earning money.

Once Jesus and Peter were going in a boat. When they reached the shore, a man approached them saying that he was hungry. Peter gave him a couple of fish. Then Jesus said, "Peter, why are you giving fish to the needy? If you give him a net, he will be able to catch fish for himself. Truly, it is not practical for you to provide him with fish or for his daily sustenance." Instead of merely

satisfying a man's hunger for one day, try to find him a job with which he can earn for his livelihood. Due to the influence of Kali Age people expect rewards without any effort.

The Entire Universe Is Pervaded By Peace

I am telling you what actually happened in Prasanthi Nilayam. Sometime back, Swami provided a refuge for the physically disabled. Swami was arranging for their food needs daily. A few ladies among them started asking for betel leaves and nuts. Swami granted this requirement also. But these people were not satisfied with mere sustenance. They were inclined to go to the market and beg and earn money. From the great to the indigent, all are after money. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows. These are all well-known facts to all our members. Knowing this, do not run after money.

There are many who come and tell Swami that they want peace of mind. Should God give you peace? The entire universe is pervaded by peace. You are yourself the embodiment of peace. Only, you are not aware of it. Indulging in evil ways, increasing your desires, the peace within is shattered to pieces. God has already provided for all human wants. Wherever you see, you find only good things. But man does not turn his attention to the good things of life. Evil things attract him and he trusts only the evil. You are all witness. You have all assembled in hundreds of thousands here and arrangements for feeding you all free have been made. How delicious was the food! Swami also partakes of the same food that is given to all of you. The food is not only tasty, but is also pure. The cooks prepare the dishes with great enthusiasm. However, some do not relish this diet and go to five- star hotels and pay shamelessly a hundred rupees for food, not worth even a rupee. You should uproot such egoism and ostentation from your being. Take only that much as is necessary to satisfy your hunger.

Humanity Should Strive Towards Divinity

One might say that the poor people are in reality the richest. As their needs are limited, the satisfaction and the peace they enjoy is not enjoyed even by

the wealthiest. In fact, peace is satisfaction. Dissatisfaction results in mental distress. So, reduce your requirements and utilise your surplus resources for righteous purposes. Do you save money solely for the purpose of sending your children and grandchildren to foreign countries? After they grow up, God only knows whether they will go to America or some other world. If foreign education is in their destiny, they are bound to get it. With this kind of excessive desires, man loses his humanness and becomes almost an animal. Humanity should strive towards divinity, not towards animal nature. Why I am saying all these things at such length is to emphasise that if you put into practice whatever has been told to you now, your life will become fruitful and meaningful. Here is another important thing to note. Suppose you have some urgent work, say, for example, in Delhi or in Mumbai, you can travel by flight. Why should you spend so much money for travelling in aeroplane, when you have no urgent work? Instead you can travel by train and save a lot of money which can be used for some constructive purpose. You may say plane journey is safer than train journey. But don't you hear about plane crashes these days? If the end is destined, you are bound to meet it any way. If you reduce your expenditure, you will lead a peaceful life.

Don't waste money. Misuse of money is evil. Don't waste food, Food is God. Many people get food served on the plate in excess and ultimately waste so much of it. It is said, Annam Brahma (food is Brahma). What is the use of worshipping Brahma if you waste food which is the very form of Brahma? Similarly, time is God. God is extolled as Kalaya Namaha, Kala Kalaya Namaha (God is time, God is the master of time). So, don't waste time. Time wasted is life wasted. Don't waste your energy by reading vulgar stories and seeing obscene pictures, by watching television and movies. You can certainly see all that is good. A lot of energy is wasted because of bad thoughts, bad vision, bad hearing and bad speech. Talk to the extent necessary. One who indulges in excessive talk is a fool. Many who participate in congregations keep chatting unnecessarily with people by their side. They do not realize that unnecessary talk leads to waste of energy and puts one to disrepute. God is known as Sabda Brahman, meaning God is in the form of sound. Do not misuse it. Today people are interested in seeing obscene pictures. What is the benefit they get out of it? Nothing at all. So, do not see evil.

