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1. Good Thoughts Herald New Year

Date: 01 January 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: New Year

There is pain in pleasure also; none can separate them.
It is pain that leads to pleasure.
In fact, both pain and pleasure are the effects of Kali Age.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

YEARS have rolled by, but man has not developed noble feelings. A true human being is one with a good mind. The qualities of a good mind are: it has the brightness of the sun and coolness of the moon; it makes one utter sacred words and confers peace on society. Only one with compassion, love, forbearance, sympathy and sacrifice is a true human being. But in modern man such sacred qualities have become scarce. How can one, bereft of human qualities, be called a human being?

Follow Nature And Practise Human Values

Man has originated from Nature. Earth sustains life. Sun gives light. Trees give oxygen. Water quenches our thirst and air helps us to live. How is it that man, born out of the five elements and sustained by them, does not possess the sacred qualities of the five elements? Having been born out of and brought up by Nature, man should practise and propagate the ideals set by nature. Birds, animals and trees follow Nature and lead an ideal life. Trees inhale the poisonous carbon dioxide and exhale the life-supporting oxygen. Even the animals discharge their duties and help man in many ways. But, having been born as a human being, why is man not practising human values? He is not in a position to practise and propagate human values in

society as he himself has lost them.

Embodiments of love!

Every man expects the new year to confer on him peace, happiness and prosperity. New year does not bring happiness or sorrow with it. Yesterday was same as today and tomorrow will be same as today. Days are the same, but one experiences either pleasure or pain depending on one's own actions. Meritorious deeds will not confer misery and sinful deeds cannot give happiness. One is bound to face the consequences of one's actions. But one treats pleasure and pain alike when one becomes the recipient of God's grace. God's grace destroys mountains of sins and confers peace. But due to the impact of Kali Age, man has lost faith in God. He is after money and power. How can such a man attain Divinity? Man can rise from the level of the human to the Divine only by practising human values. So, man should cultivate human values.

Years come and go, so also pleasure and pain. Nothing confers permanent bliss except the experience of the Atma. Man cannot attain peace and happiness from his actions unless he has sacred feelings within. Many people expect the new year to confer happiness and prosperity on them. But in fact, new year only confers on you the results of your past actions. In order to atone your past sins, you have to cultivate sacred qualities and involve yourself in sacred activities more and more in the new year. In fact, Bliss is within you, it originates from your sacred feelings. So, you have to manifest bliss from within, it cannot be bestowed on you by others. None can take away the bliss from you and you cannot obtain it from outside.

Sacred Activities Confer Happiness

Heart is the centre of sacred feelings. It is filled with compassion. It is compassion that gives rise to sacred feelings. One has to develop compassion, spread the light of love and cultivate Divine feelings. Without doing so, how can one expect time to confer happiness on him? One gets what one does. If one expects good results, one must cultivate good feelings.

With purity of heart, steadiness of mind and selfless actions, one can become the recipient of Divine grace, which will remove any amount of sufferings in a trice. One cannot achieve anything without Divine grace. So, one has to undertake such activities which will confer Divine grace. Peace and happiness cannot be obtained from the external world. Only through Divine grace can one be peaceful and happy. People celebrate the advent of the new year with singing and dancing. That enthusiasm and happiness are momentary. What man needs is permanent peace and happiness. How can he expect to attain permanent happiness by indulging in worldly deeds? He has to undertake sacred activities in order to attain permanent happiness.

Happiness results only from difficulties. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. It is impossible to experience pleasure without pain. You may be one of affluence or a spiritual aspirant; you get what you deserve. You cannot expect mangoes by sowing a neem seed and vice-versa. As the seed, so is the fruit. Similarly, as the feeling, so is the result. Pain and pleasure result from one's feelings. People are deluded thinking that they get pain and pleasure from the external world. In fact, they result from their own feelings. They should transform their heart with sacred feelings. Today man is changing, but not his mind. Years are rolling by, but his feelings have not become pure. He will attain peace only when there is transformation in his feelings.

Embodiments of Love!

Under all circumstances, let your feelings be pure and ideal. Let all your actions be for the welfare of others. The Vedas declare:

Paropakarah Punyaya Papaya Parapeedanam
(One attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them).

When your feelings are sacred, you will get sacred results without your

asking. Due to the impact of Kali Age, man's thoughts, words and deeds are not in harmony with each other. You may say or do anything, the result you get depends on your feelings. So, make your feelings sacred and become a good human being. One with good feelings and good mind alone can be called a good human being. Sometimes deeds done with good mind may yield bad results. The result may appear adverse but there is goodness latent in it. A good mind will never change because of such results. Man is essentially good. So, he ought to lead a life of goodness. But today man wavers every moment. It is due to the lack of Will power. Man should have unwavering mind and steady vision. Then he will not be subjected to any hardships. Only God's grace can help man to overcome these negative tendencies. One may be a millionaire, but his wealth will not redeem him if his feelings are impure. Even if a man does not possess anything, he can still achieve the highest if he has purity of heart. Anything that a man of purity sees or touches turns into gold. On the other hand, if he lacks purity and effort in the right direction, even a stick in hand will turn into a snake. Sankalpamoolam Idam Jagat (thoughts form the basis of the entire world). Some people feel their expectations are not fructifying in spite of their best efforts. This is mainly due to absence of purity in their feelings and intentions.

Change Your Actions For Better Results

Today marks the commencement of the new year 2001. Next year, it will become 2002. Destiny does not change with the change in year. Along with the change in year, your actions too should change for the better. Only then you will get good results.

Students!

You will fare well in the examination only when you work hard throughout the year. As is the feeling, so is the action. As is the action, so is the result. Sometimes, you may question the adverse outcome of a good action. But in fact, good actions never yield bad results. Bad result implies an element of negativity in the intentions. It is a human weakness to see only the good in oneself ignoring the bad.

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)

Even a sweet mango tastes sour when plucked prematurely. It should be allowed to ripen. Only then it will taste sweet. So, do not get disheartened if your actions don't yield the desired results immediately. Your efforts are bound to fructify in due course of time.

Embodiments of Love!

You have been waiting for the commencement of the new year with great expectations. Your efforts must be in accordance with the expectation. Before undertaking any activity, you should discriminate and enquire into the pros and cons. Today man has lost the sense of discrimination. He does not know how to respect and behave amongst elders. He should make proper use of the Mathi (mind), Gathi (destiny), Stithi (position) and Sampatthi (wealth) that God has bestowed on him. The six evil traits of man, namely, desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy arise due to the defects in his food and habits. Food and habits are responsible for qualities in man, good or bad.

Take To The Inward (Nivritti) Path

The sacred qualities that originate from the heart are true and eternal. They correspond to the inward path (Nivritti), whereas all the worldly, tendencies like amassing wealth, taking up jobs, playing games, desiring for positions of authority, etc., correspond to the outward path (Pravritti). Worldly tendencies originate from the head and are bound to change. Only the inward tendencies that originate from the heart are true and eternal. Ignoring the inward tendencies, man takes to the outward path. Consequently, he is unable to

attain permanent happiness. He treads the path of Pravritti but expects the results corresponding to Nivritti. All that he sees, says, and does have become polluted with untruth and unrighteousness. In fact, his entire life has become Pravritti-oriented. He should give up the outward path and direct his vision inward. Before entertaining any thought, he should discriminate whether it is good or bad. One who follows the inward path will never become frustrated or restless. One who follows the outward path can never attain permanent happiness. For example, you may be 20 years old or 40 years old. You have been eating food everyday all these years. But can your hunger ever be satisfied permanently? No. Only the taste varies but hunger is the same for everybody.

Food may vary but hunger is the same,
Jewels are many but gold is the same,
The colour of the cows may vary, but milk is the same,
Forms are many but God is one, Beings are many but breath is one.
(Telugu Poem)

Man leads a life of delusion because he sees diversity in unity. He faces many hardships to carry on with the sojourn of his life. But life is transient. To lead such an ephemeral life, why should one take to wrong path and get deluded? So long as one is alive, one should tread the path of truth and set an ideal. Only then can one's life be sanctified. Truthful activities alone can confer eternal peace.

A poet composes many verses in praise of God. He extols God grandiloquently and ultimately prays for His protection. The feeling is important and not the manner in which the verses are composed. One may extol God according to one's own capacity but one should do so with pure, steady and sacred feelings. One may be doing bhajans, offering worship and undertaking service activities for a number of years. But all this will prove

futile if there is no transformation of the heart. Heart should be filled with compassion. Only then can it be called temple of God. Otherwise, it becomes verily a devil's den.

Ignore Evil Qualities

The new year does not bring anything new with it. The day when fresh and sacred thoughts originate in your heart is the real new year day. As you all consider this day as new year day and welcome it with enthusiasm, I bless you all so that you may cultivate fresh, sacred and ideal feelings. I desire that you share with others all that you consider as good. I want you to lead a peaceful and blissful life and become role models for the rest of the country.

At times evil qualities like desire anger and hatred may arise in you but they should not be allowed to enter the mind. Once they are refused permission, they will automatically withdraw. If they are allowed to enter the mind, they will remain in it. A small example. When someone comes to your doorstep with his baggage, if you receive him and start exchanging pleasantries, he will immediately enter and settle down in your house. On the other hand, if you ignore him completely, he will go to a hotel or a lodge. Likewise, when the evil qualities try to enter your mind, just ignore them. Then they will go back to the place of their origin. On the other hand, if you entertain them, they will rule over you. When you come across something evil, do not look at it, talk about it or listen to it. Just ignore it. That is the true human quality. You will allow only your friends and relatives to enter your house through the doors. Will anyone allow the donkeys and pigs to enter the house just because it has doors? Your body has got nine doors. You should permit through them only that which is sacred. Do not allow the evil to enter. Only then can you attain peace.

Human life is highly noble, valuable and divine. Do not put it to misuse by giving room to evil qualities. Use the power of discrimination and make proper use of the senses. Only then will your life be redeemed. You will attain immortality and infinite bliss. Start a novel and Divine life in this new year. Give up all the old unsacred feelings. Cultivate Divine feelings. Once you have

divine feelings, no other feeling can enter your mind. Install God within, then peace will automatically follow.

Embodiments of Love!

I bless you all so that you may lead your lives with peace, prosperity and happiness. Thus I bring My Discourse to a close.

2. Hospitals Are Meant To Serve The Poor And Needy

Date: 19 January 2001 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Inauguration of SSSIHMS

The 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 Bharat is reputed for its scholarship.
It is the sacred land, which stood forth
As the exemplar in the realms of music, literature and sacred lore;
Born in the land of Bharat, noted for its fine arts and natural beauty, oh
devotees!
It is your bounden duty to foster
The glory and prosperity of the motherland.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

IN life, Health is the greatest wealth. Since ancient times, many Yogis, sages and seers and men of excellence have been making deep investigations into the ways and means of keeping good health. They made great efforts in this direction as they were of the view that man could work for the peace and security of the nation only when he was hale and hearty. In modern times, some people repose complete faith in Allopathy while some others feel Ayurveda is also essential along with Allopathy. Allopathy gives only temporary relief; it does not have permanent cure for diseases. But Ayurveda can provide permanent cure for diseases.

Divine Grace Sustains Human Life

The heart is the most important part in the body. If the heart goes on strike, the body becomes lifeless. What is the role of the heart in the human body? It pumps blood to the lungs where it gets purified and then it is supplied to all parts of the body. Each time the heart beats, the blood travels 12,000 miles in the body. Who has endowed the heart with such a capacity? Is it the scientist, the engineer or the Yogi or any man-made machine that makes it perform such a stupendous task? No. It is only the Divine power that is the basis for all this. Man cannot accomplish even a small task without the help of Divine power. Today man has lost self-confidence and does not have faith in God. So, first of all, man should foster self-confidence without which life becomes meaningless.

Allopathy cannot eradicate disease-causing germs permanently. It can control them only to a certain extent for a certain period of time. There is always the risk of relapse. Though allopathy has been progressing from time to time, the number of diseases too has been increasing. Dr. Samuel Hahnemann of Germany, who discovered Homoeopathy, also made deep investigations into ayurveda. Welfare of the whole world was his motto. But man today is not concerned with the welfare of the world.

Impart Health And Happiness To The Poor

These days heart diseases are widely prevalent in society. That is why we established a Super Speciality Hospital at Prasanthi Nilayam where 10,600 operations have been performed so far, totally free of cost. Many poor people have benefited from this. Heart surgeries have become very expensive. In such a situation, what would have been the fate of poor people? No one seems to be bothered about this. One has to work for the welfare of the poor, alleviate their suffering and set an ideal to the nation. Service becomes truly meaningful only when it is rendered to the poor and needy. Today neither the doctors nor the politicians, not even the Government for that matter, are concerned about the welfare of the poor. If a hospital is constructed at a cost of ten crores, they expect a profit of 100 crores. Instead of being kindhearted, they have become business-minded. Hence, the pathetic condition of the poor.

During the last three or four days, many heart surgeries have been conducted here in this hospital. Who are the patients? One is a carpenter, another a Dhobi (washer man). Many such patients who are economically backward are being treated here. In this short period, as many as 50 heart surgeries have been conducted! One gets immense joy seeing their happy faces. Of what use is medical science if it does not bestow health and happiness on the poor and needy?

Today the educated do not care to spare a thought for the poor and forlorn. This hospital is dedicated for the welfare of the poor. I am happy only when the poor are served. I have dedicated My entire life for the uplift of the poor and downtrodden. In future, even the highly advanced surgeries like heart transplant and lung transplant will take place here. One may be wealthy and virtuous but without good health, one cannot lead a happy life. The late former Chief Minister of Karnataka, Patel helped us a lot in this project. The present Chief Minister, Krishna, has also been of great help to us. Many noble people of Karnataka are also associating themselves with this project. So, we are determined to give happiness to the people of Karnataka.

Sai Institutions Are Eternal

Disease has no distinction; it may afflict anybody, be it a pauper or a millionaire. We too have no such distinction. Here the treatment will be rendered totally free of cost to the rich and poor alike. Not merely this, even the food will be supplied free. Our aim is to cure the patients of their ailments and send them home happy and healthy. This establishment will serve the poor forever. Some may have a mistaken notion that it will only be a temporary one. All the institutions established by Sai are eternal.

The other day, a washer man from Gulbarga underwent a heart surgery in our hospital. When he saw Me, his joy knew no bounds. He said, "O Swami, You are our God, I have undergone heart surgery in Your hospital." One needs to spend a lot of money to undergo a heart surgery. Even for admission, one needs to spend thousands of rupees. The poor washerman does not have even a fraction of the required amount. In this world, there are many men of

affluence, but how many are showing compassion towards the poor? They may say a thousand things, but do they practice even one? Is there any rich person who is doing even one-thousandth part of what Sai is doing? We are spending crores of rupees to provide potable drinking water to the villagers, to render free medical treatment and to give free education. But some people out of jealousy are indulging in false propaganda. The tongue has no bone, so people twist it in the way they want. Let us see, if any of those who indulge in false propaganda are prepared to feed the hungry and alleviate the suffering of the poor. In fact, such people set their dogs on the beggars who come to their doorstep to beg alms. Today all fields like education, medicine, music, literature, have become business-oriented.

Sacrifice Is The Hallmark Of A Doctor

Embodiments of Love, Doctors!

Fill your hearts with compassion and serve the poor and needy. Don't be stonehearted and moneyminded. When the hour of reckoning comes, will you be able to carry with you the wealth you have amassed? No. Serve the poor with love. That alone can redeem you. Service to the poor is service to God. Sacrifice your life for the cause of the poor. Service to the poor is My only motto; I have no other desires. I am prepared to sacrifice even My life to serve the poor (cheers). Do at least one-thousandth part of what Swami is doing. Of what use is human life if it is not spent in the service of the poor?

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 poor. (Sanskrit Verse) It is your good fortune that you have become doctors. Sacrifice is the hallmark of a true doctor. So, doctors should have the spirit of sacrifice. They should be compassionate and considerate towards the poor. There are many poor people who are losing their lives as they cannot afford costly treatment. Your love alone can sustain such lives. The more you develop the spirit of sacrifice in you, the greater will be the word's progress. Hospitals are meant to serve the poor and not to earn money. What is the point in earning crores of rupees when one has to ultimately leave the world

empty handed? So, spend all your earnings for the welfare of the poor. Dedicate your lives to the service of your fellowmen.

Prior to the establishment of this hospital, the land here had not much value. But after the hospital has come up, here the land value also has gone up. Now you find so many buildings coming up around. What is the use if one is merely interested in making profit? One should utilise it for the benefit of the poor. Your happiness will become manifold if you can make at least one poor person happy. Help ever, hurt never. Do not extort money from the poor. Do not put them to suffering for your greed for money. Remember it is not money that you are wresting, but their lives. Lead a life suffused with love, compassion and sacrifice. Thyaga (sacrifice) alone can lead to Yoga (spirituality).

We don't have any distinction of caste, creed, religion and nationality. We offer free treatment to everybody. We are determined to offer free treatment, come what may, even if we have to take loans. We are prepared to spend any amount of money; safeguarding the life of patients is our main objective. All of you, particularly doctors, should learn this lesson. Eschew greed for money; develop love and spirit of sacrifice. Then money will come to you automatically.

Divine Grace Is Essential For Cure

Embodiments of Love!

Medicines on their own cannot cure diseases; it is Divine grace that cures. Only sacrifice can win God's grace. Do not be satisfied by merely filling your own belly; try to appease the hunger of others too. Undertake such activities that will benefit the poor. This hospital does not merely stand for architectural beauty. Andam (beauty) has no value if there is no Anandam (bliss). You can experience bliss only when you give happiness to the poor. The poor are suffering because they cannot afford to buy medicines. We will give all the required medicines free. Make every effort to give happiness to all.

Today, as the programme is already delayed, I do not have enough time to give you further details. Develop spiritual outlook and treat the patients with love and care and make them happy and healthy. Without God's grace, even the pulse cannot beat. You are under the mistaken notion that mere medicines can cure the diseases. If that were the case, what happened to all those kings and rich men who had access to best medical facilities? So, along with medicines, one should have Divine grace too. Medicine and Divine grace are like negative and positive, respectively. Diseases can be cured only when both these come together. So, along with taking medicines, one should also pray for Divine grace. Without Divine grace, human body cannot be sustained. Human body is most wonderful and mysterious. Who is responsible for the pulse beat? Who is making the heart pump blood? All this happens because of Divine Will. Divine power is responsible for the growth of the body. There is no point in merely feeding the body and sustaining it unless it is used to serve the poor.