Bhagawan Loves All

People go all the way to temples to see the deity, but when they stand in front of the deity, they close their eyes and pray. Such being the case, why should one go to temples at all? When you go to temples, you should keep your eyes open and enjoy the beautiful form of the deity. Even in our bhajans, Swami finds many of our boys closing their eyes and singing. They are not blind like Suradas! One should see the divine form and install it in one's own heart. Only then can one grow in devotion. Swami is explaining to you even these minor details so that you may understand them better and put them into practice. Some of these things you may not be aware of. Swami considers it His duty to enlighten you. Rest assured that you will attain divinity if you translate these teachings into practice. Swami often tells you, My life is My Message. Follow Me. Swami loves all. Love is highly sacred. When you develop love, it will gradually get transformed into wisdom. It is because of love that Swami has been bestowing sacredness and divinity on the people, all these years. Today you have gathered here in large numbers. Has Swami sent any invitation to you? No. It is Swami's love that has attracted you here. Love is the greatest attraction. You have come here to experience the bliss that you are not able to get in your house, town, village, state or country. Install the divine principle in your heart that bestows this bliss on you.

The Nature Of Sai Is Love And Love Alone

Munde, Munde Mathir Bhinnah (heads vary, so do the feelings). Each one has his own likes and dislikes. What appears good to some people may appear bad to some others. Good and bad are the feelings of your mind. Sai has nothing to do with them. The nature of Sai is love and love alone. You belch what you eat. Likewise, you are responsible for all your bad thoughts. Swami has absolutely no bad thoughts. His word is pure, His actions are pure, His heart is pure, He is purity personified. During all these 75 years, never has He asked anybody for any favour. Yet so many social welfare schemes are being undertaken.

How is all this being accomplished? Does Swami earn anything? He does not own property worth even a naya paisa. But He has got plenty of property, which you are not aware of. All of you are Swami's property. None else has got this property. All worldly property has a certain limit. But love has no limit. It is the unlimited property. Love alone is responsible for attracting all of you here. All those who have participated in this conference should recapitulate what has been said here and should try to practise at least a little of what has been said here. Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu (May all the worlds be happy). Pray for the welfare of the entire world, not yourself and your family alone. Without the society, how can you and your family exist?

Treat Pleasure And Pain, Success Or Failure Alike

Before the close of this discourse, let Swami tell you a small story. Once there lived a king and queen who looked after the people very well. One day as the queen was applying oil on the king's head, she shed drops of tears. Taking note of this in the mirror opposite to him, the king asked her as to why she was weeping? On his insistence, she replied, "O king, I found a few grey hairs on your head. This is the first message that God sends to man that his end is approaching. The second message is that the vision gets blurred. The third is that the teeth start falling and the last is that there would be wrinkles on the body. Today you have got the first message. That is why I am grief-stricken." The king was one of wisdom. Immediately, he set out to the forest and did penance.

Lord Narayana appeared before him. The king prayed, "O Lord, your sannidhi (proximity) is my pennidhi (wealth). Please shower Your grace on me. I want everybody to live in equality in my country. There should not be any difference such as rich or poor. Let there be no dearth of food, clothing and shelter for my people." Lord Narayana replied, "O king, no doubt, your desire is very noble. But it is not possible to make everybody equal. In this creation, multiplicity is very essential." The King insisted that his desire be fulfilled. Lord Narayana ultimately relented to the king's request. On his return, the king noticed that his kingdom had undergone a great change. Wherever he saw, he found palatial buildings. People were travelling only by cars and

aeroplanes. He did not find anybody walking on the roads. When he reached his own palace, he found the road opposite to the palace was very dirty. He did not find any watchman or a sweeper. Then he immediately called the queen and asked her to send word for a sweeper. She replied that the sweeper, the barber, the dhobi and the cook were not reporting to duty as they became wealthy overnight and did not feel the need to work any more.