This hospital will surely attain exalted position. You may not understand it now, but you will realise it in future. People belonging to different parts of the world will come here for treatment (loud applause). This hospital has such Divine potentiality in it. Do not entertain any wrong notions about this hospital. Earlier when the Super Specialty Hospital was established at Puttaparthi, people had their own misgivings about its functioning. Now, in the villages surrounding Puttaparthi, you don't find anybody suffering from heart diseases. Even small children are not afraid to undergo heart surgery in our hospital there. Likewise, we should see to it that no one suffers from heart diseases in the State of Karnataka. Villagers who are suffering from heart diseases should be brought here for treatment. Anybody can come here for treatment. We have no objection. Everyone has equal right to get treatment here.

Leaders Should Support Noble Causes

Our Prime Minister Vajpayee took great pains to come here. Leaders like him are very essential for this world. He is a leader who supports and encourages noble causes like this. Ministers who extend their cooperation for good causes

are very much necessary for the nation to progress. They should have noble feelings and love for God to attain Divine grace. There is nothing that one cannot achieve if one has Divine grace. Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu (May the whole world be happy!) That is My desire. I am prepared to do anything for this. I am prepared to sacrifice even My life for the welfare of humanity. Of what use is the life of one who does not aspire for the welfare of humanity? I always wish for the well being of others. My feelings are always pure and sacred. If your feelings and intentions are noble, you need not be worried about money; it will come to your doorstep.

Embodiments of Love!

We have caused great inconvenience to you by making you wait for a long time. You are all very tired having been sitting here patiently for the last three to four hours. Having taken part in this congregation, may you develop the spirit of sacrifice and spend your time, wealth and energy in the service of the poor! This is what I desire from you. I do not ask anything from anybody. Help the poor in every possible way. Feed the hungry. Food is God. Do not waste food. Do not waste money. Money makes many wrongs. Misuse of money is evil. The rich squander their wealth in drinking and gambling. Money should be put to proper use. One should not spend as one pleases. Do not waste energy and do not waste time. These are the four important principles that a man should adhere to. Time wasted is life wasted. Instead of wasting time in vain gossip, utilise it to serve society. Help everybody to the extent possible. This is what I expect you to do. Come and see it for yourself the work that is being done here with the spirit of sacrifice, and experience bliss. Here you will find the poor with happiness and joy on their faces. You should see to it that the poor lead a healthy and happy life. That should be your aim in life. Paropakara Punyaya Papaya Parapeedanam (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by harming them). I bless you all so that you may attain the deservedness to see the happiness of the poor.

3. Vision Of The Atma

Date: 21 February 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

One may be able to repeat Vedas and Sastras by rote.
One may be able to sing ornate poetry melodiously.
If one lacks purity of heart, one is bound to be ruined.
The word of Sai is verily the truth.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

IF you lack purity of heart, you will not be able to understand the principle of Atma, irrespective of your educational qualifications. You may be a highly learned person but you are not able to see your own body when you are in deep sleep. On the contrary, even an illiterate person can see himself and the surroundings if he opens his eyes. Just as ash covers the live embers, man's vision is clouded by delusion.

Consequently, he is unable to realise his true nature. Man should understand the intimate relationship between himself and Divinity. You can acquire immense power and strength once you develop purity of heart, gain spiritual knowledge and understand Divinity. Sadhana or spiritual practice does not mean undertaking good activities like japa and dhyana. True sadhana lies in removing the veil of illusion that covers the antahkarana (inner instrument). It is said, Pashyannapi cha Napashyati Moodho (he is a fool who sees yet does not recognise the reality). O man, is it not foolishness on your part to think that you have not seen God though you see Him in the form of the world. Fire is seen if you blow the ash from live embers. You can see the pellucid waters only after removing the moss. A person's vision is clouded when he has cataract in his eyes, but when the cataract is operated on, he gets back his

normal vision. Similarly, as long as a person is under the influence of the mind, he identifies himself with the body and experiences pleasure and pain. Once he transcends the mind, i.e., maya, the dualities of the world do not exist for him. He visualises Divinity everywhere. Today man tries to know Divinity with his mind. In order to visualise Divinity, you should understand the principle of Atma or 'I'. The Atma is formless. So long as you are attached to your form, you will not understand what Atma means. Everyone introduces himself using the letter 'I', which is nothing but the Atma. Though not seen, the Atma is present in one and all. This Atma is all-pervasive.

Atma Is The Greatest

There are three types of ethereal dimensions, namely, Bhutakasha, Chitthakasha and Chidakasha. Bhutakasha is engulfed by Chitthakasha, which in turn is encompassed by Chidakasha. The Bhutakasha, which consists of the earth, the sun, the moon and the stars, is very vast. The sun is much bigger than the planet earth having a circumference of 8000 crore miles. But it looks small to our eyes, as it is at a distance of 9 crore miles from the earth. The stars are still farther away and are much bigger than the sun in size though they look like small diamonds adorning the sky. Light travels at a speed of 180 thousand miles per second. Some of the stars are at such a great distance from the earth that the light emanating from them is yet to reach the earth. All the stars, the sun, the moon and the earth, form a part of Bhutakasha. All these are present in Chittha in a subtle form. So, Chitthakasha is many times bigger than Bhutakasha. You feel the sun is self-effulgent, but in fact, it is the Atma, which illumines the sun. So, the Atma is the greatest of all. Its vastness cannot be described in words. All the five elements are made up of atoms, whereas the Atma is not made up of atoms, as it is formless. What do you mean by vision of the Atma? It is visualisation of the all-pervasive effulgence. The Atma is present in every cell of the human body. In order to understand this, you have to transcend form. All the material objects have a definite form, but in due course of time they lose their identity and merge into the causal dimension, i.e., in the Atma. So, man should make an effort to go beyond form and merge into the Atma. All the activities that are related to the form correspond to Pravritti (outward path)

i.e., Bhutakasha, which is made up of atoms. All this will ultimately merge into the Atma. What is Atma? Bliss is Atma.

Atma Transcends Name And Form

In the days of yore, many sages made concerted efforts to recognise the nature of the Atma. Ultimately, they declared to the world, Vedahametham Purusham Mahantham Adithyavarnam Thamasa Parasthath (I know the Supreme Being who shines with the effulgence of sun and who is beyond Thamas (the darkness of ignorance). O people, the Atma transcends name and form. It is self-effulgent. In order to have the vision of the Atma, you don't need to go to the forest and undertake penance. You can see it everywhere once you dispel the darkness of ignorance from within. Efforts in this direction amount to true Sadhana. Divinity is latent in humanity, but you are attributing various names and forms to it and are trying to visualise it through worship and rituals. As a result, you are subjected to frustration and depression. First of all, you should make efforts to realise the divinity that is latent in Bhutakasha. But how can one understand Divinity when he fails to understand humanness. In the first place, man should understand what humanness means.

Only when you transcend Bhutakasha and Chitthakasha, can you understand Chidakasha. Bhutakasha is like a small star in the sky of Chitthakasha. The same can be said of Chitthakasha as compared to Chidakasha. Chidakasha is nothing but the Atma. There is nothing beyond this. To understand the formless Atma, you should go beyond form. In the beginning, you meditate on a specific form, but gradually you should go beyond that form and realise the formless Divinity. So long as you are attached to the form, you are bound to experience pleasure and pain.

The formless Atma is experienced in the deep sleep state (Sushupti) in which you lose the identity of name and form. In the deep sleep state, there are no feelings pertaining to Bhutakasha. So long as your mind dwells on Bhutakasha, you identify yourself with a form. Though the modern man is highly educated, he is unable to comprehend the principles of Bhutakasha,

Chitthakasha and Chidakasha. He is keeping himself away from such an enquiry, thinking them to be abstruse philosophical truths. It is not mere philosophy. They are the eternal truths, which are to be understood and put into practice in daily life.

In Bhutakasha, beings are many, but the underlying Atmic principle is the same. Right from his childhood to old age, man uses the letter 'I' while introducing himself. Man passes through different stages of life, but the 'I' in him remains the same. That changeless 'I' is verily the Atma. Oblivious to the presence of such divine principle within, man is after the worldly and ephemeral pleasures. This corresponds to Pravritti. But the Atma is related to Nivritti. As man is engrossed in Pravritti, he is not able to realise his true nature.

Divinity Pervades The Entire Nature

All that you see in the external world is nothing but the manifestation of God. All of you who have assembled here are the embodiments of God. Even this hall is a manifestation of God. In fact, you are yourself God. Though you see God everywhere, still you search for Him. Here is a small example. The hostel boys see Sai Gita every day, so they are not excited about it. But if they happen to see even the tail of an elephant in a forest, they would feel thrilled. Likewise, though you see God in the form of people around you, you are not excited. But if you see a person with three heads, you will become ecstatic thinking that you had the vision of Divine Cosmic Form. You should understand that Divinity pervades the entire nature. Lord Krishna declared in the Gita. *Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana* (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). I and you are not separate. We are one and the same. Once you understand this truth, you will not go in search of God here and there. All that you find in the external world is nothing but Viswa Virat Swarup (cosmic Divine form). All forms are His. Form is associated with Pravritti. It is the root cause of delusion. What is Maya? That which leads to mistaken identity is Maya. When you mistake a rope for a snake in the darkness, you are scared. But when you flash torchlight on it, you realise that it is a rope and not a snake. It is the mistaken identity that has given rise to

fear in you. Once you know the reality, you become fearless. Due to the influence (Prabhava) of worldly objects, you have forgotten your Swabhava (true nature). Once you recognise your Swabhava and strictly adhere to it, there will be no scope for delusion or fear. Where is the question of fear when you are everything and there is nobody other than you? An actor once came to the Court of a King to give performances. That day, he had come dressed as Sankaracharya. He gave a scholarly exposition on the philosophy of Adi Sankara. He preached thus: Janma Dukkham, Jara Dukkham, Jaya Dukkham Punah Punaha, Antyakale Maha Dukkham, Tasmath Jagrata Jagrataha (Birth, old age and worldly life are full of misery. Death too is miserable. Beware of this truth.) Matha Nasthi, Pitha Nasthi, Nasthi Bandhu Sahodaraha Artham Nasthi, Griham Nasthi, Thasmath Jagrata Jagrataha (Parents, friends, relatives and wealth are like passing clouds. Beware of this truth.) The King was very pleased and offered a lot of gold. The actor said, "O King, a Sanyasi does not need gold. I cannot accept this gift." The next day the actor appeared in the Court as a dancer. He danced beautifully and pleased everyone present. At the end of the performance the King offered a small gift of just a few coins. The actor said, "O King, this payment is meagre and not enough." The King was astonished and asked, "Yesterday, you refused a substantial gift but today you are demanding more. What is the reason for this strange behaviour?" The actor replied, "O King, an actor will not be true to his profession if his words do not match the costume he is wearing. Yesterday, I played the role of a Sanyasi and therefore, spurned wealth. Today, I am a dancer, and a dancer always expects a handsome reward! My conduct must be in consonance with my garb." Today, though man has put on the garb of a human being, his conduct is not in accordance with his 'dress'. Having been born as a human being, man should lead his life with self-confidence and uphold his self-respect.

Abraham Lincoln

You are aware of how Abraham Lincoln, though born in a poor family, rose to become the President of America because of his self-confidence. He was born in a poor family. His schoolmates used to heckle him for his dress and poverty. Lincoln, unable to bear this humiliation, approached his mother and

said, "Mother, I am subjected to a lot of ridicule by fellow students. Please get me a new dress." Then the mother told him, "Son, we are not well-to-do. You must act according to our family condition. Don't be deterred by other people's taunts. Develop self-confidence and uphold your self-respect. From that moment, Lincoln strictly followed the advice of his mother. After some time, his mother passed away, and his father married again. His stepmother was also quite affectionate towards him and encouraged him to persevere on the path shown by his mother. After his father's death, Lincoln, who was aged 16 years then, left home to earn his livelihood and started selling newspapers. There also he continued to uphold his self-respect. Seeing his good qualities, his friends encouraged him to contest the elections. Lincoln stood for elections and won with a thumping majority. He was made the President of America. Though born into a poor family, he rose to an exalted position because of his self-confidence and self-respect.

Students!

Uphold your self-respect. First of all, understand what Atma means. The principle of 'I' that is present in everybody is Atma. The Vedas declare. Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahma). But in My view, even this is not complete truth because the presence of 'I' and Brahma symbolises duality. Truth is one, not two. Man should hold on to the principle of non-dualism and sanctify his life. Once you develop faith in this principle, you will have all the purity and prosperity.

Today is the very auspicious day of Sivarathri. Siva stands for auspiciousness. What is so special and auspicious about Sivarathri? Mind has 16 aspects, of which 15 are merged on this night and only one is remaining. Make proper use of this holy night by undertaking Sadhana with devotion and steadfastness. What sort of Sadhana you must undertake? Cleanse your heart of all evil qualities. Evil qualities arise in you because of the misuse of the senses. It is the root cause of all sins. Sadhana does not mean doing Japa and meditation. You should develop pure and divine feelings in you. Consider everyone as divine. Respect them. "All are Mine and I belong to everybody." Once you have such firm conviction, you can enjoy immense happiness in life.

There will be no trace of worry in your life Have Firm Faith In God Once while Sankaracharya was going to river Ganga with his 14 disciples, he came across a Brahmin who was memorising some Sanskrit passage, "Dukrun Karane". The Acharya asked him, what he was doing and the Brahmin replied that he was studying Panini (the great grammarian). "What do you gain out of this study of grammar", the Acharya asked. He replied, "I shall become a great scholar and go to some royal Court or the other and become an official scholar and earn all the wealth that I need. With wealth earned like that, I shall lead a happy life." "How long will you live like that?" "I shall live as long as I am alive." "What next?" asked the Acharya. He replied, "I don't know," Then, Sankaracharya made his famous pronouncement, "Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam, Govindam Bhaja Moodhamathe, Samprapthe Sannihite Kale Nahi Nahi Rakshati Dukrun Karane," (O fool, chant the name of Govinda. When the hour of death approaches, the nuances of grammar will not come to your rescue). The Acharya said, "You fool, you will enjoy all the pleasures of the world as long as you are alive, but after this body passes away, what will you do? So, keep chanting the name of Govinda incessantly and don't waste your time in these mundane studies. These studies are all related to Pravritti. This helps only for a very short time. You are proud of your youth; how long does youth last? Soon you will be an old man. Do not put your faith on your youthful prowess, place your firm faith in God." Realise your self-confidence. Selfconfidence leads to self-satisfaction and self-satisfaction leads to self-realisation.

Students!

'I' is a permanent reality. Consider this Atma as Godhead itself. Without a substantial basis, there will be no manifestation. The basis for the waves in the ocean is the water therein. In the same manner, Atma is the basis for the phenomenal world. All the good and bad, praise and blame that happen are all mere passing clouds. The baby, the boy, the youth and the old man are all differences in form but the Atma in the person is the unchanging entity. While traveling in the train, you see out of the window, trees, mountains and lakes fleeting past. This is an illusion. Sometimes, in the skies, you see as if the moon is moving fast, while in reality the clouds are moving. This again is an

illusion. The moon is not moving at the same pace as the clouds. In the same way, the Atman does not change or move; it is only our feelings that change.

Total Understanding Is Awareness

Embodiments of Love!

Today is a very holy day. The time at 6 o'clock is highly sacred. At that time, the Atma Lingam will be manifested. God is sometimes called the Hiranya garbha. The golden Lingas emerge from Hiranyagarbha itself. Don't conclude that only Swami is Hiranyagarbha. All of you are manifestations of Hiranyagarbha. You are also eternal and self-effulgent. Hold this truth firmly in your heart. Keep this awareness firm.

We have 'Awareness classes' in our Institutions. Knowing this or that bit of information is not complete awareness. Awareness implies total understanding. Having seen just the tail of a rat, how can you claim to have seen the rat itself? Today what the scientists have known is only a fraction of the total truth. But they think that they know everything.

First of all, you should understand what humanness means. In accordance with your form, you should have human qualities. Of what use is your life if you behave like a monkey? Understand that you belong to mankind. Do not have a monkey mind. One whose heart is full of compassion alone is a true human being. Today man talks of the need for compassion but has filled his heart with demonic qualities like anger, greed, jealousy, etc.

Excessive Desire Causes Imbalance In Nature

Man should put a ceiling on his desires. As man's conduct is perverted, today we find natural calamities taking place. You are aware of the devastation caused by the earthquake in Gujarat. Thousands of people lost their lives. The reason for this is that, man is entertaining excessive desires. God maintains perfect balance in His creation. In God's creation, the earth and the oceans are endowed with balance. But man is indiscriminately exploiting the earth for

extracting oil. Every day tonnes of fish are caught from the oceans. This indiscriminate exploitation of nature results in imbalance in earth, which is playing havoc with human lives. Only when man is free from Kampam (unsteadiness) within, will he not be troubled by Bhukampam (earthquake). Not only the people of Bharat but also the people of the entire world should strive to maintain balance. The five elements are nothing but manifestations of the Divine. Man's life will be secure only when he realises this truth and acts accordingly. A few days ago, I had sent Lorry loads of rice, grams, etc., to the earthquake victims of Gujarat. Some people asked "Swami, why should you take the trouble of spending so much money for sending the relief material to Gujarat. You could have as well averted the earthquake." I replied, "My dear, man has to blame himself for the earthquakes. Due to excessive greed for wealth, he is disturbing the balance of the earth. Hence the earthquake. That is the law of Nature. You have to express your love for man by helping the needy. Love is your nature. Just as balance is very much essential for Nature, so also love is very much needed for man. Know that whatever God has created is for your own welfare. You should enjoy Nature according to your need. You should not rob Nature of its resources to satisfy your greed. Here is an example. Once a greedy person owned a duck, which used to lay a golden egg every day. One day, he ripped open the stomach of the duck thinking that he would get many golden eggs at a time. Today man also is indulging in such foolish and greedy acts. Instead of being satisfied with what Nature is giving him, he aspires for more and more, and in the process, creating imbalance in Nature.

Today scientists are interested in new inventions. The advancement in science and technology has also led to imbalance in Nature. As a result, there are earthquakes and no timely rains. Science should be utilised only to the extent needed. Science has its limitations, and crossing those limits leads to danger.

You have a long way to go. Adhere to truth and righteousness. Our ancient sages said, Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam (speak truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth). Make proper use of natural resources and do not put them to misuse. Help

everybody and make them happy. Share all the good things you have learnt with others. This is your foremost duty.

4. Have Steady Faith In The Atma

Date: 22 February 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

The evil effects of Kali Age cannot shake the one whose heart is filled with compassion,
whose speech is suffused with truth and whose body is used for serving others.

(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

IN this world, all the beings are classified into four categories:

- (1) Andaja , that which is born out of an egg,
- (2) Pindaja , that which is born out of the mother's womb,
- (3) Uthbhija , that which is born out of the earth
- (4) Swedaja , that which is born out of sweat.

Under each category, there are 21 lakh types of species. Hence, it is said that there are 84 lakh species in God's creation. The 84 lakh species are subjected to three types of sufferings, namely *Adhibhouthika*, *Adhidaivika*, and *Adhyatmika*. Adhibhouthika refers to the diseases that are caused by man's attachment to the physical world. It also refers to the diseases that are caused by insects like mosquitoes, flies, etc. Adhidaivika is related to the suffering caused by natural calamities like earthquakes, floods, and epidemics like cholera, plague, etc. Adhyatmika refers to the suffering that result from wrong food and bad habits. It also indicates to the suffering caused by cruel animals and wicked people.

What is the remedy for these three types of sufferings? One should have strong faith in the Self. That is the panacea for all the suffering. One should strive to experience Atmic bliss for which nine paths of devotion are prescribed: *Sravanam* (listening), *Kirtanam* (singing), *Vishnusmaranam* (contemplating on Vishnu), *Padasevanam* (serving the Lotus Feet), *Archanam* (worship), *Vandanam* (salutation), *Dasyam* (servitude), *Sneham* (friendship), *Atmanivedanam* (Self surrender). Man can get rid of his afflictions by taking to any of these nine paths.

Faith In The Atma Is Your Dharma

Before the commencement of the Kurukshetra War, Duryodhana and Dussasana prostrated before their mother Gandhari seeking her blessings. Gandhari, being one of pure heart, steady mind and selfless love, blessed them saying,

"Yatho Dharmah Thatho Jayaha"
(victory is where Dharma is).

Then they went to their preceptor Dronacharya to pay their respects. He blessed them saying,

"Yatho Dharmah Thatho Krishnah Yatho Krishna Thatho Jayaha"
Where righteousness is there Krishna is; where Krishna is, there victory is.

You are born as a human being but are you following the Dharma that is prescribed for a human being? If so, your Dharma will certainly protect you.

Today man is subjected to hardships because he has forgotten the source of his origin. Fish is born in water. It cannot survive even for a while without

water. It is happy only when it is in water, the place of its origin. What is the source of man's origin? Lord Krishna declared in the Gita,

"Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathanaha"
(the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being).

From this it is evident that man is a spark of the Divine. He has originated from the principle of Atma. Having been born from the Atma, man should always contemplate on the Atma. He will become restless and face hardships if he forgets the Atma. So, never forget the Atma, the place of your origin. Have faith in the Atma. Respect it and revere it. Treat Atma as the basis of your life. This is the Dharma that man should adhere to. You may occupy positions of authority, you may have wealth and prosperity, but none of them can protect you. Only faith in the Self can protect you. You may involve yourself in any work you like but have unwavering faith in Atma.

When a mother goes to the river to fetch water, she leaves her child in the cradle. On her way back, she may be conversing with other ladies while carrying a pot full of water on her head. But her mind will be constantly focused on her child. She wants to get back home as quickly as possible, lest her child should wake up and start crying. Likewise, your mind should be constantly focused on the Atma in all your activities. That should be your aim. You participated in the bhajan throughout the night. While doing bhajans, you may sing various songs with different tunes and beats but your mind should be constantly fixed on the Atma. All your actions must be done with the sole purpose to please God.

Arjuna asked Lord Krishna as to how he could fight in the war if he had to constantly think of God. Krishna replied, "O simpleton, it is your body and senses that are involved in the warfare. Such being the case, you can always focus the mind on God."

See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil.

Direct your mind on God instead of directing it on the senses. As I pointed out yesterday senses are responsible for both merit and sin. If you put them to misuse, you will incur sin. If they are used in a proper way it results in merit.

Speak softly and sweetly and cultivate a good mind.

Only then will you earn the respect of others.

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

Cultivate right vision. Evil looks will put you in danger. Keechaka cast his evil looks on Draupadi, which eventually led to his death at the hands of Bhima. Do not listen to evil talk.

Kaikeyi paid heed to the evil words of Mandhara, which ultimately led to the exile of Rama, whom she had loved much more than her own son, Bharata. Today do you find any woman named Kaikeyi or Mandhara? No. Society will not respect those who indulge in evil talk and listen to evil. So, you should always speak good and listen to good words. If you happen to hear something evil do not share it with others. What is the purpose in causing unrest to others by telling them something, which has caused unrest to you. Today there are people who not only lend their ear to evil talk but also spread the same to the rest of society causing a great deal of unrest.

Paropakaraya Punyaya Papaya Parapeedanam

(one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them).

Let your tongue utter such words, which will give joy to others. This is precisely what you have done the whole night. You sang the name of God, which gave joy to one and all. When you think of God, there will be no scope for criticism or talking ill of others, but there is a type of prayer in which the devotee reminds God of those who troubled Him. Once Vidura prayed to Krishna thus: "O Krishna, why don't you come to my house? Never did I tie you to a pillar and whip you the way Sakkubai's mother-in-law did. Never did I try to harm you the way Kamsa did. Never did I abuse you the way Sisupala did. Then why don't you visit my house?"

You may be aware of how Sisupala hurled abuses at Krishna in the open Court questioning the latter's credentials to receive the grand offering made by Dharmaraja at the conclusion of Rajasuya Yaga. He said, "O Krishna, what makes you think that you deserve this grand offering more than others in this Court? Is it because you played pranks with Gopikas as you pleased? Don't indulge in self-aggrandizement, shut up."

Thus, as Sisupala had crossed his limits, Krishna took the plate in which the offering was made and hurled it at Sisupala, which in a trice beheaded him. Krishna's act was appreciated by one and all. Many people are under the impression that Krishna used His chakra (discus) to kill Sisupala; but in fact, it was only a plate that beheaded him. When the time is not favourable, even a stick in hand will turn into a snake. On the contrary, if your time is favourable, even if you stamp on a snake, it will remain harmless like a stick. **In order to enjoy favourable time always, you must fill your heart with sacred feelings.**

The history of Bharat is replete with many examples that bear testimony to this truth. Such sacred history is being forgotten today and people are resorting to unrighteous means and setting bad examples. Learn the sacred

lessons that the history of Bharat teaches. Cultivate sacred feelings. Let your ears listen to sacred stories. Let your tongue utter sacred words and let your hands perform meritorious deeds. You know why God has given you hands? Is it merely to feed your stomach? No. They must be used in the service of society. You know why feet are given? Not to wander in the streets like a vagabond, but to visit sacred places.

The evil effects of Kali Age cannot shake the one whose heart is filled with compassion,
whose speech is suffused with truth and whose body is used for serving others.

(Sanskrit Verse)

Today people are prepared to listen to vain gossip but when the sacred stories of the Lord are narrated, their ears get clogged. People are never tired of going to cinemas but their eyes find it very difficult to concentrate on the beautiful form of the Lord even for a minute.

(Telugu Song)

People see anything and everything with their eyes wide open, but when they visit a temple, they close their eyes while standing in front of the beautiful image of the Lord. What an irony it is! Senses can lead you to either sin or merit. It is your duty to put them on the right path and earn merit. Then God will fulfill all your wishes. You don't need to ask Him.

Do not ask, O mind, do not ask. The more you ask, the more you will be neglected.

God will certainly grant you what you deserve without your asking.

Did He not grant the wish of Sabari, who never asked?

Did He not redeem the bird Jatayu, who never asked but sacrificed his life for His cause? (Telugu Poem)

So, first and foremost, make your heart pure. It is only purity that attracts Divinity. If the iron filings are rusted, even the most powerful magnet will not attract them. The iron filings may blame the magnet, saying it has no power. But the magnet tells them, "You may think as you please, I am not bothered. Get rid of the rust and become pure. Only then will I attract you." In the same manner, how do you expect God to attract your mind, which is rusted with evil thoughts? See good, listen to good things, speak good and pleasant words, undertake sacred activities. If you act in this manner, without your asking God will certainly bestow His grace on you.

Keep Your Senses Under Check

Yesterday evening at 6 o'clock, the most auspicious time arrived during which the emergence of the Linga took place. Why is Sivarathri considered auspicious? The reason is this. The moon has 16 kalas (aspects) and so too the mind. On the day of Sivarathri, 15 are merged and only one remains. If the 16th aspect is also merged, one attains Divinity. This total merger will take place only when one chants the divine name continuously and wholeheartedly. **Of all the senses, the tongue is very important.**

O tongue, the knower of taste you are very sacred. Speak truth in the most pleasing manner.

Chant the Divine names of Govinda, Madhava and Damodara incessantly. This is your foremost duty.

(Sanskrit Verse)

The tongue is one of sacrifice. When it tastes sweet delicacies, it sends them to the stomach. But if the item is bitter, the tongue at once spits it out. Not

merely that, the tongue conducts itself in the most respectful manner. It does not step out of its house (mouth) under any circumstances. It does all its work without crossing its limits. While all other senses do only one work each, the tongue alone has the capacity to do two types of work, namely, to taste and to speak. That is why one has to exercise proper control over the tongue lest it should indulge in sinful activities like talking ill of others. In times of anger, observe silence. Our ancients taught: Talk less, work more. The lesser you talk, the purer your heart remains.

Contemplation on God is the only means to keep the senses pure. But today people have absolutely no control over their senses. Even the animals have a reason and a season but not the modern man. He is facing limitless difficulties, as he has not kept senses under proper control. All the spiritual practices are meant to exercise control over the senses. Eat to the extent necessary. Do not overload your stomach. Divide your stomach into three equal parts. Fill one part with food, one with water and leave the remaining empty. But today, some people overload their stomach to such an extent that they find it extremely difficult to even get up after their meals. Such people are bound to suffer from indigestion.

You may exercise control over your food but you need not set any boundaries for your love. It should be given total freedom. Love one and all. Love transcends the senses. "All are mine. The life principle that exists in me exists in everybody." With this feeling of unity, share your love with everybody. Love alone can confer peace, which everyone aspires for.

Your *vasana* (innate tendencies) depend on the feelings you cultivate in your heart. Here is a small example. A paper has no smell by itself. If it is used for wrapping pakodas or dry fish or Jasmine flowers, it emits the smell of the item wrapped, good or bad. Your heart may be compared to a paper. If good feelings are packed in it, you will certainly develop good tendencies.

See good, hear good, talk good, and do good.

Then the evil effect of Kali will have no impact on you. Do not allow the Kali *Prabhava* (effect of Kali Age) overpower your *Swabhava* (true nature). Today practice of dharma is fast declining and, consequently, the water level in earth is also going down. Humanness has become scarce. There is no purity in society, no morality in politics.

Neethi (morality) alone can sustain manava jathi (human race).

Embodiments of Love!

When you sing Bhajans, take care that the words you utter do not convey negative meanings. Here is an example. Our boys sing many Hindi bhajans, in which they often use the word 'Thu' meaning 'you'. They sing 'Thu' Rama', 'Thu Krishna', 'Thu Sai' (you are Rama, you are Krishna, you are Sai, etc.) But in Telugu, the letter 'Thu' conveys a derogatory meaning. You may use 'Thu Hai' instead of 'Thu'. The Bhajans you sing must convey sacred meanings. You should not give scope for disrespectful words.

Bhakta Pothana

Yesterday Raju spoke about Pothana, a great poet and devotee of Rama. He was one with pure heart. He was the one who composed the Bhagavata in Telugu. He firmly believed that it was Lord Rama Himself who wrote the Bhagavata through him. His name Pothana has a profound inner meaning. 'Po' means 'to drive out' and 'Thana' means the feeling of 'his'. So, he had driven away the feeling of 'mine' and thus became a great devotee.

Srinatha, the famous poet from the royal court, had given his daughter in marriage to Pothana's son. Pothana's family used to eke out their livelihood through farming. Once Srinatha came to see them in a palanquin. On the way,

he found Pothana's son involved in ploughing the field. In a sarcastic tone, he asked him, "O farmer, how are you?" Pothana's son was not upset by this sarcastic remark. In fact, he gave a fitting reply in the most loving manner thus: "Sir, it is better to take refuge in Bhumatha (mother Earth) and Gomatha (mother cow) and lead a dignified life than to seek the refuge of a king, and be subservient to him." Those who repose their faith in Bhumatha and Gomatha will never lack anything in life. Since times of yore, Bharatiyas considered Bhumatha and Gomatha as the very basis of their life. But today we find many people are giving up agriculture and migrating to towns in search of money. They watch television day in and day out and aspire for luxurious life. As more and more people are giving up agriculture and deserting villages, scarcity for food has arisen. Having given up farming, how can you expect the mother Earth to feed you? Villages are the very life breath of Indian culture. Even to day, Indian culture is sustained only in villages, not in towns. Only people of villages are aware of the greatness of Indian culture. As people have lost respect and reverence for mother Earth, we experience earthquakes and such other natural calamities causing untold destruction.

In Bhagavatha, there is a story of Vishnu and His consort Lakshmi involved in a game of chess.

Generally, women are more intelligent than men. Though men are also endowed with high intelligence, they can never make full use of it, as their mind always wavers. Lakshmi, being one of intelligence, was able to arrest the movement of Vishnu's elephant. Suddenly, Vishnu stood up and said, "O elephant, I will come to your rescue, don't worry." Lakshmi immediately said, "impossible", thinking that Vishnu was referring to the elephant in the game. But in fact, Vishnu's mind was on Gajendra (King of elephants), who by then had totally surrendered to Him as his desperate attempts to wriggle out of the crocodile's grasp proved futile. Gajendra, being highly egoistic had utmost faith in his physical prowess. But as he got tired, he realised that God alone could save him. He cried out, "O Lord, I have no refuge other than You. I surrender to You completely. Please forgive my sins and come to my rescue." Vishnu, being one of compassion, rushed immediately and saved Gajendra.

At this juncture, Bhagawan recited a beautiful poem composed by Pothana describing Lakshmi's plight, as she found her husband Vishnu rushing to save His devotee without telling her and without even taking any weapons with (Him.) All the compositions of Pothana are suffused with sacredness. He composed the Bhagavata with the sole purpose of describing the glories of the Lord, not to parade his poetic skills. Unlike many ordinary poets, he was never after name and fame. Pothana's words contained the essence of the Vedas. The path shown by Pothana is the royal road to liberation.

5. Know Thyself

Date: 26 March 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ugadi

Neither merit nor sin, nor comfort nor misery, nor incantations, nor places of pilgrimage, nor scriptures nor sacrifice, nor food nor eating nor eater. I (the Atman) am the very personification of Chidananda. I am Siva Himself.

(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

RIGHT from the beginning, the Vedas have taught the principles of equality to mankind. It says that you are neither sin nor merit, neither happiness nor misery. You are neither Yajna nor charity. You are neither the ritual offering nor the process of worship. You are neither a man nor an animal. Then who are you? You are the embodiment of Siva (auspiciousness). Since man has not understood the fundamental principle of creation, he goes by name and form and distinguishes among birds, animals, human beings, etc.

One should not repose faith in name and form. Name and form correspond to Pravritti (outward path). One should take to the path of Nivritti (inward path) and understand the fundamental principle of creation. (At this juncture Swami created a lemon). This is a lemon. We call it lemon on the basis of its form and taste. These reflect Pravritti aspect and not Nivritti. In fact, it is nothing but a combination of cells, molecules and atoms and in each of these cells there is immanent potentiality of the whole lemon. The cells have neither beginning nor end. These cells are of immense power. This immense potentiality is related to the akasa (space). This Akasa is related to the pure consciousness. Even the lemon is a representation of pure consciousness. The person who eats the lemon is also a personification of consciousness. Everything that IS, is consciousness itself. Name and form are conditioned by Pravritti (outward path) and are not related to the internal path, namely, Nivritti.

Every Object Is Pervaded By Consciousness

Every man uses the terms 'I' and 'mine'. This handkerchief, tumbler, car, house, etc., are all related to the expression 'mine' and not to the Atmatathwa 'I'. Thus, 'mine' relates to Pravritti while the Atma is related to Nivritti. The term 'I' (Atman) is constant, unchanging and eternal. This 'I' term is Constant Integrated Awareness. 'I' is the embodiment of consciousness. As this principle is immanent in every person, everybody is the personification of consciousness. We have therefore to recognise the fundamental principle or mooladhara. There are three aspects to it. They are pravikriti, paryanakruti, and pariprasna, Pravikriti means surrendering one's own self. Secondly, one has to surrender all that one considers me and mine. Thirdly, one must constantly be enquiring about this Atmatathwa from one who has realized it. To recognise that I am not the body, the mind or the intellect or any of these things that are manifest in the external world is the import of Pariprasna. The Vedas from ancient times have been teaching these eternal truths.

First of all, you must enquire into the nature of the Self. The cells are made of atoms, which have no beginning or end. Atoms and molecules are manifestations of the Divine principle. Wherefrom did this Divine power manifest? It arises from akasa (space). Sarvathah Pani-padam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham Sarvathah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishtathi (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). Consciousness is all-pervasive. Wherever it falls, it occupies the object therein. Object occupies space and space is pervaded by Consciousness and hence all objects are also pervaded by Consciousness. There are two aspects to this: being and manifesting. This manifestation (Bhathi-effulgence) is the Atmic principle.