Then the king realized that it was a mistake on his part to have asked for such a boon from Narayana that all should be equal. The queen also felt that it was not possible to live in this world without the dualities of rich and poor, good and bad. She too went to the forest and did penance. When Lord Narayana appeared before her, she asked, "What is the boon that you gave my husband?" Narayana replied that the king wanted all his people should live in affluence like him. Then the queen said, "O lord, what is the use if people under such a noble king are bad? Kindly transform all the people into noble ones. Let the king as well as his people live for 100 years." Lord Narayana, pleased with her broadmindedness, said, "You too will live happily for 100 years." The queen returned to the kingdom and told the king about what had happened. But still the problem continued as the barbers, dhobis and cooks were not available. The king again went to the forest and prayed to Narayana. "O Lord, what I had desired from you was utterly wrong. I am paying the price for not paying heed to Your advice. Please restore the kingdom to its original position." Narayana said, "So shall it be." The king realized that happiness lay in union with God, not in material comforts. When the king entered his kingdom, everything appeared normal. The sweepers, barbers and all others belonging to the different strata of society were discharging their duties as usual. Thus, you see that whatever God does is sacred and for your own good. It is not proper on your part to remember God only in times of misery. Sukha Dukhe Same Kruthwa Labha Labhau Jaya Jayau (treat pleasure and pain, success or failure alike) Under any circumstances, your love for God should not waver. Your faith should be steady.

Students and Delegates!

Experience bliss by practising at least one or two of what you have heard

here and share the bliss with others. Pray for the welfare of the entire world. Sathya Sai Organisation is meant to emancipate the world. Being members of such an organisation, you should take part in activities that will uplift the society. Mere lip-service will not serve the purpose. Put into practice all that you have learnt in this conference. World peace cannot be achieved through prayers and rituals. It can be attained only when your behaviour is good. Practise before you preach. That is true devotion, that is true service. Revive the ancient culture of Bharat and transform it into land of divinity. Only then will your lives be sanctified.

Be pure in words and deeds, and keep impure thoughts away. I am every one of you, and so I become aware of your slightest wave of thought. When the clothes become dirty, you have to give them to the wash. When your mind is soiled, you have to be born again, for the cleansing operations. The dhobi beats the cloth on the hard stone, and draws over it the hot iron, to straighten the folds. So too, you will have to pass through a train of travail in order to become fit to approach God. See Me as resident in every one; give them all the help you can, all the service they need; do not withhold a sweet word, a supporting hand, an assuring smile, comforting company and consoling conversation.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

23. Overcome Jealousy With Love

Date: 25 December 2000 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Christmas

Forbearance is the real beauty
in this sacred land of Bharat.
The nectarous feeling in this country
is the feeling towards one's mother.
Character is valued far higher than the very life itself.
People have forgotten the basic principles of this great culture and are
imitating Western culture today.
The Bharatiyas are not aware of the greatness of their own cultural heritage
just as a mighty elephant is not aware of
its own strength.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love Boys and Girls!

SINCE ancient times, this land has been the birthplace of sages, seers and saints who propagated the sacred culture of Bharat to the rest of the world and earned name and fame; but such noble souls are forgotten today. You should recognize the basic truth that Bharat relies on its spiritual wealth and nothing else. Just think for yourself the plight of present day Bharat, which once upon a time spread the light of divinity to the rest of the world. In this sacred land, many men of nobility and virtue had to face hardships and criticism, yet they remained firm in their resolve to set an ideal to humanity.

Jesus Was The Victim Of Jealousy Of The Wicked

Today you have to remind yourselves of the ideals Jesus stood for. From time to time, many noble souls, endowed with immense spiritual power, have

taken birth to propagate sacred teachings to the world. They struggled hard to make the world a good place to live in. But without understanding their noble intentions, foolish people tried to ridicule and persecute them. Right from his birth, Jesus had to face many trials and tribulations. When the name and fame of noble souls spread far and wide, many people become jealous.