This Atmic principle is consciousness itself. It is this effulgence that is variously called Atma, Paramatma, Paramajyoti, etc. It is from this effulgence that the various objects of the world manifest. The Vedas call this manifestation as Atma (I). This is not created by anybody. It is Self - manifest. There is an eternal principle of 'I' present inside the individual. The feeling of 'mine' is relating to external objects. 'I' is the Atman and 'mine' is maya

(illusion). The changeless principle is immanent in all objects of the world. But man falls into error due to his vasanas (innate tendencies) and abhyasas (habits). Man creates for himself manifold relationships like my son, my brother, etc. The body consciousness is the cause for these bonds. Who is the mother and who is the child before birth? Who is the husband and who is the wife before marriage? All these are transient relationships created by man and they are as impermanent as passing clouds. Getting lost in these transient relationships, man falls into delusion (bhrama). When you are in deep sleep, you are not even aware of your own body. In samadhi, similarly, the sadhaka does not feel his body. It is believed by some that what is perceived by the senses only is real. Actually, none of it is real. The Atma alone appears as reflection, reaction and resound. None of these is yourself. The Atmic principle alone is your Self. Nobody else can create your inner reality nor can anyone deny it. This 'I' is the true eternal principle. Nirgu nam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nithya, Suddha, Buddha, Muktha, Nirmala Swarupinam (Attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). This Atmic principle is the very personification of Divinity; hence the expression Easwara Sarvabhutanam (God is the indweller in all beings). It is this principle of universal divinity that is asserted by great scholars. For instance, all of you know the story of Adi Sankara and the Brahmin who was learning Panini's Grammar whom Sankara admonished to concentrate on Govinda Nama (Bhaja Govindam, etc.). In our daily life, we give different names to different persons and objects. If you just call, 'hey boy', who will come? But if you call, 'hey Rama', the boy named Rama will immediately respond. You are not born with any name. Names are imposed. Even the very body that you possess is not you. By constant repetition of 'I' in relation to the body, you have fallen into the illusion of body consciousness. Whenever you are able to apply the expression 'my' to any object, from your handkerchief to the various limbs, it implies that 'you' are different from the object denoted by the expression 'mine'. Then who are you? To recognise this, Vedanta has given various expositions. If you find the true differentiation between 'me' and 'mine' in its true implication, the relationships in the entire world become clear. The sense of possession 'mine' is entirely separated from your true self. Your self transcends all these. That is why the Veda makes the assertion, Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman). It does

not say, Brahma is mine. It says, I am the very personification of Brahman. So, one should try to recognise this principle of 'I'.

Understand the Fundamental Principle

Embodiments of Love!

Firstly, this confusion arises because of the distinction of 'I' and 'mine' and consequent neglect of the principles of the cell, molecule, atom, etc. This lemon is an agglomeration of atoms and not a lemon per se. For our convenience we have given it the name lemon, not for the sake of understanding the basic reality of atoms and molecules. What is knowledge? Advaita Darshanam Jnanam (perception of the One without a second is supreme knowledge). This is a body with various systems of blood, food, etc., in it. It is alive only so long as all these systems are functional. It becomes a dead body, the moment these systems stop functioning. The body is dead but the cells and atoms are still there. Atoms get back to atoms. Hence, it is necessary, first of all, to recognise the principle of mooladhara. What is the basis for water? When hydrogen and oxygen combine, we get water and we can drink it. But can we drink hydrogen or oxygen, when we are thirsty? For convenience, we postulate such variety. But all this variety is mere mithya (relative reality). What is Mithya? It is neither truth nor untruth but an appearances of the non-existent as real. Such appearances are temporary and transient and change their form after some time. Truth is unchanging. Trikala Badhyam Sathyam (that which is unchanging in the past, present and future) alone is truth.

Man today resorts to many evil ways for the sake of power and pelf. But how long do they last? They come and go. Ma Kuru Dhana Jana Yauvana Garvam, Harathi Nimeshath Kalah Sarvam (Do not be proud of your wealth, progeny and youth; all will be destroyed in due course). Presuming such a transient world as true, you waste your life in such pursuits. You are born so that you may fulfill the purpose of your life. Sareeramadhyam Khalu Dharma Sadhanam (the body is solely intended for the pursuit of righteousness). What is your dharma? Does everything that pleases you constitute dharma? Not at

all. True adherence to your conscience is righteousness proper. You abandon the dictates of your conscience and become a victim of delusion. You see your reflection in a mirror, but is the image real? In fact, it suffers from lateral inversion. How can such erroneous images become true? In the same manner, the entire external world is a reflection of your inner reality. Your inner reality should be the basis. When you have a firm grip on the principle of mooladhara, all external delusions and illusions vanish. From birth to death, man neglects his inner fundamental basis (mooladhara) and dissipates his life and energy on the objects of the external world. This is not the purpose of life. You must realise the truth of your inner source and ultimately attain it. You must experience the life of truth. Being born, growing, eating and indulging in other mundane activities and dying is not the purpose of your birth. However, these days such concerns have increased manifold. Because of this man has not increased his stature for several ages.

The Good Will Remain Unaffected

The name of this New Year is Vrusha. Lots of people are making all kinds of predictions of the events in the coming year. What is bound to happen will happen. Carry on doing what you have to do. During all this, your mind should be centred on your original source (mooladhara). If you neglect this, all your efforts are useless. As a consequence of this only, humanity is faced with so many distressing and calamitous events. One should not say unpleasant things, but I am obliged to say some unpleasant things. The coming year is likely to face far more difficulties, than the past year, in fact a lot more. The political arena is likely to face greater problems. There are likely to be more earthquakes. What is the cause? It is the consequence of man's wrong actions. The good or bad events of the world are a consequence of the activities of mankind. There is conflict even between brothers; and in the field of politics human values have been forsaken. It is not in any one country but all over the globe.

Vrusha is the name of this New Year. In Kerala, this is known as Vishu. According to Indian calendar there are 60 years, after which the cycle repeats. To name a few, Prabhava, Vibhava, Shukla, Pramodhuta, Prajotpathi,

Angirasa, Srimukha, Bhava, Yuva, Datha, etc. These are the names of the children of Narada. He begot these children when he became Narada. As he had desired that the names of his children should remain eternally, the years have been named thus.

One is bound to experience the reflection, reaction and resound of one's own actions, but none can predict when, where and how. One thing is certain, the good will never be put to suffering and no danger can befall them.

In Gujarat, there lived a well-to-do businessman named Patel, who was also a great devotee. He had all comforts and conveniences at his disposal. He used to perform regular Puja (worship) every day. One day one of his friends asked him, "Patel, you have got everything that one could ask for in life. Then what for are you worshipping God?" Patel replied, "I don't worship God for wealth and prosperity. I only ask Him for peace and bliss which He alone can confer, as He is the embodiment of Supreme Bliss and Peace." This is true devotion. Peace and bliss cannot be obtained elsewhere except from God. Happiness is union with God. No matter however you try, you cannot attain peace from the external world. Many overseas devotees say, "I want peace." I tell them, "You are the embodiment of peace. What you get outside is only pieces. The peace you aspire for is within you." You are truth, peace, love, nonviolence, and you are verily God. When you have such a firm conviction, there will be no scope for misery, you will always be blissful. Do not think that God is separate from you. Have full faith that 'I am God'.

Hanuman's Devotion

Once Lord Rama asked Hanuman, "How do you contemplate on Me?" "At the physical level, You are my Master and I am Your servant. At the mental level, I am a spark of thy Divine Self. At the Atmic level, You and I are one", said Hanuman. Pleased with Hanuman's reply, Lord Rama presented him with a pearl necklace, which was given to mother Sita by her father, king Janaka, at the time of her marriage. Hanuman held this very valuable necklace in his hand, began to remove all the pearls one by one from the necklace, and kept it near his ear for some time and then after biting each one of them, threw

them away. Sita was surprised to see Hanuman behaving thus. She thought that Hanuman had not given up his monkey traits. Rama knew the intention behind this act of Hanuman. But in order to make Sita understand this, He asked, "Hanuman, why are you biting and throwing away such precious pearls?" "O Lord, I am examining whether I could listen to Your name in the pearls. Since I couldn't hear, I am throwing them away. The pearl is no better than a stone if there is no Rama Nama in it. I want only You." Listening to this statement of Hanuman, Rama offered Himself by embracing Hanuman. The inner meaning of this is Rama is where Hanuman is and vice-versa. Hanuman is one who realised the unity of the individual and God. Consequently, Hanuman was always in a state of bliss. Hanuman is given various appellations such as Santhudu, Gunavanthudu, Balavanthudu (one of peace, virtues and strength). He derived his strength from the Divine name of Lord Rama. Many people confine the Divine Name only to the lips but Hanuman chanted the name of Rama from the depth of his heart.

Poison will remain poison even if it is put in a precious vessel studded with diamonds, pearls, emeralds, etc. The divine ambrosia will not lose its taste even if it is put in a brass vessel. Likewise, it is the purity of heart, not the external appearance that matters. Purity of heart is the purpose behind chanting God's name. Chanting of God's name should originate from the heart, not from the lips.

Let Society's Welfare Be Your Aim

When you give away something in charity, think that you are offering it to God Himself. That is true charity. Some people give money to the priest and ask him to perform worship on their behalf. Will your hunger be appeased if someone else eats? Likewise, how can you get the benefit of worship performed by the priest? Any good activity should be undertaken by the concerned person himself in order to derive the benefit therefrom. Today people are unable to understand the secret of Divinity. In fact, you are divinity personified. But you consider yourself to be the body, which is ephemeral. The Bhagavadgita says, 'Anityam Asukham Lokam Imam Prapya Bhajasva Mam'. Having reached this world, which is temporary and full of

misery, contemplate on Me (God).

This body is a den of dirt, disease-prone and cannot cross the ocean of Samsara. O mind, do not be under the delusion that body is permanent. Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus Feet.
(Telugu Poem)

So long as one is alive, one can aspire to lead a happy and healthy life. Healthy body leads to healthy mind. So, take proper care of your body and always contemplate on the selfless, pure, steady Atmic principle. You are a member of the society. Your welfare depends on the welfare of the society. So, aspire for the well being of one and all. Lokassamastha Sukhino Bhavantu (May all the worlds be happy!) Eschew narrow-mindedness; cultivate broad feelings in order to experience bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

This New Year brings with it some good results also. The New Year Day is not celebrated merely to partake of delicious dishes. You have to imbibe sacred feelings and resolve to lead a fruitful life. The good and bad of the world depend on your conduct, which in turn depends on your thoughts. So, develop good thoughts. Only then will you be able to lead a noble life. Set an ideal to your fellowmen. Give them happiness. Show compassion towards them. Talk to them lovingly. All this is possible only when you acquire Divine love. So, strive to become the recipient of Divine love. Chant His Name wholeheartedly.

6. Ramayana - The Essence Of The Vedas

Date: 02 April 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Rama Navami

Just as Veda Purusha (Virat Purusha) was born as Dasaratha's earthly son, the Vedas were born from Prachetas in the form of The Ramayana.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

Embodiments of Love!

THE Ramayana is the very form of the Vedas that have come down to us from the heavens. The Vedas are divided into four parts, namely Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharvana Veda. Lord Rama is the embodiment of Rig Veda, Lakshmana, the Yajur Veda, Bharata, the Sama Veda and Satrughna, the Atharvana Veda. The four Vedas became the four sons of Dasaratha and played at his palace. The Rig Veda and the Yajur Veda consist of Mantras, which are related to Yajnas and Yagas. That is the reason why Sage Viswamitra took Rama and Lakshmana along with him to safeguard his Yajna. While Rama was in exile, Bharata left Ayodhya and stayed in a village called Nandigram, all the time singing the Divine Name of Rama for 14 long years. It is for this reason that Bharata is described as the personification of Sama Veda. It was Satrughna who safeguarded the places of sacred rituals like Yajnas and Yagas from the invasion of evil spirits and demons. Do not think that Ramayana is different from the Vedas. In fact, it is the very essence of the Vedas.

The Inner Significance Of Ramayana

Rama exemplified three kinds of righteous behaviour (dharma), namely, the dharmas relating to

(1) the individual,

(2) the family, and,

(3) society.

To uphold this three-fold dharma, Divinity manifested in a triangular flow, in the form of the *Trimurtis* (the Triune form). The Ramayana manifested to elaborate the human values. The period of the Mahabharata was well over 5000 years ago, and the Ramayana was enacted aeons earlier. Even after the passage of countless ages, if it is still occupying the hearts of the people at large, you can well imagine its importance. There are two kinds of messages dominating the Ramayana: One pertains to Rama and the other to Ravana.

Sathya (Truth) is the very form of man; dharma (righteousness) is the innate propensity.

Sathya and dharma are the two eyes of man. These eyes are the very forms of all the scriptures. Rama's message to humanity was to uphold dharma and sathya, to stay in the path of these and fulfill one's life. On the other hand, the two principles of sathya and dharma were the very opposites of Ravana's propensities.

At the point of death, Ravana sent the following message to his people: "Oh my people, do not follow my example. I am the personification of all evil qualities. Falling into excessive desires, I have lost my progeny. Instead of establishing a good name for myself, I have destroyed my entire kingdom. Ultimately, I have ruined myself. Rama achieved universal fame and I have ended up accumulating ill-fame."

Fame and disrepute are cognates. There is no Rama without Ravana or Ravana without Rama. It is the bringing together of Rama and Ravana that is the Ramayana. Good and evil are always present side by side. Pitch-black hair surrounds a moon like face. What is the inner significance of this? The shining

forth of righteous fame is intensified by the surrounding darkness of evil. It is necessary for you to recognise the inner significance of the events of the Ramayana.

The Ramayana has very subtle truths embedded in it. The epic first of all expounds the duties of the individual. In the everyday world, any person's form is termed as the individual. The duties of the individual taught by Ramayana are not relating to this external form of the individual. The unmanifest, immanent, and hidden human values are the essence of the Ramayana.

The inner reality and the divinity resident in the heart constitute the true individuality. Individual does not mean the form; the individual in action is the true individual. Rama was exemplifying such individual values to humanity. To uphold the promise of his father, He went through the inconveniences of forest life, but He did not look on these hardships as hardships. In this way, He upheld His family traditions also. It is well known that the scions of the Ikshvaku family never swerved from their promises. Under any circumstances, upholding the values of one's parents, relations, and wife and children constitutes this three-fold dharma. How has Rama done this?

Rama Was The Embodiment Of Dharma

Wearing bark clothes, He came to Kausalya to take leave of her. Kausalya was astonished at the attire of Rama, who was about to be crowned as the emperor. Smilingly Rama told Kausalya.

"Today I have been commanded by My father to become the ruler of the forests. To rule the forests is also part of our family tradition." As this conversation was in progress, Lakshmana arrived there in a furious state. He said, "Mother, this is not what happened. Father, compelled by the words of Kaikeyi, has caused this situation. I am only waiting for Rama's command. Let Him just give me permission. I will go immediately and destroy Manthara and Kaikeyi and restore Rama as the king. I am not constrained even by the words of father".

Rama rushed up and physically closed Lakshmana's mouth. He said, "Lakshmana, this evil way is not in keeping with our family tradition. Our family tradition is the upholding of dharma. We have to uphold the individual and family tradition. Nothing happens in this world without a cause. Father wouldn't give Me such an instruction without proper reason. Please keep your emotions under control."

On hearing Lakshmana's version, Kausalya fainted. Later, she said, "Rama, is it not a son's duty to equally obey father and mother? Do I not bear half of your father's rights? Therefore, You have to fulfill your mother's orders also. So, I shall also come along with You to the forest."

Then Rama pleaded to His mother, "Father is highly distressed because of separation from Me. In this condition, it is not proper for you to desert him. You carry half his burdens. It is your duty now to support, sustain and protect him. The duty of a wife is to serve her husband first of all."

Sita, who was standing by heard this conversation. She asked Him, "Rama, You seem to be changing words according to persons and place. You have asked me to stay back and look after father and mother, but to Your mother, You are telling that serving the husband is the prime duty of a wife. Is not my husband, my God? Are the norms different for the wife and the mother?" Rama was pleased that Sita understood her duty well.

When Lakshmana used abusive words against Kaikeyi, Rama advised him, "Kaikeyi loves Me even more than Bharata. Such a mother should not be abused like this."

Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava
(revere the mother and father as God).

This is our family tradition. I am obeying the words of My father implicitly. I

respect all My mothers". In this manner Rama expounded dharma to different people appropriate to the circumstances.

Encounter With The Rakshasa Hordes

In the forest, Lakshmana cut off the nose and ears of Surpanakha. She went and complained to Ravana. Then Ravana invaded the forest with a huge army. At that time, Rama called Lakshmana and said, "You have to support Me as per My instructions. I shall go and face this army of Rakshasas alone. You take Sita to a secluded place and keep her concealed in a safe haven."

But Lakshmana refused to accept this. He said, "Is it proper to face this huge horde of Rakshasas alone? My duty is not to protect Sita alone. My prime purpose is to serve You. Being Your brother, can I standby and safely preserve my life while You are in grave danger? So, I shall not go leaving You alone".

Rama replied, "In the multiple duties of man, many such situations arise. You have to act according to circumstances without transgressing dharma. Are you not aware that I can face alone any number of opponents singly? Therefore, you only take up the job of protecting Sita."

In such soft words, He mollified Lakshmana and made him agree to stay back and look after Sita. He whispered the secret of the appropriate dharma in Lakshmana's ears. Lakshmana agreed and conducted Sita to a safe place. From their safe haven, Lakshmana and Sita could hear the loud clamour and bright flashes of the fierce battle. It was difficult for Lakshmana to keep his mind tranquil. Sita also, in her anxiety, urged Lakshmana with even abuses to go in help for Rama.

"Lakshmana, why are you abandoning your brother? Go to His support," she insisted. Lakshmana said, "Mother, my prime duty is strict obedience of Rama's instructions. Rama is capable of winning over all the enemies by Himself. He is omnipotent and omniscient. What is my strength compared to His! I won't leave you." He was pacifying her in this way, and waiting. Rama

released a thousand-headed weapon against the enemy, and the Rakshasas were all destroyed. When Rama returned, He was happy to see that Sita and Lakshmana were safe and sound.

How was Rama able to destroy the Rakshasa hordes singly? Really Rama is not a single person. He has got many forms. Sahasra Seersha Purushah Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad...etc., (Myriad headed, myriad eyed and myriad footed is the PURUSHA...etc.,). A mere sight of His presence was enough to render the Rakshasa horde unconscious.

Sweeter than sugar, tastier than butter, sweeter indeed than the essence of a beehive,
constant repetition of this nectarous sweet name makes you taste the very divine Amruta itself.
Therefore, contemplate on this sweet name incessantly.
(Telugu Poem)

Lakshmana said to Sita, "It is even possible to count the waves of the ocean, but there are no words to describe the manifold powers of Rama. In Rama, there are transcendental powers that transcend the Trigunas. We are mere instruments. Rama is the omnipotent One. It is enough if you merely pronounce the syllable "Rama".