The history of Bharat is replete with many examples that bear testimony to this truth. Asuya (jealousy) has three sons, namely., kama, krodha and dwesha (desire, anger and hatred). The divine Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara are the sons of Anasuya. The evil forces of desire, anger and hatred put the people to a lot of trouble. Jesus was also put to suffering in every possible way, though he strove tirelessly for the peace and welfare of society. He was the epitome of compassion and the refuge of the poor, needy and forlorn. But many people tried to create troubles for Jesus as they did not like his sacred teachings and activities. Their hatred for Jesus increased day by day. Even the priests turned against Jesus as they became jealous of his growing popularity. But the fishermen held Jesus in high esteem. They started following his teachings and became his followers. As he became more and more popular, many people, out of jealousy, raised obstacles in his path and even tried to kill him. Jesus had twelve disciples. Judas was one of them. But he betrayed Jesus. At that time, there was only one Judas, but today there are many such 'Judases.' Today the world is engulfed in unrest because of the rise in the number of treacherous people like Judas. They are mean-minded and are easily tempted by money. Judas betrayed just for a few pieces of silver.

Even two thousand years ago, money was the primary temptation of man. Because of their greed for money, people resorted to evil and unjust ways, destroyed truth and indulged in false propaganda. This was the case then, and it is the same even today. No one needs to be afraid of such false allegations. Why should one be afraid of the mistake that one has not committed? In the past, many evil-minded people were jealous of the divine personalities who attained worldwide fame through the teachings of truth and righteousness. Even today there is no dearth of such wicked people.

Bhagawan's Resolve To Serve Humanity Is Unshakable

Today many people are jealous of Sai as His name and fame are spreading far and wide. Neither they undertake any good activity themselves nor do they tolerate someone else doing good. The Rayalaseema region suffered from scarcity of drinking water right from the time of British rule. There were many leaders and wealthy people, but none of them took up the task of providing drinking water to lakhs of people of Rayalaseema.

Today the cost of heart surgery runs into lakhs of rupees. Again, it is Sai Baba who has established Super Speciality hospitals, where most expensive heart surgeries are done totally free of cost. The field of education is corrupted by money to such an extent that one has to pay Rs.20,000 as donation to admit a child to a primary school. But Sai Baba is providing free education right from kindergarten to post graduation. No other individual or government for that matter has been able to provide free education or free medical care to the people.

Sai's Heart Is Pure

Some people are so mean-minded that they do not want to understand and appreciate the sanctity associated with the activities. Have any of them been able to accomplish even one-thousandth part of what Sai baba is doing? No, no, no! It is only Sri Sathya Sai Baba who has undertaken such noble tasks without a trace of selfishness. Sai's heart is pure, His feelings are sacred, and He is totally selfless. Sri Sathya Sai Baba stands for three P's namely, Purity, Patience and Perseverance. There is no trace of selfishness in Sai Baba from top to toe. He is rendering totally selfless service. Why are those with a modicum of intelligence unable to recognize this truth? Why are they indulging in false propaganda? They are doing so due to their greed for money. Not merely that. Money is the basis of conversion of people from one religion to another.

Even those who wear ochre robes become jealous of the prosperity of each

other and indulge in false propaganda.

One does not become a saint or develop devotion just by donning ochre robes.

One does not become free from sins merely by holding the Gita in one's hands.

(Telugu Poem)

What to talk about the Peethadhipathis (heads of big religious establishments), even some of the so-called Sadhus are indulging in this wicked activity. We should not criticize anybody. But I am forced to tell you all this, as it has now become the demand of the situation. Do not be afraid of any false publicity.

Sai's Resolve Will Never Change

Another Super Speciality Hospital has been built in Bangalore at a cost of Rs.300 crores. In this vast land of Bharat, do you find any politician in power associating himself with such noble causes? On the other hand, rather shamelessly, they go on talking ill of others. People who try to obstruct sacred activities are not human beings to all. They are verily demons. Even if the whole world were to be filled with such demons, Sai's resolve will never change. Some people out of their mean-mindedness are trying to tarnish the image of Sai Baba. I am not after name and fame. So, I do not lose anything by their false allegations. My glory will go on increasing day by day. It will never diminish even a bit if they were to publicise their false allegations in the whole world in bold letters. Some devotees seem to be perturbed over these false statements. They are not true devotees at all. Having known the mighty power of Sai, why should they be afraid of the 'cawing of crows'? One should not get carried away by all that is written on walls, said in political meetings or the vulgar tales carried by the print media.

Let us firmly resolve to propagate the principles of truth, righteousness and

love. Sri Sathya Sai Baba has no trace of selfishness in Him. I am spending crores of rupees to alleviate the sufferings of the poor and the downtrodden. My resolve is to feed the hungry and impart education to poor children. There are many millionaires in this world who are so mean and narrowminded that they set their dogs on the beggars who come to beg alms at their doorstep. It is shameful to consider them as human beings.

These persons are unable to do even one thousandth part of what Sri Sathya Sai Baba is doing for society, but shamelessly indulge in false allegations. Instead it would be better for them to follow Sri Sathya Sai Baba and set an ideal to the rest of the world. I have no desires or ambitions. There is no trace of jealousy in Me. I am love personified. Love is My very life. Wisdom is the fruit that I grant. These two form the basis of My life.

Recall The Fate Of Those Who Opposed Divinity

People who indulge in false allegations are bound to come to woe. Those who investigate such false publicity too will meet their doom. Money should be utilized to undertake righteous actions, not for evil purposes. Serve your fellowmen with all love and compassion. Put them on the right path and make them happy. I am not afraid of any false propaganda that people may do. Why should I be afraid when I follow the path of truth, righteousness and love? Let people say what they want; I am not perturbed.

Today I am explaining to you in detail the principle of love that I stand for. During the time of every avatar, wicked people did play their tricks. During the time of Krishna, there were evil-minded people like Kamsa, Sisupala and Dantavakra, who tried their best to harm him. When Rama incarnated for the establishment of dharma, he too had to face stiff opposition from evil forces. He was exiled to forest for 14 years where he had to undergo a lot of suffering. Even his consort was separated from him. Ultimately, what happened to all those who tried to create trouble for the divine personalities? Those who accuse them and put them to suffering commit the worst sin. If one cannot undertake meritorious deeds, it would be better one keeps quiet instead of indulging in such sinful deeds.

There are some people who claim to be devotees and take to evil ways. They feel that their physical appearance will earn them respect. Not at all. It is one's sacredness that makes one a good person. So, one should lead a life of truth and righteousness. The principle of love is the same in one and all. All should stand united by the bond of love. Then the entire world will become one family. We can never attain happiness if we contract and fragment love and develop hatred.

I lead a life suffused with love from dawn to dusk. I am providing high quality free education to thousands of students. Not merely free education; I am showing them by My example the way to lead an ideal life. When these students go out, some people try to pollute their minds with wicked feelings. Whatever others may say, our students are like gold. The very dust of the feet of our students will prevent wickedness in others. The alumni, both boys and girls of our institutions are leading sacred and exemplary lives.

Betrayal Of God Is The Worst Sin

The Messengers of Sathya Sai, Association of alumni of Anantapur College, are undertaking various service activities in many countries. They are encouraging their husbands also to take to the path of service. Our old students are working in various countries like Switzerland, America, Japan, China, Russia, etc. Some foreigners are trying to bribe them, asking them to fabricate stories against Sri Sathya Sai Baba. In Switzerland, when one of our girl students was approached by someone asking her to concoct stories against Sai Baba, she got so enraged that she immediately took out her shoe to teach a lesson to that person. She asked him, "Is this what your religion teaches? Is this the ideal that your religion propagates? Fie on you! Get out!" But there are some traitors like Judas, who are being bribed to level false charges against Sai Baba.