All Dharmas Are Ordained By Vedas Only

All the *dharmas* (righteous duties) are no different from the dharmas contained in the Vedas. Dharma is frequently defined as a two-way path. One is *pravritti* and the other is *nivritti*. All activities relating to the external world are pravritti dharmas. Pravritti tells you when you are hungry, "My child eat." Nivritti tells you on the other hand, "Child, merely because you are hungry, don't eat everything that you get hold of." Nivritti tells you what, when, and

how you should eat. Pravritti confuses the mind. Nivritti purifies the heart. That which pertains to external objects is Pravritti; that which concerns internal needs is Nivritti. All the things that you are experiencing through your eyes, ears, mind, etc., are only related to Pravritti. Nivritti transcends the sense organs such as eyes, ears, etc. Rama taught such a path of Nivritti. This is the main theme of the Vedas.

Rama was born as a child of Dasaratha. He was not born from the womb of Kausalya, but actually from the fire of sacrifice. In fact, the Vedas are personified by the Yajnas (sacrifice) and Rama is the very personification of Yajna. This is not related to objects of nature. The Rama principle transcends the mind and the intellect.

Kaikeyi was in fact fonder of Rama than Bharata, but Manthara intervened. If you start enquiring what the principle is behind actions of Manthara, you will discover that this is also part of the Vedic principle.

Once, when the King of the land of Kekaya was hunting, he aimed an arrow and killed a male deer. The female deer went to her mother and said, "Mother, the King of Kekaya has killed my husband. Now, what is my fate?" That mother had the device (Yantra) by which dead persons could be revived. So, the mother deer said, "My child, don't cry, I shall revive your dead husband." The mother deer went to the King of Kekaya and told him, "O king, It is not a proper action that you have done, killing the husband of my daughter. You should not indulge in such actions that create separation. Just as I am suffering now by the loss of my son-in-law, you will suffer the loss of your son-in-law. I shall see to it that this event takes place." That mother deer was born as Manthara and was the cause of the death of Dasaratha and the consequent loss of son-in-law of Kaikeyi's father. If you look closely into the various events in the Ramayana, you will discover several truths that are enshrined in the Vedas.

Vedas, Sastras and Puranas are all inter-dependent, indispensable to each other, and should not be studied as independent works. It is not proper to separate them as unconnected works. The so-called scholars apply worldly

standards to these works and make all kinds of studies by separating them as different (Such as Veda, Sastra and Purana).

Good and bad are intricately mixed and it is not possible for anybody to entirely disentangle them. The same kind of connecting and contrasting relationship that exists between a bright face and a crown of black hair exists between good and evil. If Ravana never existed, Rama's reputation would not have been so popular and widespread amongst people. Ravana was no ordinary person. He had studied all that Rama had, but he did not put any of his knowledge into practice; hence suffered indigestion of knowledge. Whereas, Rama fully put into practice all His study, having digested it properly, and uplifted his people thereby.

There are two kinds of study: Inward looking and outward looking. The stuff that you learn by rote and disgorge into your answer paper is the outward looking study. On the other hand, taking your studies into your heart, feeling its fullness and experiencing its bliss is the inward looking study. These have been differentiated by the terms: Education and "Educare". Your aim should be for acquiring "Educare" and not mere education.

Manthara Was Born To Fulfill A Vow

Manthara never forgot her past resolve and therefore decided to poison Kaikeyi's mind against her natural affection and her duties towards Dasaratha. Outside Kaikeyi's palace, there was fanfare, trumpeting and joyous noise of some procession. It was actually Dasaratha coming with all his regal paraphernalia to inform Kaikeyi about his decision to crown Rama. The hunchback Manthara looked out of the window to see what the noise was about. The glory of Dasaratha was distasteful to Manthara. As Manthara was coming down, she encountered Kausalya's servant maid. She was on her way to Kaikeyi to show off all the dress and fineries that Kausalya had given her.

Manthara asked her wherefrom she got all this finery. She replied, "Kausalya's son Rama is going to be crowned as king and in the joy of that news Kausalya has given all of us, her servitors, fine clothes, jewelry, etc." Manthara was

infuriated by this. She was even jealous of the fact that none of it was coming her way also. Even that rankling was persisting in her mind.

Immediately, she went to Kaikeyi and asked her, "Wherefore are you decked out in all these fineries?" Kaikeyi did not pay any attention to Manthara's words. Manthara went near Kaikeyi and told her, "You simpleton, you are under the false impression that Dasaratha loves you more than anyone else. But it is really deceit. You will see what happens to you in the future. Just listen to me."

So saying Manthara tapped on Kaikeyi's shoulder. By this mere contact, all the evil seething inside Manthara entered into Kaikeyi. It is very dangerous to cultivate association with anyone with evil habits. Even a little contact can pollute you with their qualities. Kaikeyi who was so fond of Rama till then turned against Him in a moment.

Manthara told her, "Remember, you had rendered a lot of help to Dasaratha when he was fighting with Sharadushana. When the retaining peg of the axle tree of Dasaratha's chariot got loose and the wheel was about to fall off, you put your finger in the place of the lost peg and retained the wheel in place until Dasaratha was able to vanquish his enemy. At that time, Dasaratha, in his joy, granted you two boons and you had told him that you would ask for the same at some future date, and the king had promised you that he would keep up his word. Now is the time for you to ask for the boons.

(Bhagawan here mentioned that if husband and wife remained separated for more than thirteen years, their relationship ceased to exist).

So, you ask Dasaratha to banish Rama to the forest for fourteen years and insist on Bharata's coronation immediately. See, Dasaratha is coming. Take off your ornaments; throw them pell-mell on the floor. Get into your Hall of Anger, lie down on the ground like a withered creeper."

Kaikeyi followed her advice. The king came, asked where Kaikeyi was, and got no reply. Manthara told him, "Go and see for yourself".

Dasaratha was horrified by the sight he saw inside the chamber. He asked gently, "Kaikeyi, why are you acting like this?" There was no reply. Dasaratha exhorted further, "Kaikeyi, this is not an occasion to behave like this. Rama is about to be crowned and this is a very important event in my life. On such a happy occasion, don't put on such a sorry face. Whatever you want, palace or ornaments or anything else, just mention it and it will be yours."

Kaikeyi said she did not want any of these things. Then she expressed her demands, as tutored by Manthara. On hearing this, Dasaratha fell unconscious. In a fit of jealousy, Manthara pushed Kaikeyi into this plight. Anyone possessed by the demon of jealousy will not be spared.

Dasaratha pleaded, "Why are you afflicted by this fit of jealousy? This will only bring you ill fame." But Kaikeyi stuck to her stand.

Swami keeps telling you,

Tyaja Durjana Samsargam
(Leave association with people of evil habits).

Don't associate with anyone who is afflicted with jealousy even at the cost of losing your life.

Rama Upheld Dharma Even In Adversity

Manthara was the personification of jealousy. Her jealousy was so potent as to change Kaikeyi's great motherly love for Rama. Any amount of persuasion from Dasaratha was fruitless.

Just then Rama entered, all dressed-up ready for coronation, to pay His respect to His parents. Looking at the situation there, He asked Kaikeyi, "Amma, what is the problem?"

Kaikeyi did not reply, but Manthara told Him about Kaikeyi's boons. She told Him, "Your father promised that day, but is now going back on his promise". After hearing everything, Rama told Kaikeyi, "Mother, I shall uphold the words of father. One should never go back on promises. Such an act will bring great dishonour on the Ikshvaku clan. So, I shall depart for the forest immediately."

At once, Manthara came in with bark clothes for Rama to wear. Jealousy is so ready when it decides to act. Rama changed His clothes right there. Rama saluted His father, but Dasaratha was unaware of all that was happening. Kaikeyi then told Him, "Rama, do you look on Your father and mother differently? As a mother, I am telling You to go to the forest straightaway." Rama complied without demur.

Jealousy Is The Root Cause Of All Evils

The Ramayana gives examples of Ravana and Manthara as both had evil propensities in them. Ravana was slain in the battle, but Manthara is alive even today in the form of jealousy. There is none who can destroy this 'Manthara'. We have to ignore this 'Manthara' and carry on with our duties. When Lakshmana wanted to kill her, Rama stopped him, saying, "One should not kill a woman."

Jealousy is the worst of all evil qualities. Three-fourths of the world is ruined because of jealousy. Jealousy has no limits whatsoever. People are jealous of others' prosperity, beauty and education, and try to cause their downfall. One should not speak bad words, listen to bad things and indulge in evil activities. This is the main teaching of Ramayana.

Manthara indulged in evil talk and Kaikeyi paid heed to her. What happened to them ultimately? They were put to disrepute. Today, do you find any woman bearing the name of Kaikeyi or Manthara? You come across women having the name Kausalya, but not Kaikeyi or Manthara. Keechaka cast evil looks on Draupadi, and consequently met his doom at the hands of Bhima. Do you find anybody having the name Keechaka? None. All those who indulge in evil talk and evil actions should be banished from this world. The Ramayana

shows us the way to lead an ideal life. That is why people of all countries and all languages hold the Ramayana in high esteem. This sacred epic is ever new and ever inspiring. Its glory has not diminished even a bit with the passage of time. It has stood the test of time because of the sacred ideals it stands for.

Divine Will Is Supreme

Once Anjana Devi, mother of Anjaneya, visited Kausalya at her residence. Kausalya enquired who she was. Anjana Devi introduced herself saying, "I am the mother of Anjaneya, who could cross over the mighty ocean in a leap". After some time, the mother of Sage Agastya also came there. On being asked, she introduced herself saying, "I am the mother of the one who swallowed the entire ocean in one gulp." Then Kausalya said to them, "Your sons could accomplish such stupendous tasks because of the mighty power of my son, Rama's name."

As they were conversing, Rama appeared there and asked, "Mother, what is it that you are discussing?" Kausalya replied, "Son, we are discussing the glory of Your name." Then Rama said, "Mother, it is not because of My name, but because of My Will that they were able to perform such mighty tasks. There are many who chant My name, but are all of them able to reap its benefit? Purity of heart is very essential."

The one with noble qualities of purity, patience and perseverance is verily God. Have the determination to uphold good and remain peaceful in the face of adversities. Don't aspire for name and fame. Keep your heart sacred. Have strong determination to do good. This is the sadhana you are supposed to do.

Describing the greatness and grandeur of Rama's Divine power, Thyagaraja composed a beautiful song, "Oh Rama, without Your Divine power, would a mere monkey cross the ocean? Would Lakshmana worship you! Would Lakshmi Devi, the goddess of wealth, become Your consort? Would the intelligent Bharata be subservient to You? Words are inadequate to describe Your Divine Power." People have been celebrating Rama's birthday for the past thousands of years, but are not able to give up their evil tendencies.

Celebration of any festival becomes meaningful only when there is transformation in your heart.

Students!

You are young and have a long way to go. Society is like a train and all elders are bound to get down soon, but you have yet to travel a long way. So, keep your 'compartment' clean and have a comfortable journey. Keep your goal in mind and be the recipients of Divine grace. Chant the Name of Rama wholeheartedly. Install Him in your heart and sanctify your lives. Rama is present in every heart in the form of the Atma. That is why, He is known as Atma Rama. Atma is changeless and that is your true form. Develop the faith that you are Brahma (*Aham Brahmasmi*).

Embodiments of Love!

As you are aware, Prasanthi Nilayam is a part of Rayalaseema region, which is known for its hot summer. Though you are very happy here, your body may not be able to bear this summer heat. It is but natural in this season. So, those who wish to go may do so. No one needs to wait for Swami's permission. Go happily and come back happily in the month of June.

7. Fill All Your Actions With Love

Date: 14 April 2001 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Tamil New Year, Baisakhi, Vishu

If you leave pride, you become dear to all;
If you conquer anger, you become free from worries;
You become prosperous when you control your desires.
You attain happiness only when you conquer greed.
(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

AS Long as man is proud and pompous, none will love him including his wife and children. They may pretend to love him, but it is not true love. The reason is that pride and pomp come in the way of love. As long as man has anger in him, he cannot escape misery. If man wants to be away from misery and attain peace, he has to rid himself of anger. One with desires can never attain happiness. "Less luggage more comfort." In this journey of life, desires are your luggage. You have to reduce them in order to lead a comfortable life. A greedy man can never attain prosperity. He will be happy, prosperous and blissful on the day he gives up greed.

Welfare Of The World Depends On Man's Thoughts And Actions

Today marks the commencement of the New year. Many such New Years have gone by. Man expects the new year to confer on him and the world at large peace, happiness and prosperity. But the welfare of the world depends on man's conduct and behaviour. Man's conduct depends on his mind. The nature of the mind depends on thoughts. Only when man's thoughts are based on truth will the world flourish. One who aspires for the welfare of the world should see to it that his thoughts and actions are in accordance with his

aspirations.

Good and evil, happiness and misery, merit and sin depend on man's actions. As is the action, so is the result. But today man ignores the law of action and acts as he pleases. It is easy to indulge in sinful deeds but it is extremely difficult to bear the bad results they yield. The Upanishads say. "Thasmai Namah Karmane" (salutations to action). You should offer your salutations to the action you perform so that it becomes sacred, brings you good name and contributes to the welfare of the world. This is one of the primary doctrines of the culture of Bharat. Since time immemorial, the Bharatiyas have been offering respect to action, be it big or small, before undertaking it. A dancer pays her respects to the anklets that she wears before the commencement of her dance performance. Even tabla players start playing on the tabla only after offering their respects to it. Not only the educated people follow this practice, even an illiterate lorry driver offers his obeisance to the steering wheel before driving the vehicle. This is the sacredness that our culture imparts to action.

Offer your Namaskar (salutation) to the action you perform. What is Namaskar? It is giving up the sense of ego. But today this ancient culture is being forgotten and man acts as per his whims and fancies. Consequently, he is subjected to untold misery. He feels miserable when he has to face the consequences of his evil deeds, but he does not care to enquire whether it is good or bad before undertaking any action. Use your sense of discrimination before performing an action. Never be in haste. "Haste makes waste, waste makes worry. So, do not be in a hurry. Man attains happiness or misery based on the actions he performs. The New Year brings with it neither happiness nor misery. Man faces the results of his actions. So, he should perform righteous deeds. You should perform activities that would benefit others.

True Service

Once when Emperor Asoka celebrated his birthday, all his vassal kings made their offerings of wealth collected through taxes from the people of their respective kingdoms. But the King of Magadha did not offer anything. So, the

emperor asked the king as to why he had come empty handed. The king replied, "O emperor, this year my kingdom passed through a terrible phase of drought, famine and floods. Consequently, my people suffered too much due to lack of food, water and shelter. In order to alleviate their suffering, I spent all money that I had collected through taxes. I provided drinking water, constructed schools to educate children, and established hospitals to treat the sick. As a result, I am left with nothing to offer you".

Emperor Asoka was immensely pleased with his reply. He called him by his side and said, "Oh king, what you have done is highly commendable. Water sustains life. Education develops the intellect and medical care is essential to maintain good health. You have done a great service to your people by providing these basic amenities. I am happy to note that you have done all this without any trace of selfishness and as an offering to God." Addressing the other assembled kings, the emperor said, "Many criticise the government for collecting taxes. But without collecting taxes, how can the government get money? Without money, how is it possible for the government to undertake social welfare projects? So, it is necessary for the government to collect taxes. But one should see to it that the money is spent for the benefit of people. That is true service." Offer Dedicated Service Today people talk of devotion without really understanding its meaning. I don't want your devotion; I want your transformation. What is devotion? Paropakartham Idam Sareeram (this body is meant to serve others). You should understand that the body is the means to serve others and involve yourself in such activities, which will benefit others and give them happiness. Resolve to tread the path of service. Some people indulge in meaningless activities in the name of devotion and waste their time. True devotion lies in performing actions that will sanctify time. I am not asking you to serve the whole world in a big way. It is enough if you keep God in your heart and serve as per your capacity. 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). The path of service is superior to all the spiritual practices like japa, dhyana and yoga. Only through service can you please God. "Deho Devalaya Prokto Jeevo Deva Sanathana" (Body is the temple and the indweller is God). So treat every body as a temple. Have firm conviction

that God resides in every body in the form of the Atma. There is no place where God does not exist. He pervades all names and forms. Sarvata Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthathi (with hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). Whatever action you undertake, do it as an offering to God.

Make Proper Use Of Your Senses

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish one day or the other. But in such a transient body there exists the eternal divinity in the form of the Atma. The all-pervasive divinity is known as consciousness, the limited form of which exists in body as conscience. Consciousness and conscience are the same in terms of quality, only the quantity differs. You may collect water from an ocean in a pot and a tank. The water in these two differs only in quantity but the salinity is the same in both of them. The body may be compared to the pot; the all-pervasive consciousness exists in it as conscience. The whole world is pervaded by consciousness. On this basis, the Vedas declare; Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman). There is no matter in this world that is not pervaded by Brahman. You are all embodiments of the Cosmic Divine. Though you see God day in and day out, you feel you haven't. It is a sign of your weakness. Have firm faith that the body is a temple. Will anyone utilise a temple for unsacred purposes? So, make proper use of your body. This temple has many doors, but the doors of senses like the ears, the eyes and the mouth are very important. Do not allow any evil to enter your body and mind through these 'doors'.

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

The safety and sanctity of the body lies in making proper use of the five senses. The culture of Bharat has taught nine paths of devotion to sanctify the senses. They are: Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on God), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus

Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender). Chant the name of God and perform all actions for the benefit of others. Karmanubandheeni Manushya Loke (in this world, man is bound by action). Your life is controlled by action. You cannot live even a moment without action. Let every action of yours be a prayer to God. This is the true and eternal path prescribed by the Upanishads, and contained in the prayer, "Thasmai Namah Karmane." You should offer your prayer to the God of action so that He makes you perform noble deeds that are beneficial for one and all and lead to world peace.

Recognise The Principle Of Unity

Human body is meant to serve others, not to indulge in selfish deeds. As selfishness has become part and parcel of your life, you indulge in many sinful activities. Eschew selfishness, take to selfless service. Give up attachment towards the body. Become attached to the Self. Understand that the same Self (Atma) exists in everybody. Though you find myriad bulbs glowing here, the current that is passing through them is the same. Bodies are like bulbs; the principle of the Atma is the current that is present in them. With such a feeling of oneness, make efforts to alleviate the suffering of your fellowmen.