Ultimately, what happened to Judas? He felt miserable for having betrayed Jesus for monetary gains. He shed tears of repentance. He hit himself, saying, "Fie on me! I am a traitor. I betrayed my own Master and God." Betrayal of God is the worst of all sins. Such betrayal can never be atoned for in any

number of births. So, never try to betray God. Love all.

Pleasure Is An Interval Between Two Pains

Salute even those who criticize you because divinity is present in all. Do not spoil your mind by harbouring the feelings of anger, etc. Pray to God with love. All noble souls and incarnations in the past had also to put up with criticism. You may ask why at all such criticism should arise? Criticism, in fact, adds to their glory. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. Shadow follows light. One should not be afraid of shadow. There is light even in shadow. Light and shadow cannot exist separately. There is a principle of unity between them. So, do not react to any criticism levelled against Swami or any other elder for that matter. Just brush it aside, saying, you have nothing to do with it. If someone points out mistakes in you, you can certainly rectify them. But if someone levels false charges against you, you don't need to be worried over it. Be happy. If the criticism is made in a loud voice, it goes into the thin air. If it is made within one self, it goes to oneself only such being the case, why should you be perturbed? Let anyone say anything; remain calm. Consider whatever happens as good for you. With such equal-mindedness, carry on your good work.

There Is Nothing That Sai Cannot Accomplish

In future, you are going to witness many more glorious events. There is nothing that Sri Sathya Sai Baba cannot accomplish. In fact, people would be struck with awe and wonder by His deeds. But His only aim is to make everybody happy. Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu (may the entire world be happy!). Those who aspire for the well-being of others will never be put to difficulties. No obstacles can ever shake them. A small example. Once Buddha encountered the demon of jealousy, which said, "Buddha, I am going to devour you." Buddha smiled and said sweetly, "O demon of jealousy, I love you too." On listening to the loving words of Buddha, the demon immediately turned into a dove that symbolized love and peace and flew away.

One becomes a devotee in the true sense only when one cultivates patience

and conquers the evils of anger, hatred and jealousy with love. "Don't be elated by praise or depressed by blame. It is not proper on your part to love only those who praise you and hate those who criticize you. Criticism will only help you to progress. So, do not harbour hatred towards those who criticize you. Accept everything good that comes your way. Ignore all that is bad. People may praise or criticize, but none can shake Sai. Sai lives in truth. None has been able to shake truth at any point of time. Lead your lives with such strong conviction. Increase your faith in God day by day. As faith increases, all the wickedness will perish. Do not give up the spiritual practices that you have been doing all along. Since Jesus bore all the difficulties with fortitude, he is being adored and worshipped to this day.

Once a young disciple asked Jesus, "O Master, when I am faced with some problems, how am I to solve them? Jesus replied, "O simpleton, do not seek solutions to your problems. Love God, who is installed in your heart. Love even those that hate you because God is present in them also. How can you ever have suffering when you love all? Your heart will be filled with bliss when you love everybody." Similar was the answer which Lord Krishna gave to Arjuna when he asked him, "Swami, is there anybody who is very dear to you?" Krishna replied, "O simpleton, I have neither friend nor foe. I am present in every heart. I reside even in the hearts of those who criticise Me. One who sees God in all and loves them is very dear to Me. One is intimately related to Me not by birth, but by one's intense love for Me. Having been with Me for so long, it is rather surprising that you have not understood this basic truth. O Arjuna, you have made Me sit in your chariot, but not in the chariot of your heart." A Wavering Mind Becomes Unsacred One should install God in one's heart. In fact, you don't need to install Him; He is already there. It is enough if you know the truth that God is present in your heart. Once you recognise this truth, you will become God yourself.

What you have to propagate to the world is love alone. Nothing exists other than love in this world. Love is God. Love is life and love is everything. So, cultivate love more and more. Let your mind not waver under any circumstances. A wavering mind becomes unsacred. That is why once Thyagaraja sang, "O mind, do not waver and do not get deluded." Consider

love as your very life. Love alone makes one's life sacred. One is a true human being only if one has love in him. Love is man; man is love. Man is God and God is love. It is love that unifies all. So, develop love. Tread the path of truth and righteousness and lead a peaceful life. There are no greater powers, no greater ideals and no greater supports than these human values of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema. These four values are the lifesupporting principles. Adhere to these four values and sanctify your life.

Do Not Be Afraid To Follow Truth

Embodiments of Love! Be fearless. Do not be afraid even if a thunderbolt were to land on your head. Death comes only once and not twice. It is bound to come one day or the other. So do not be afraid of death. Be ready for anything. Do not be afraid to follow truth. Fill your life with love. Only then will your life be sanctified. No spiritual practice like japa and dhyana can redeem your life if you do not adhere to truth and love. Let anything happen; hold on to these values. These values alone can give happiness and prosperity to the entire world. Develop love more and more. Do not pay heed to the criticism of others; because you are not committing any mistake. What mistake can there be if one loves God? Having unflinching love for God till your last breath. Do not entertain conflicts or doubts.

Everyone has to face the consequences of his actions. None can predict when and how, but you are bound to face them. However, when you constantly think of God, you will never be put to suffering. He will always be with you, in you, around you, safeguarding you. You may worship God by any name - Jesus, Rama, Krishna, etc. But remember that God is one, goal is one, truth is one and love is one. Love is God. Enshrine this unity principle in your heart and have firm faith in it. Then God will certainly take care of you wherever you are-in a forest, in the sky, in a city, in a village, on a mountain top or in the middle of deep sea. No one has the right to deny your God. Due to the impact of Kali Age, people are taking to evil ways in pursuit of money. They even go to the extent of killing others for the sake of money. For them money is everything. One should not struggle to earn money. Rather, one should strive to earn the wealth of love. When you have the wealth of love in your

possession, you will never suffer.

Sacred Bond Of Love Between Swami And His Students

Embodiments of Love!

I hope I am not causing you badha (trouble) by speaking for a long time. In fact, I am giving you a great bodha (illumination) and not Badha. People who are feeling discouraged should be given the tonic of courage, so that they do not entertain any weakness whatsoever.

The Messengers of Sathya Sai are rendering yeoman's service to society. Sometimes, they even forego their food while participating in service activities. But that is not a good practice as it can spoil their health. They wanted to make their contribution for the Super Speciality Hospital that has been constructed at Bangalore. Being ladies, they felt sad that it was not possible for them to take up any manual service activity at the construction site like carrying bricks, etc. They collected 75 lakh rupees from their own small savings and sent the amount to Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust without informing Me. Moreover, there are many old boys of our college. Though they are working outside, they belong to Swami. Some of them wait here for months together without even taking food properly. They have also saved some money to contribute for the hospital. They have sent 45 lakh rupees to the Central Trust for this purpose.

It Is My Goodness That Attracts All The Help

We don't want your money. We want your love. We want your welfare, progress and happiness. Wherever you are, lead ideal lives. Some people are under the impression that some big people are contributing crores and crores of rupees for this hospital. We are not asking them. They are not giving us either. I am happy with even a small contribution offered with love. Many people offered Jesus precious gifts; he did not accept any of them. But when an old lady offered him a small coin, he accepted happily and kept it with him till his last breath as the offering was made with love. Similarly, what I want is

love, not money. Like this, many more hospitals will be coming up in future. I do not ask anybody for any help. It is Sathya Sankalpa (Will of Truth); what I am doing is good. If one undertakes any good work, it is bound to fructify. It is My goodness that attracts all the help.

Students! Boys and Girls!

Take back the money that you have given. Not only now, I never wanted money at any time in My life. Your love, progress and well-being is what I want. I will be pleased if you lead ideal lives with good conduct. Earn a good name that Sathya Sai students are wellbehaved. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows. Develop your morality and character. Be courageous. Share your love with others. Outsiders are not aware of the love and devotion that the students and devotees have for Me. They do not even care for their health when it comes to serving Me. But I don't want such service. You should eat well. Do not put yourself to trouble. Do not put the body to any harm as God is its indweller (jeeva is deva). Make yourself happy and then serve the community. You have been going to various villages and serving the poor. There is no greater service. This wealth of service is much greater than crores of rupees. Go to each and every village, serve the poor and feed the hungry.