Sage Vyasa has given the essence of 18 Puranas in the following dictum, "Paropakaraya Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam" (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). So, "Help ever, hurt never." There is no higher sadhana (spiritual practice) than this. This is the basis for self-realisation.

Self is nothing but the principle of the Atma. There is only one Self. Hence, it is said, Ekameva Adviteeyam Brahma (God is one without a second). It is rather surprising that man is unable to believe this principle of unity. He has faith in what is broadcast on television and radio, but does not have faith in the Self. One without faith in the Self is verily blind. In this world nothing exists except the Atma.

Everybody is the embodiment of divinity. Sarva Jeeva Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachchhati (whomsoever you salute, it reaches God). Likewise, whomsoever you criticise, it reaches God. So, do not criticise or hate anybody.

There are many people who undertake spiritual practices like Japa, Dhyana and Yoga. No doubt, these are sacred activities and one may undertake them. But it is very essential to recognise the principle of unity. There is only one God and He is omnipresent. Why are you not able to believe this all-pervasive Divinity? You are ready to believe those who put you on the wrong path. But you don't believe those who show you the right path. This is the impact of Kali Age and the result of modern education. Modern education is limited only to bookish knowledge, which is nothing but superficial knowledge. There is one book that you have to study and that is this world. Instead of learning lessons from this big book of the world, you are confining yourself to your small textbooks. Of what use are they? Do not be satisfied with mere bookish knowledge. Try to acquire practical knowledge. Only then will your life find fulfillment.

Embodiments of Love!

There is love in everybody. Love is God, live in love. When you have such sacred love in you, why are you unable to translate it into action?

Start the day with love, Spend the day with love, Fill the day with love, End the day with love, This is the way to God.

Self-confidence Is The Key To Success

There are some people who hate even their parents. It is a grave mistake. Matrudevo Bhava, Pitrudeva Bhava, Acharyadevo Bhava, Atithidevo Bhava (revere your mother, father, preceptor and guest as God). How can one who cannot respect his own parents, revere God? None can match the mother in imparting sacred teachings to the children. You might have heard the story of Abraham Lincoln. As he was born in a poor family, he did not have even

proper clothes to wear. While going to school, his fellow students made fun of him. Lincoln could not bear the humiliation. One day he complained to his mother, crying, "Mother, my fellow students in the school make fun at my dress. They look down upon me and say that I am not worthy of their company." His mother then told him, "Son, you are aware of our financial condition. So, don't pay heed to what others say. Uphold your self-respect. Develop self-confidence, which alone can bestow all the wealth and prosperity on you." From that day onward, as per his mother's guidance, Lincoln grew in self-confidence, upheld his self-respect and ultimately rose to become the President of America. Though born in a poor family, Lincoln could reach such an exalted position only due to his self-confidence and self-respect. Self-respect confers grace. Do not get dejected if others subject you to criticism and ridicule. Think that whatever happens is good for you. Once you develop such equanimity, there will be none greater than you.

Love Is The Greatest Wealth

Embodiments of Love!

Respect and be respected. What you give to others will come back to you. You are bound to face the reflection, reaction and resound of your actions. Everything, including God-realisation, depends on your actions. Today the New Year has commenced, but it has not brought anything new with it. Today is in no way different from yesterday. If you do good now, you will reap its benefits in future. So, sanctify your actions. Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaikena Amrutatthwamanasu (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth. It is attained only by sacrifice). The bliss that you get out of sacrifice is eternal. That alone is the true wealth, and it can never diminish. In order to acquire such everlasting wealth, spend your time in the contemplation of God. Divinity pervades all that you see, hear and feel. Being in the constant company of such an all-pervasive Divinity, why should you worry and fear? Why fear when I am here? (loud applause). Never be afraid of anything; because God is in you, with you, above you, below you, around you. He follows you like shadow. Never forget Him. Atheists may talk as they please. If you have faith, God will protect you wherever you are: in a forest or

in the sky; in a city or a village; on a hill or in the middle of deep sea.

Today cities have become centres of pollution and unrest. There is pollution everywhere, as man's mind has become polluted. If mind becomes pure, everything else will become pure. So, cleanse your mind. Drive out all your worries. What is the use of brooding over the past? Past is past, forget it. Future is uncertain. What is the guarantee that you will be alive till tomorrow? Don't worry about your future. Present is very important. This is omnipresent, not ordinary present. So, make the best use of present and be happy.

Students and Devotees!

Devotion does not merely mean reading sacred texts and undertaking rituals. You may continue doing so, but keep your heart always sacred. Whatever may happen, see that your faith does not waver. All the worldly things come and go like passing clouds. But the principle of love comes and grows. There is no God other than love. Love is your life, your friend, your relative, your food and your everything. Heart that is filled with love can never be polluted. Love is nectarous. Once you fill it in your heart, the poison of evil will have no place in it.

Embodiments of Love!

As you are not aware of the sacredness of love, you are wasting it by diverting it on worldly things. Love is the greatest wealth and treasure. Let the whole world be filled with love. Love alone can safeguard the country and make it prosperous. Let every action of yours be filled with love. Love begets sacred rewards.

8. Prayers Of Mothers Sustain The World

Date: 06 May 2001 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Easwaramma Day

The more you grind the sandalwood, the more it yields sandal paste.
The more you crush the sugarcane, the more it yields sweet juice.
As the gold is heated more and more, it becomes purer and shines with added brilliance.
Likewise, the good qualities in a noble person blossom more and more as he passes through the vicissitudes of life.
(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

THE difficulties of life do not cause any hindrance to a person pursuing a noble course of life. In spite of these, he always remains at peace and contemplates on God constantly. In Bharat, the relationship between the mother and the child has been considered highly sacred and nectarous since ancient times.

Rama's Divinity blossomed under Kausalya's loving care;
Because of the tender feelings and austerity of Sita,
Lava and Kusha achieved name and fame; Fostered with the love of his mother
Putlibai, Gandhi became a Mahatma; The loving care of Jijabai made Shivaji a great warrior.
(Telugu Poem)

You cannot expect sweet mangoes when you sow Neem seeds. If you want

mangoes, you have to sow the seeds of mango. The earth is one but the seeds are different. You must sow what you want to reap. The womb of the mother is like the earth. The children will be good or bad depending on the thoughts of the parents.

Janthunam Najanma Durlabham

(out of all the living beings, the human life is the rarest).

It is a great good fortune to be born as a human being. Having been blessed with human birth, man should develop noble thoughts and experience bliss within. Only then will he be called truly fortunate.

Sacredness Of Mother Child Relationship

Putlibai, the mother of Mahatma Gandhi, 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. Out of love and concern for his mother, he went behind the house and mimicked the singing of cuckoo. Then he came inside and told his mother that she could have her food as she had heard the song of cuckoo. The intention behind this act was no doubt good. But Putlibai felt very sad as she knew that her son was uttering a lie. With tears in her eyes, she bemoaned, "What sin have I committed that I gave birth to a son who speaks untruth!" So saying, she reprimanded him for telling a lie. Gandhi took a vow that he would never indulge in falsehood thenceforth. As per the command of his mother, he adhered to truth till the very end of his life and attained good reputation.

Putlibai had a maid-servant named Rambha. As the saying goes,

"Yatha Raja Thatha Praja" (as the king, so the subjects),

she was also pure-hearted like Putlibai. One day, Gandhi came running to her and told her that he was haunted by fear. She asked him to chant the Name of Lord Rama whenever he was fearstricken. From then onwards Gandhi chanted the Name of Lord Rama till his last breath. Thus, we see that when the mother and other members of the household take to sacred path, the children would certainly emulate them and attain exalted position in life.

Aryamba, the mother of Sankaracharya, spent all her time in the worship of Easwara. Everyday she performed Abhisheka (sacred bath) to the Siva Linga, sipped the sanctified water and gave it to her son too. She constantly chanted the Divine Name of Lord Siva. Sankaracharya became a world teacher and attained great fame as he was born to such a noble mother.

After the war for the liberation of Rangoon, a mother and her son somehow managed to reach Chennai. They neither had shelter over their head nor any food to eat. The mother was concerned more about her son than herself. Such is the love of the mother. The love of the mother transcends all descriptions. A bus stand became their home. Everyday the mother would go for begging 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 would herself go without food. As a result, her health gradually deteriorated. One day the son told her, "Mother, you have been taking care of me all along. Now it is my duty to take care of you. From today you take rest, I will bring food for both of us." Everyday he would go for begging, give most of it to his mother and partake of whatever little was left. Consequently, he too became very weak.

One day he stood in front of the house of an officer and cried, "Oh sir, I am hungry, I am hungry." The officer was relaxing in an easy chair and was going through the daily newspaper. Hearing the pitiable cries of the boy, he went inside, brought food in a leaf plate and asked him to sit and eat. But the boy said that he would take it home. The officer said, "Why should you take it home? If you are really hungry, sit here and eat." As the officer was insisting

that he should eat the food there itself, the boy felt giddy and collapsed on the ground. He was trying to say something, but could not say it loud enough as he was very weak. The officer went close to the boy and tried to hear what he was saying. The boy was saying, "First to my mother, to my mother." With these words, he breathed his last. Seeing this, the officer was moved to tears. He thought, how lucky this boy was who had sacrificed his life for the sake of his mother. Blessed was the mother, who gave birth to such a noble son.

It is impossible to describe the love that exists between the mother and her child. The Bharatiyas consider the love of a mother as true love. But, unfortunately, modern youth do not realise the sacredness of mother's love. They keep their self-interest above their parents. They do not try to understand the love their parents have for them. He or she alone is a true son or daughter who gives happiness to the parents.

Noble Mothers Have Noble Wishes

Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar lived with his mother in a village near Kolkata. Financially they were poor, but they were endowed with the wealth of virtues. The mother often told her son, "My dear one, the education that merely caters to the needs of the stomach is no education at all. You should study so as to serve society. You should utilise your education for the emancipation of the country." Vidyasagar used to study under streetlights or at the bus stand because of his poverty. He followed the words of his mother in letter and spirit and put his heart and soul in his studies. Mother's blessings can make anybody great. The children may be good or bad, but the mother always loves her children and aspires for their welfare. The mother's heart is full of love and compassion for her children.

After completing his education, Vidyasagar took up a job. Once there was a religious festival in the village. The rich people of the village participated in the festival in their best clothes. But Vidyasagar's mother had to wear an old sari even on that festival day, as she had no good sari to wear. Seeing this, Vidyasagar felt very sad. When he received his first salary, he placed it at the feet of his mother and pleaded with her to buy a good sari for herself. She

said, "Son, I don't want you to spend your earnings on my saris and jewels. Utilise it to serve the society. All that I want is that you should come up in life and earn a good name." Then she added, "I have a few desires, but I will express them only at the appropriate time." Gradually, Vidyasagar rose to a higher position and accordingly his salary too increased. Then he requested his mother to express her desires. She made him sit by her side and said, "My dear one, you are highly educated and are holding an exalted position. But as a mother I must tell you what is good for you. Whatever I tell you is only out of my motherly love towards you. I don't want anything for myself. Ours is a small village. The children of our village have no opportunity for education, as there is no school in our village. So, I want you to construct a small school." Complying with his mother's wish, he established a small school in the village. After some time, he said to her, "Mother, as per your wish I have got a school constructed in our village. Is there anything else that you want?" She told him, "Son, in our village, people are suffering due to lack of medical facilities. There is nobody to treat them even for small ailments like cough, cold and fever. So, it would be convenient for everybody, especially the children, if you establish a small hospital here." Obeying the command of his mother, he promptly built a small hospital.

Easwaramma, The Chosen Mother

Mother Easwaramma too had such noble desires. As Sai's glory began to spread far and wide, she came to Me one day and said, "Swami, I am pained to see small children of our village walking all the way to Bukkapatnam to attend school. Please construct a small school." Conforming to her wish, I established a small school. After some time, she wanted a small hospital also to be established here. She said she could not bear to see the mothers taking the trouble of carrying their children to Bukkapatnam for medical treatment. Accordingly I got a small hospital built. The small school that I established has become a big university today. The small hospital that I constructed has become a Super Specialty Hospital (cheers). These mighty tasks could be accomplished as a result of the Sathya Sankalpa (noble wish) of Mother Easwaramma and Nitya Sankalpa (Divine Will) of Sai. Her last wish was to provide drinking water to the village. She pointed out that the women had to

take great pains to draw water from deep wells, which had almost dried up. I immediately provided drinking water to the village. Now under Sri Sathya Sai water Supply Project, I have provided drinking water to the entire district of Anantapur.

Once you become the recipient of your mother's love, you don't need anything else. You may be aware or not, but even after 30 years of her passing away, Mother Easwamma continues to express her love for Swami in a number of ways. Even to this day, she moves around in her physical body. At times, she comes to Me and expresses her motherly concern for My well being. Once she cautioned Me not to accept handkerchief from everybody. I told her that I had to accept when people offered it with devotion. She said, "Swami, no doubt there are crores of such noble persons. But there are also a few evil-minded persons who may smear poison on the handkerchief and offer it to You. This can prove dangerous when You use it to wipe your lips." I promised her that I would follow her advice. Even to this day she makes her appearance in My room. The boys who sleep in My room too have witnessed this. Whenever she comes and talks to Me, they sit up on their beds and listen.

One day, I asked the boys for a belt to keep the silk Dhoti tight around My waist. The belt that they gave Me had a shining buckle and could be seen through the robe I wear. I did not want to use it lest people should think that Sai Baba wears a gold belt. After this, one day Easwamma came to My room early in the morning and started talking to Me. Then Satyajit, Sainath and Srinivas woke up and wanted to know with whom I was conversing. They wondered how anyone could enter My room since the lift was locked and the key was with them. Then I told that Griham Ammayi (Mother Easwamma) had come. I showed them the belt that she gave me. It had no buckle. There are many such noble mothers in this world. But Easwamma was the chosen one. I chose her to be My mother (cheers). That is the intimate relationship between Mother Easwamma and Myself.

True Devotion Of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Once Chaitanya Mahaprabhu went to a temple and prayed, "Oh Lord, I know that you are the Master of the world. You are omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. You can grant any wish that I ask for. But I don't have any worldly desires. I don't aspire for money, jewelry and material objects. Neither am I interested in devotion or renunciation nor do I crave for liberation. But I do have one desire. Grant me the strength to love You. It is enough if I can love you. There is nothing superior to this." As Chaitanya Mahaprabhu loved God dearly, he propagated the message of love to the entire world. "Think of God incessantly. Chant His Name. There is nothing in this world except God." This was the message propagated by Chaitanya.

His mother wanted him to get married to a girl named Lakshmi, who hailed from a good family and was highly devoted. But Chaitanya was not interested in marriage. He said that he had dedicated his life to the Lord. His mother said, "You might have offered your mind to God, but what about your body? Life should have both spiritual and physical aspects." On the insistence of his mother, Chaitanya married Lakshmi. Immediately after the marriage, he set out on a pilgrimage. He wanted to propagate the Divine message. Chaitanya did not return home from his pilgrimage for a long time. His wife Lakshmi was a pious lady. She had a pure heart full of selfless love. She left her mortal coil while constantly thinking of Chaitanya. Chaitanya returned home after her death. His mother felt highly depressed at the turn of events. She felt that it was impossible to get another girl like Lakshmi who was pious and pure-hearted. Then she got him married to another girl named Vishnupriya. After his second marriage, he again set out to propagate the Divine message and in the process totally forgot his home. He considered God as His only refuge. He had no other thought in his mind.

Once when he was singing the glory of Lord Krishna in the streets, some miscreants, who were jealous of his growing reputation, snatched away the cymbals from his hands. Thereafter, he started playing on a drum while singing the Divine Name. Even the drum too was broken by the miscreants, but he was least perturbed. He felt there was no necessity to use the musical instruments to sing the Divine Name. Then he started clapping and singing Bhajans. Now the miscreants beat him up mercilessly. His body started

bleeding profusely, yet Chaitanya continued to chant the Divine Name. But when his mother came and saw, there was no trace of blood on his body. It had all disappeared miraculously because Chaitanya firmly believed that his body belonged to God and was not attached to it.

Wicked People Do Not Spare Even God

When the mother's heart is pure, her children too would be pure-hearted. One should respect one's mother and never hurt her feelings. When Swami was staying in the Old Mandir, one day there was an unusual crowd. Sensing danger, Easwaramma came to Me and said, "Swami, these people seem to be having some ulterior motive. I am afraid they may try to harm You. I am unable to sleep peacefully." I infused courage in her, saying, "Be fearless. The body is bound to perish one day or the other. So, give up body attachment." Those days I used to sleep all alone in a thatched hut. That night, as Easwaramma feared, some evil-minded people set the hut on fire from all four sides. There were raving flames all around. Seeing this, Subbamma and Easwaramma came running. When they reached the spot, they found to their utter amazement, there was a heavy downpour on the hut. However, there was absolutely no rain in the surrounding area (loud applause). When I came out of the hut, both of them were overjoyed to see Me safe and sound.

There is a similar incident in the Mahabharata. Lord Krishna went to the Kauravas as an emissary of the Pandavas to bring about a compromise and avert the war. Before going to the Kauravas, He approached the Pandavas one by one and sought their opinion.

Dharmaraja was of the opinion that a person of Krishna's stature should not approach the meanminded Kauravas in the role of an ambassador. Arjuna and Bhima who were filled with Rajo Guna (quality of passion) were in favour of Krishna going to the Kauravas, but they wanted him to settle for war so that the wicked Kauravas could be punished. Then Krishna sought the opinion of Droupadi. Women are by nature tenderhearted. She did not want war because it would cause immense grief to both the sides. Then He went to Nakula and Sahadeva who did not say anything.

Krishna went to Hastinapur, spoke to the blind king Dhritarashtra and tried His best to bring about a compromise, but all in vain. When Krishna returned, Nakula and Sahadeva hugged Him and shed tears of joy. They said, "Krishna, it is enough for us that You have returned safe from the den of the wicked Kauravas. You had asked us what we wanted before setting out on Your peace mission. Your safe return is what we wanted. Your welfare is our welfare. You are everything for us." Women Are The Embodiments Of Compassion Droupadi said to Krishna, "Oh brother, I too was of the opinion that You should not go to the wicked Kauravas. People may say that women are weakminded. But, in fact, women are highly courageous and when it comes to sacrifice, women stand first." During the Mahabharata war, on a certain night, Aswatthama, the son of Dronacharya, slaughtered the Pandava children while they were asleep. Arjuna took a vow that he would behead Aswatthama. He told Droupadi that she could anoint herself with his blood as an act of revenge. He tracked down Aswatthama, tied him with ropes and dragged him before Droupadi. Will any mother forgive the one who has mercilessly slaughtered her children? But what did Droupadi do? Instead of cursing the evil doer, 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)

Consumed with fury, Arjuna was about to attack Aswatthama. Droupadi raised her hand and asked him not to kill him. She said:

Oh Parhta! It is not righteous to kill a person who is afraid or has lost courage, who is asleep or intoxicated, who seeks refuge or is a female. You should not kill Aswatthama, for he is your preceptor's son.