A New Scheme To Help The Poor And Needy

As I mentioned to you recently, I came across a news item in a small piece of paper, which I happened to find one day. There was a poor mother who did not have the wherewithal to feed her son. Her Husband was no more. Everyday she used to beg for alms in order to feed her son. Some time back, there were heavy rains continuously for many days. Consequently, she could not go out for begging. One morning her son started crying, "Mother, I am hungry. Give me something to eat." In such a situation, what could she give him? She felt helpless and shed tears. She thought within herself, "Son, God has not given me the strength to feed you." In that moment of helplessness, she somehow managed to get poison, mixed it in water, gave it to her son and drank it herself. Both of them died. I felt sad that in this land of Bharat,

which is known as Annapoorna (goddess of food), some people are unable to feed their own children.

From that day onwards, I have taken up a firm resolve. Children should be fed properly and given proper education. So, I have made a scheme of fixed deposits of one lakh rupees for each family of such helpless mothers and their children. They will get an interest of more than one thousand rupees per month to fulfil their needs. But there may be some cheats who will try to exploit their innocence. They may mislead to invest those one lakh rupees in a business for their own selfish ends. That is why the bank manager would be given strict instructions in this regard to give only the interest to the parent concerned every month.

It is not possible to provide education to the children if they are living in a different village. We wanted to keep them nearby and asked the government to allot a suitable piece of land. But they have not given this to us and I have stopped asking them. We have got our own orchard. I have decided to use that piece of land to construct houses for these poor families. I thought that instead of utilizing the land for growing fruit trees, it would be better to utilise it for the sake of poor children. We are going to construct houses with two rooms, a kitchen and a bathroom for every mother and her children. They can live lifelong in these houses and look after their needs with the interest they get from the bank. I will take the responsibility of providing education to these children. We have many students, both boys and girls, who can teach them and train them.

I Want My Students To Render Service To The Poor

Our boys and girls are ready to render any service. I do not want to praise My own students, but you cannot find students like them anywhere else. They are highly virtuous. I want My students to render service to the poor and needy and alleviate their suffering. Students, you do not need to pay heed to what others say. Take a firm resolve to serve society and sanctify your life.

Shortly, I am going to Puttaparthi. Very soon the students' Sports Meet is

going to be held. The students need to be encouraged. The construction of houses for the poor has also to be started. Then, by 19th I will be back here at Brindavan for the inauguration of the Super Speciality Hospital, which is going to benefit the entire State of Karnataka. All the heart patients in the State of Karnataka should be cured of their ailment. Everyday 30 to 40 operations will take place. For this purpose, 30 surgeons will be employed by paying them high salaries. There will be 8 to 10 operation theaters. At least 25 to 30 heart surgeries should take place everyday. No patient should suffer from heart failure. That is My strong determination. I don't want to make any distinction between States. All States are Mine. All belong to Me and I belong to you all. Do not entertain any doubt or weakness. I am ready to give whatever you require. Be courageous. Why fear when I am here?

Young Minds Are Being Spoiled By TV

Boys and Girls! Follow the commands of your parents and make them happy. Get married if they want you to, and lead a life of an ideal householder. I bless you all and bring My Discourse to a close.

After a short while from now, the Messengers of Sathya Sai are going to present a drama. It is an ideal drama unlike the dramas that you see on television. Today TV has become very common. Young minds are being spoiled by watching the TV. There is no harm if good programmes are shown, but the government is encouraging programmes which are not good for children. We do not want such a government. We want a government, which will make the people tread the path of truth and righteousness. God-ment is the real government. There are people who are working for their selfish ends. Do not follow them. Selfishness has become their way of life. Let it not become your way of life. Do not join politics. Take to the path of service. Go to each and every village. Serve everybody. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Learn this art of service. Chala Santosham (Very happy).