(Telugu Poem)

She said, "Arjuna, today I am crying over the death of my children. If you kill Aswatthama, just imagine what would be the plight of his mother! One should never cause grief to a mother. So, restrain yourself from killing him." But having taken the vow, Arjuna was bent upon killing him. She stood in front of Aswatthama and stopped Arjuna from going towards him. Bhima could not bear to see this. Exploding with anger, he roared: "Do not release him but kill him. If you do not do that, I myself will hammer his head with my powerful fist." Droupadi pleaded with him to forgive him:

"Forgiveness is the highest virtue. It is the truth, righteousness, nonviolence. It is the heaven and everything in all the worlds."

(Telugu Poem)

Though the Pandavas were highly virtuous and brave, the spirit of compassion that Droupadi possessed was not found in them. The heart of a woman is highly sacred as it is filled with nectarous love and compassion. So, it melts easily. At times, women may also get angry, but they immediately repent and reconcile. Due to the impact of the Kali Age, modern women are sometimes found lacking in the spirit of love. But even today, there are many women of virtue and character. Bharat is what it is today because of such noble women. The progress of a nation depends on its women. So, never look down upon them. Treat all elderly women as your mothers and the younger ones as your sisters. The country will remain safe and secure only when men have such noble feelings. When you understand this truth and act accordingly, you can attain even Divinity. Mother is not just an ordinary woman; she is verily God. Worship her and attain her grace. Once you have the blessings of your mother, you can achieve anything in this world. Never disobey or displease her.

Abhimanyu ventured into the battlefield against his mother's wish. His mother Subhadra said, "Son, your father Arjuna and uncle Krishna are busy fighting the enemies elsewhere. At this juncture, it is not proper for you to enter the

battlefield." But Abhimanyu did not pay heed to his mother's advice and insisted upon going to the battlefield. She blessed him thus, "Son, you are going against my wish. May victory be yours!" Then she prayed:

"May such blessings be with you and protect you which mother Gowri conferred on her son at the time of the killing of Tarakasura and those received by Bhargava from his mother when he slayed Shambharasura!"
(Telugu Poem)

Love And Serve Your Motherland Even today, there is no dearth of noble mothers. They feel pained to see their children straying away from the right path. They leave no stone unturned to correct them. It is impossible to describe the love of a mother. The love of the mother is much more than that of the father. Once Mother Parvati and Easwara saw a person sitting on the branch of a tree, which was about to break. Then Mother Parvati pleaded with Easwara to save him. Easwara teasingly remarked, "Why should I protect him? You have seen him first. It is your duty to save him." She said, "How can I protect him without your grace. I am negative and you are positive. Unless you shower your grace on him, he cannot be saved. Please do not delay any further." Then Easwara replied, "Is it not his duty to call Me for help? How can I go to his rescue without being called? As the proverb goes, one should not attend a function without being invited." Parvati, out of her motherly compassion, wanted to protect that person at any cost. So, she said to Easwara, "If that person, when he falls down, cries out Amma (mother). I will go to his rescue and if he cries out Appa (father), you should protect him." Easwara agreed to her proposal. Both of them eagerly waited, but the person fell down crying Ayyo! (alas!). The words Amma or Appa did not come to his lips as he never respected and revered his parents in his lifetime. Such was his fate. How can God come to the rescue of a person who has totally forgotten his parents? Mother is God; father is God. With such feelings, offer gratitude to your parents.

Today we are celebrating Easwaramma Day to propagate the glory of

motherhood. The world is sustained by the prayers of mothers. A woman's prayer is more powerful than a thousand prayers of men because women are pure and tender-hearted. Never cause displeasure to your mother. Never hurt her feelings. Then God will help you in all your endeavours. One calls one's country motherland and not fatherland. Thus, mother is given an exalted position in the world. Consider your country as your own mother and work for its progress. Under any circumstances, do not cause any harm to your mother and motherland. This is the significance and main teaching of today's celebration.

In a few minutes from now, you will listen to a music programme presented by P. Susheela and others. She has been a devotee for the past 40 years. When she had no children, I blessed her with a son. I performed her son's marriage too. Her daughter-in-law is also a musician. They are all here today to sing a few devotional songs and give happiness to one and all. After this music programme, Bal Vikas children will present a drama in the Kalyana Mantapam. You know why these programmes are arranged? Man's mind is like a mad monkey. Discourses, music programmes and prayer meetings are meant to control the waverings of the mind. Body is like a water bubble; mind is like a mad monkey. Don't follow the body; don't follow the mind. Follow the conscience. Contemplate on what you have seen and heard here. Put it into practice and derive bliss therefrom.

9. Attain God's Grace Through Sacrifice And Love

Date: 07 May 2001 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Buddha Purnima

I am neither merit nor sin, neither

happiness nor misery. I am none of these either - places of pilgrimage, scriptures or Yajnas (sacrifices). I am not the food, the consumer of food or the process of eating. I am the Atman, the very embodiment of Divinity. I am Siva Himself.

(Sanskrit verse)

Embodiments of Love!

IN this world, there is nothing like merit or sin, happiness or sorrow. Mantras, yajnas and yagas are mere rituals. God alone pervades everything. You are the very form of the Divine. True humanness lies in understanding the significance of truth and righteousness and putting them into practice. Truth is referred to as neeti (morality), righteousness relates to reeti (procedure) and sacrifice confers khyati (reputation). Manavajathi (human race) is the combination of Neeti, Reeti and Khyati. Unfortunately, these three are not found in the present day world.

First Step Toward Nirvana Is Samyak Drishti

Siddhartha, who came to be known as Gautama Buddha, undertook various spiritual practices in order to realise his true Self. He studied the Vedas and sacred texts. He met many elderly wise men and tried to know the truth from them. But none of these practices could show him the path to Nirvana. Ultimately, he realised that Nirvana lay in making use of the five senses of speech, touch, vision, taste and smell in a sacred manner. He understood that japa, dhyana, yoga, yajna, etc., were mere physical activities. These spiritual practices are needed for those who are attached to the body. One who is attached to the Self need not undertake any of these practices. Buddha

taught that Nirvana could be attained only by cultivating Samyak Drishti (sacred vision), Samyak Vak (sacred speech), Samyak Sravanam (Sacred listening), Samyak Bhavam (sacred feeling) and Samyak Kriya (sacred action). Today man is polluting his mind because of his evil vision. Once the mind is polluted, how can he expect to attain Nirvana? So, first of all he should develop sacred vision. See no evil; see what is good. Man is subjected to hardships because of his unsacred vision. Evil vision is sure to lead to sinful acts. In fact, it destroys his humanness itself.

Buddha undertook various types of spiritual practices, but ultimately left all of them. He could realise the truth only by renouncing everything and by recognising unity in the plurality of the world. He could know the ultimate truth by sacrifice. This is what the Vedas say: Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaikena Amrutatthwamanasu (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth, but only by sacrifice). This immortality is true Nirvana. Samyak drishti is the first step toward Nirvana. Consider all that you see as divine. Let your vision be suffused with love. Vision filled with love is the hallmark of a true human being. All are one, be alike to everyone. You can understand unity in diversity only when you develop sacred vision. Samyak drishti makes you realise the presence of divinity in all. The Vedas declare, "Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanthi" (truth is one, but scholars refer to it by many names). See the world with the vision of truth. All are one; all are essentially divine. Give up multiplicity to attain unity. The Vedanta declares that the Atmic principle is the underlying unity in diversity. Bulbs are many but the same current flows in all of them. Likewise, the Atmic principle exists in all. Man's inability to understand this principle of unity is the cause of his ignorance. True humanness lies in understanding unity in multiplicity. You have to develop Samyak Drishti in order to develop unity. This was Buddha's first teaching.

Fill Your Heart With Love

Next, he stressed the need for Samyak Vak (sacred speech). Anudvegakaram Vakyam Sathyam Priya-hitham Cha Yat (one should speak only those words, which cause no annoyance to others and which are truthful, agreeable and

wholesome). Whatever you speak should not cause any disturbance to others. It should be truthful as well as pleasing. You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly. Sacred speech is the manifestation of divinity. God exists in the form of Sabda Brahman (sound principle). Divinity is represented in eight forms, namely, Sabda Brahmanayi, Characharamayi, Jyothirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi and Srimayi (God is the embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, supreme majesty, delusion and wealth). Under any circumstances, do not let your speech be tainted by harshness. Never become agitated. When you understand that all are one, there will be no chance to get agitated. All bodies are like mirrors, showing you your own reflection in them. How can you be angry with your own reflection? You should speak with love. There is no divinity greater than love. When you fill your heart with love, your thoughts, vision, words and deeds will be suffused with love. Because you are not filling your heart with love, many evil qualities are finding their way into it and destroying your very humanness.

How can you attain God's grace? Here is a small example. You toiled hard, earned money and deposited it in a bank for safety and security. No doubt that money belongs to you, but the Bank Manager will not give it to you on your mere asking for it. There are certain rules and regulations for the withdrawal of money from the bank. You can withdraw the money only when you sign the cheque and surrender it to the Bank Manager. Likewise, you have deposited the 'money' of meritorious deeds with God, the Divine Bank Manager. Affix the signature of love on the cheque of sacrifice and surrender it to Him. Only then will He confer the wealth of His grace on you. This is the royal path to attain peace and purity; it leads ultimately to Nirvana. Though God is the embodiment of sacrifice and the money belongs to you, there is a proper procedure to get it. God is the Manager of the Bank of Love. You have deposited your money in His bank. In order to withdraw money from this bank, you have to submit the cheque of sacrifice with the signature of love. Love is God; live in love. Anything may happen; your love for God should not change. Only through such love can you follow the path of sacrifice and withdraw 'money' from the Divine Bank. Here 'money' does not mean currency notes. It is the 'money' of grace, wisdom and righteousness.

Control Your Senses To Attain Purity Of Heart

Having undertaken various types of spiritual practices for a long time, Buddha felt sad that he had wasted a lot of time without attaining the desired result. He realised that one could attain divinity only by making proper use of the five senses. God has given the five senses equally to all, be they rich or poor. You can see the manifestation of God only when you use your senses in a sacred way. Today man misuses the senses for the sake of comforts and worldly happiness. He uses the God-given faculty of speech to criticise and hurt others. Speak lovingly, softly and sweetly. That is known as samyak vak.

Along with samyak drishti and samyak vak, you should also have samyak sravanam (sacred listening). Why has God given ears? Is it to listen to vain gossip? Ears should listen to only those things that are related to the Atmic principle. Only the vibrations of the soul should percolate through the ears. Never listen to anything unsacred or evil. Your ultimate goal is to realise the innate Atmic principle, which is the same in all. There are no differences whatsoever. The Atma that is present in you is present in everybody. It is attributeless. In order to realise this Atmic principle, you should fill your heart with love. The heart is like a vessel. Fill it with the qualities of truth, love and sacrifice. Then you don't need to ask for peace; it will automatically manifest from within. In fact, love, truth, etc., are within you. You should manifest them from within. You cannot acquire them from outside.

Everything is the reflection of the inner being. Your innate nature is always pure. You pollute it because you follow the worldly path and fill your heart with worldly feelings. The heart is always pure, steady and selfless. It gets polluted mainly due to unsacred vision, unsacred listening and unsacred speech. You can maintain its purity only when you use the five senses in a responsible and sacred manner. Hridaya (heart) is that which is full of daya (compassion). Just as one God is worshipped in many forms and names, the Atma has various names like sathya, dharma, prema. You have to make efforts to understand and experience unity in diversity. Buddha could experience bliss only after understanding this principle of unity. He sacrificed

all sensual pleasures. He understood that all that we experience through the senses is useless and leads to bondage. He realised that misuse of the senses destroys the very humanness itself. He left his house and family and renounced the world. Ultimately, he realised Atmic unity and attained the state of Nirvana.

When Buddha was about to leave his mortal coil, his cousin Ananda was by his side. Ananda started shedding tears. Then Buddha said to him, "You are born to experience Ananda (bliss). It is possible only when you make proper use of your senses." Brahmanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam... (God is the embodiment of supreme bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya "Tattwamasi" eternal, pure, unchanging and the witness of all functions of the intellect). Instead of experiencing such eternal bliss, modern man is getting carried away by sensual pleasures. What is the use of being born as a human being if you get carried away by sensual pleasures like dogs and monkeys? A monkey also experiences the same type of sensual pleasure that you indulge in. Then why should you be born as a human being at all? Do not behave like a monkey. You belong to mankind. Have kindness and compassion. You are born to experience eternal bliss, not to indulge in fleeting pleasures.

At the time of birth, every human being cries, "Alas! I am born in this world again. I have become distant from Ananda due to my separation from God". What is the use of human birth if man cries at the time of both birth and death? First of all, man should understand the purpose of life. What is it that he has achieved during the course of his life if he cries at birth, and also at death? Having been born crying, man should leave the world smiling. It is possible only when he puts his senses to proper use in the course of his life. What is death? It is just the change of dress. Death is the dress of life. Body is like a dress. After death, you change over to another dress.

Every man aspires to attain Nirvana (liberation). What is the effort that he is

putting in? He has deposited the merits accrued over the past lives with God. God even gives 'interest' over the 'principal amount'. All that you need to do is to submit the cheque of sacrifice with the signature of love. Sacrifice bereft of love is useless. Only when these two come together can man attain the desired result.

God is showering His love and grace on everyone, but the unfortunate ones are unable to receive them. Why? Their feelings do not match with God's feelings. They do not understand God's Will. God is the embodiment of love and the ocean of compassion. But you are unable to receive God's love and compassion because you have filled your mind with worldly feelings. If you want to receive something sacred, give up all that is unsacred. If the head is empty, it can be filled with anything. But if the head is already stuffed with worldly desires, how is it possible to fill it with sacred feelings? First and foremost, empty your head of all worldly feelings. Only then can it be filled with divine love. For this, you have to cultivate Thyaga (sacrifice). That is true Yoga.

Today people are taking to meaningless practices in the name of Yoga. They are distorting the meaning of Yoga. What is Yoga? Yoga Chitta Vritti Nirodha (Controlling the vagaries of the mind is Yoga). Without controlling the mind, if you merely perform physical exercise, it amounts to Roga (disease). Fill your mind with love. You become sacred when your mind becomes sacred. Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavati (as you think so you become). What is the spiritual practice required to purify the heart? It is neither japa nor dhyana nor yoga. Yoga does not mean controlling your breathing process. You should inhale good feelings, which are like oxygen, and exhale bad feelings, which are like poisonous carbon dioxide. 'Oxygen' emanates from the heart and 'carbon dioxide' from the head. Head is the source of all poisonous feelings. Control them and inhale the nectarous feelings that emanate from the heart.

God Is The Indweller Of All Beings

You aspire to see God, talk to Him and touch Him. None can describe the bliss that one experiences when one has the Darshan, Sparshan and Sambashan

(sight, touch and talk) of God. In fact, you see God in the form of people all around you. Your vision becomes sanctified only when you develop the feeling that all are the embodiments of God. Everything in this creation is sacred. All that you see is only the manifestation of God. You see God in the form of the world, yet you feel that you have not seen Him. God has no specific form or dwelling place. He is the eternal witness and is present in all forms. You can progress on the spiritual path only when you have such a feeling. Do not confine God to the form of Vishnu or Krishna that you find in Ravi Varma's paintings. They are all pictures born out of the painter's imagination. In reality, God has no form. He is the Cosmic Being. Easwara Sarva Bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). Isavasyam idam Sarvam (the entire universe is permeated by God). Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman).

You can achieve anything with sense control. Today man has become weak because he lacks sense control. Instead of ascending to Daivatwam (Divinity) he has degenerated to the state of Deenatwam (helplessness). He gets angry even at the slightest provocation and becomes miserable at the smallest problem. Then, how can he expect to experience Divinity? He should treat pleasure and pain alike. You are happy when you beget a son and become sorrowful when he dies. Who is born and who has died? What is marriage? Marriage is a like a mirage. Can a mirage ever quench your thirst? Prior to marriage, who is wife and who is husband? Prior to birth, who is mother and who is child? Today man is developing undue attachment toward his family. "Matha Nasthi, Pitha Nasthi, Nasthi Bandhu Sahodara, Artham Nasthi, Griham Nasthi, Thasmath Jagrata Jagrata." (Parents, friends, relatives, house and wealth are all temporary. Be aware of this truth). Worldly relationships are passing clouds. They come and go, but morality comes and grows. Do your duty sincerely. Duty is God; Work is worship. Never differentiate between work and worship.

Embodiments of Love!

You have to recognise these three - first is that which once comes, then never goes; the second, once goes, then never comes back; the third, neither

comes nor goes. The first is jnana (wisdom), the second is ajnana (ignorance) and the third is the principle of the Atma. Atma is steady and eternal; it never changes. The knowledge of the Atma is nectarean. All your worldly knowledge is useless without the knowledge of the Self. All that you read in pusthaka (book) comes from masthaka (head). But the knowledge of the Self cannot be found either in pusthaka or masthaka. It originates from the heart. First of all, control your mind. Mind is like a mad monkey. It is nothing but a conglomeration of thoughts. The nature of the mind is determined by the nature of thoughts. So, have pure thoughts and thence pure mind.

What Is Nirvana?

Today man aspires to attain mukti (liberation). What is mukti? It is not the attainment of a heavenly abode. Mukti means freedom from suffering. You need to have mukti at three levels body, mind and soul. For example, you are hungry. When you eat food, your hunger is satiated. This is also a kind of mukti. You are suffering from a disease. You take a medicine and get cured. This is also mukti. All this is related to the body. At the mental level, mukti means controlling the vagaries of the mind. But true liberation lies in understanding the principle of the Atma, which neither comes nor goes. This is termed as Nirvana.

One should have Daiva Preeti, Papa Bheeti and Sangha Neeti (Love for God, fear of sin and morality in society). That is true Nirvana. Be away from sin. Understand that Daiva Sannidhi (proximity to the Divine) is true Pennidhi (wealth). But ignorant people are unable to understand the Divine principle. They feel that they can experience God through meditation. What is meditation? It is a way of life. While you are walking on the road or driving a car, if your vision is not focused on the road, you may meet with an accident. Concentration is necessary in all aspects of life. But concentration does not become meditation. One should go beyond concentration which means the mind should become still. You should be free from thoughts. That is true meditation.

One-pointed Devotion Of The Gopikas

The Gopikas followed the same path and their minds were constantly fixed on Krishna. The Gopikas used to go to Yashoda's house to light their lamps. They had the belief that their families would be sanctified if they brought light from Yashoda's house, which was blessed with the advent of Krishna. Once a newly wed Gopika named Suguna went to Yashoda's house to light her lamp. As she was doing so, she had the vision of Krishna in the flame. She was so lost in the enchanting form of Krishna that she had no awareness of her hand getting burnt. Yashoda smelt that something was burning and came running to the spot. She immediately pulled Suguna's hand out of the flame. She was astonished that though her hand was getting burnt, Suguna did not feel any pain and was in a world of her own. When she was asked to explain her strange behaviour, Suguna revealed that she had the vision of Krishna in the flame and forgot herself completely. Hearing Suguna's words, all the Gopikas became ecstatic and started singing: "Our Suguna saw Krishna at the residence of Nanda. He appeared to her in the flame".

(Telugu Song)

What does this mean? When you have onepointed devotion towards the Lord, you see Him everywhere. When your thoughts, vision and words are sacred, you are verily God yourself. Then, you don't need to search for God. God Himself will come searching for you. God is everywhere; one need not search for Him. In fact, God Himself is in search of a good man. One who is a recipient of God's love is a good man. Such a good man is a Godman. One should become a good man and a Godman. There lies the fulfillment of human life.

Embodiments of Love!

The Principle of love in you is highly sacred. But because of delusion, you are polluting it, and thereby diminishing your value. I want to give a small example before I close. Gold in its pure form is brilliant and highly valuable, but when you add metals like silver, copper, brass, etc., to it, its shine as well as value diminishes. Likewise, man is like pure gold, but as he is associating

himself with worldly desires, he has lost his value as well as effulgence. When you develop the human values of sathya, dharma, santhi, prema and ahimsa, you will attain exalted position and people will respect you wherever you go.

Embodiments of Love!

Do not pollute your mind with worldly desires. You have attained this human birth as a result of meritorious deeds done in past lives. Do not misuse it. Human life is highly valuable. Keep up its value by practising human values. This was the teaching of Buddha. People aspire to attain Nirvana. In order to attain Nirvana, one should have a pure heart. True Nirvana lies in having love for God, fear of sin and morality in society. Animals do not know what sin is. So, they do not have fear of sin. But you should have fear of sin, as you are aware of what it is. You should have control over your senses.

Recapitulate all that you have heard and experienced here. Charge your spiritual batteries by joining good company. Only then will you progress in life and become ideal.

10. Cultivate Love And Become Divine

Date: 01 June 2001 / Location: Mumbai / Occasion: All India Conference

Embodiments of Love!

THE All India President of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, Srinivasan, spoke about the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man. But he did not speak about motherhood of the mother. (cheers). In this creation all are born to a mother, however great they may be or whatever they might have achieved. The mother's womb is like Bhumatha (mother earth). The quality of the fruit will be the same as the quality of the seed sown in the earth.

Revere The Mother As God

In today's world, people lack purity and sacrifice. What is the reason? It is the lack of purity of the mother's womb. If the mother's womb is pure, the children born to her will also be pure. If there is peace in the mother's heart, the whole world will be peaceful. So, first and foremost, we need women of purity in this world. It is because of such pure women that Bharat became a Thyaga Bhumi (land of sacrifice), a Yoga Bhumi (land of spirituality) and a Karma Bhumi (land of action) and could set an example to the rest of the world. People say motherland and not fatherland. In every country, the mother is held in high esteem. The feeling of motherhood is far superior to all other feelings. The main flaw of today's children is that they are not concerned about the happiness and satisfaction of their parents. If you make your parents happy, the whole world will be happy. Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava (revere the mother and father as God). You must understand that parents are verily God.

You have to make your mother happy. Only then will there be peace and happiness in the world. It is meaningless to worship God without revering one's own parents. First of all, offer worship to your mother as she is the one who has given you birth. Only if the mother's heart is nectarous will the whole world be nectarous. Rama's Divinity blossomed under the loving care of

Kausalya. As He was born from the womb of Kausalya, He got the qualities of Kausalya. That is why He is worshipped as God. Shivaji could do so much sacrifice for the country because he was born to the pure lady, Jijabai. It is because of the nobility of the mother that the children attain good fortune. So, Prema Swarupas! (embodiments of love!) There is nothing beyond love. Only love is the mainspring of all your good fortune. A man without love is lifeless. You should therefore adore and worship the mother who is the embodiment of love.

Fill Your Heart With Love And Peace

Where is peace in the world? When you do not make your mother happy, how can there be peace in the world? Peace cannot be bought in the bazar. Every man's heart is the abode of peace. Only when you fill your heart with love will there be peace in the world. The world is in turmoil today as man lacks total love. Peace will reign supreme in this world only when man develops total love.

Embodiments of Love!

We have attained human birth. There is nothing greater than this. Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham (out of all the living beings, the human birth is the rarest). You are born and brought up in society. Then why do you not work for the welfare of society? All the wealth that you have earned has come from society. You should show your gratitude to society. The world is facing problems because man does not show gratitude to society. You should never neglect society. Society's well-being is your well-being too. But, is anybody looking for the welfare of society? No. It is selfishness all around. Give up selfishness and work for the welfare of society. The world will enjoy peace and security only when you serve society and have devotion towards God. If you want that peace should reign in the world, then you should first develop peace in yourself. Where is peace? It comes only from our heart. Our heart is the source of peace, truth, righteousness and love. You have forgotten the heart and are searching for peace in the external world. You don't get peace in the bazar, you get only pieces. Peace is only in your heart. Fill your heart

with love. Whatever work you do, do it with total love. But now, wherever you go, there is only selfishness. Man has lost purity as his mind is polluted.

The food you eat is impure. The air you breathe is impure. Everything is impure. Then how can you escape disease? If you do not want disease, eat pure food, breathe pure air, drink pure water and be pure. But wherever one looks around, there is only impurity. When you are surrounded by impurity, how can you get purity? When purity manifests from within, you can experience its reflection, reaction and resound in the external world. First and foremost, you have to infuse purity in society. To whomsoever you speak, speak sweetly, not with hatred, anger and jealousy. First you have to learn this. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly. Speak with love.

From head to foot, man is filled with anger today. He has become like an animal. Even an animal is better than man. An animal has a reason and season. Today man has no reason and no season. If you behave in this manner, how can you call yourself a human? To call yourself a human, first and foremost show humanness in action. Just because you have a human body, you cannot call yourself a human. The human body will have value only when you cultivate human values, namely, sathya (truth), dharma (righteousness), santhi (peace), prema (love) and ahimsa (non-violence). Of what use is human birth if human values are absent? First demonstrate humanness. Develop love. By doing so, all will become your friends. What kind of friends? Those who are full of love. Your real friend is only God. God is love personified. He is full of love.

"Poornamada Poornamidam Poornat Poornamudachyate Poornasya Poornamadaya Poornameva Avashishyate." (That is full, this is full. When full is taken out of the full, what remains is again full.) God is the embodiment of love. If you want God, you should have total love for God. You should not love God for material benefits. Love Him for the sake of love. Only then can you attain Him.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

The same Atma, the same love and the same God is present in all beings. Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Nam (one God has many names). With such feelings of oneness, develop love for God. Then your heart will also be filled with love. The heart is like a tank and all the senses are like taps. When the 'tank' is full of love, all that comes out of the 'taps' will also be love only. Whatever you see in others is only a reflection of your inner being. First of all, understand this truth. If you see evil in others, it is actually the reflection of your own evil feelings. All are one. That is Prema, that is God, that is Atma. That is everything.

Earn The Wealth Of Merit

You have forgotten love and are hankering after all worldly things. Wherever you go it is only money, money, money. Money comes and goes but morality comes and grows. Everyone is interested in amassing wealth. But will the wealth accompany you when you leave this world? No. Only the results of your actions will go with you. Wealth is not going to protect you. Only the wealth of merit will protect you. Paropakaraya Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam, (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). Earn the wealth of merit. Do not accumulate sin. Alexander ruled over a vast empire, but when he died what did he carry with him? He went empty-handed. You should carry with you only pure love when you leave this world. If you earn the wealth of pure love, you are the richest person in the world. He who has much satisfaction is the richest man in this world and he who has many desires is the poorest man in this world. Today man is filled with desires from top to toe. As long as you have desires, you will never be happy and peaceful.

Embodiments of Love!

Give up desires and see for yourself how much love and bliss you get. The bliss you experience will be far superior to all the happiness you have experienced before. All the bliss is within you. But you are imagining that it is outside. What is outside is only the reflection, reaction, and resound of what is within you. If you are a good person, you will see goodness all around. If

you wear blue glasses, you see everything blue. If you wear red glasses, you see everything red. Good qualities are your greatest wealth. Cultivate them. Eschew hatred. Demonstrate Ahimsa. Ahimsa Paramo Dharma (Ahimsa is the greatest dharma). Kill anger. Cultivate love. There is nothing sweeter than love.

Man Is The Embodiment Of Cosmic Form

Sage Narada went all over the world but could not get peace. He realised that peace could not be found in wealth and material objects. It is within one's own self. Peace and bliss are within, but man is unable to experience them. How can man, who is unable to understand the divinity within, experience God outside? Everything is within you. Man is Viswa Virat Swarupa (embodiment of the Cosmic Form) but he is behaving like an ordinary person by developing attachment to the ephemeral body.

Embodiments of Love!

Give up body attachment. Cultivate the awareness of the Atma. Atmananda (bliss of the spirit) is Amritananda (the eternal bliss). That is within you. Brahmanandam, Parama sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam (God is the embodiment of supreme bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya 'Tattwamasi', the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three Gunas of Sattwa, Rajas and Thamas). Everything is within. All qualities are within you. So, you should try to bring out the love that is within you. You will not get this love outside.

You are the embodiment of love. Do not develop attachment to the body. Body is bound to perish one day or the other. Why are you deluding yourselves with this impermanent body? That which is permanent is the Atma. In order to experience Atmic bliss, love is essential. If you cultivate

love, you become divine. Do not think that God is different from you. Have the courage to say "I am God". You are not man. You are God. Have the firm belief that you are God. You must first love your parents. They have given you their blood, their wealth and have brought you up with love and care, taking great pains. So, be grateful to them. That is real Bhakti (devotion). There is no greater Bhakti than this.

Embodiments of Love!

Swami has just come for a short while. I have not got the complete satisfaction of coming to Mumbai. I will come again. (loud applause) Cultivate love. Revere your parents. Make them happy. Then I will be with you always. Live a life of love.

11. Health Care Is Not A Business

Date: 10 June 2001 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Inauguration Anniversary of Sri Sathya Sai General Hospital, Whitefield

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) DHARMARTHAKAMA mokshanam Arogyam Moolamuttamam. Health is the fundamental requirement to achieve the four goals of human life, namely, dharma (righteousness), artha (wealth), kama (desire) and moksha (liberation). Without good health, man cannot perform even a small task. Health is man's supreme wealth. It is much superior to the other types of wealth possessed by man.

Recognise Your Innate Divinity

God is omniscient and omnipotent and is

present in all beings. That is why Lord Krishna declared, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). God has endowed all beings with some power. But the power He has bestowed on human beings is much greater than that given to other living beings. Man's physical strength may be less, but God has blessed him with immense mental power. With his will power, man can achieve any mighty task. There is nothing in this world that he cannot achieve with his will power. He is spending all his energy to travel lakhs of miles into space, but is he making any effort to travel even half an inch into his heart? It is the power of the mind that helps man to go within. It is possible only when he makes proper use of this power.

Man is undergoing hardships in life as he is unaware of his immanent divine power. One needs to have a mirror to see one's own reflection. Likewise, when man looks into the mirror of his divinity, he can realise his true potential. When a small piece of wood comes into contact with fire, it becomes fire itself, Brahmaavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi (the knower of Brahman

becomes verily Brahman). When you put a drop of water on your palm, it gets evaporated in no time. But when you put the same drop of water into the ocean, it assumes the form of the ocean. Your position in life depends on the company you are associated with. Hence, it is said, "Tell me your company and I shall tell you what you are," When you develop intimate relationship with God, you become God yourself. There is none in this world who does not possess divine power. All powers are latent in man, but he is unable to realise them. As a result, he is leading a miserable life.

All Acts Of God Are To Help His Devotees

Divinity pervades everything right from microcosm to macrocosm. Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan (Brahman is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). Though God is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient, He sometimes pretends to have certain desires. Everyone should try to understand this. Lord Krishna, before conferring wealth and prosperity on His childhood friend Kuchela, asked him if he had brought anything for Him. All that Kuchela had with him was a small quantity of beaten rice. Krishna ate the rice brought by Kuchela. He did so only to confer His grace on Kuchela and redeem his life. In Vamana Avatar, the Almighty Lord approached Emperor Bali and asked for three footsteps of land in charity. Does it amount to begging? No. Not at all. God does such acts only to confer His grace on His devotees and redeem their lives.

Once Krishna entered the house of a gopika after a long walk and said that He was tired and hungry. He asked her to give Him something to eat. The gopika wondered how the Lord of the universe could ever be hungry. She said in all humility and devotion that she did not know how to satiate the Lord's hunger. Krishna said that it was enough if she gave Him a glass of buttermilk. Then, the gopika prayed to Krishna thus:

Oh Lord! How is it possible for me to give You delicious food when you have the entire universe in Your stomach? How can anyone build a temple for You when You are allpervasive? How can anyone light a lamp before You when

you are shining with the effulgence of a billion suns?
(Telugu Poem)

When the Pandavas were living in exile and were undergoing a great deal of hardship, sage Durvasa along with thousands of his disciples went to their hermitage and asked for food. He told them that they were going for a bath in a nearby river and would come back to have food. The Pandavas were gripped by anxiety as to how to provide food for so many guests when they had nothing with them. Fearing the curse of sage Durvasa, Droupadi prayed to Krishna to save them from this predicament. Krishna promptly appeared on the scene and asked Droupadi to give Him something to eat. Then Droupadi replied, "Krishna, if we were living in Hastinapur, I would have certainly given You a sumptuous feast. But alas! We are living in a forest eating roots and tubers. In such a situation, what can I offer to You?" Krishna told her to look into the vessel, which she had already cleaned, if there was any food particle left in it. She did accordingly and found a tiny piece of leaf sticking to the vessel. Krishna ate that leftover leaf. As soon as He did so, the hunger of Durvasa and his disciples was satiated and they went away without bothering the Pandavas. Thus, Krishna saved the Pandavas from Durvasa's curse. Thus, sometimes God pretends to have desires, not because He lacks anything, but only to help His devotees.

Sacrifice Is The Noblest Virtue

You might have heard the story of Laila and Majnu. Laila was a rich lady while Majnu was very poor. She wanted to know whether he really loved her because she wanted to marry him. She thought of a plan and sent two of her maid servants to him. They approached Majnu and told him that Laila was very sick and was in need of blood. Majnu said that he was willing to sacrifice his life itself for the sake of Laila and that her well being was his prime concern. When this was conveyed to Laila, she realised how pure and selfless Majnu's love was. She repented for not having properly estimated Majnu's love for her. Likewise, some people do not understand Divinity and the inner

meaning of God's acts. God does not desire anything for Himself. All His desires are meant to uplift and redeem the lives of His devotees. Whatever He does is only for others. You should understand this truth.

It was Dr. Rajeswari, the mother of C. Srinivas, who started this hospital. She was highly qualified and had worked in several countries. She would often tell Me, "Our Srinivas should become highly educated and get degrees from A to Z" I would reply, "Mother, don't worry about his studies. If he is interested, he will study." She was very loving and caring towards everybody. She started this hospital in a small room. Gradually, she expanded it and brought it to its present state. Every year she would add some new department to it. Though it is a general hospital, all types of advanced treatments are now available here. One cannot say that treatment for a particular ailment is not available here. Then how can we call this a small hospital? It may look small in size but the service rendered here is great (cheers). In that sense it is, no doubt, a big hospital.

All the doctors who serve in this hospital are highly qualified and reputed. They come here from faroff places and serve the village people with love and care. Bereft of all self-interest, they serve with a great spirit of sacrifice. Such sacrifice is very rarely seen among people today. Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dha nena Thyagenaikena Amrutatthwa-manasu (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth. It is attained only by sacrifice). Very few are blessed with such a noble quality. It is a great good fortune to be able to love and serve the suffering humanity. In the outside world, doctors crave for money, but here doctors aspire for the well-being of patients. They render service to the patients with noble feelings and purity of heart. With such dedicated doctors serving here, this has become an ideal hospital. In fact, the entire staff here work with total dedication. One may build big hospitals. We have also constructed a big Super Speciality Hospital in Whitefield. But its services are limited to only cardiology and neurology, whereas in this hospital, various diseases pertaining to lungs, liver, heart, etc., are treated. You can see it for yourselves; most of the patients are poor and helpless. They are the people who need our love and care most.

You should render service with the spirit of sacrifice. Sacrifice is the only way to immortality. Service is superior to rituals like Yajnas and Yagas. Enquire for whose sake you are performing Yajnas and Yagas. You are doing them for your own sake, not for the sake of God. God does not need them. You may say that you are performing Yajnas for the welfare of the world. But, in fact, you are doing it for your own welfare. It is God alone who looks after the welfare of the world. Sarvata Pani-padam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvat Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthati (with hands, feet, eyes, heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire uni_verse). He alone can confer physical, mental and spiritual strength.

New Building For The General Hospital

He alone is a true human being who has the purity of thought, word and deed. Hence, it is said, "The proper study of mankind is man." The doctors of this hospital are rendering service with such purity and broad feelings. Dr. Rajeswari used to work day and night in this hospital. I often used to tell her not to exert herself too much. I would tell her, "Rajeswari, it is possible for you to serve others more and more only when you have good health. So, you should take proper rest." She would say that serving others was her way of taking rest. Her only wish was to leave her mortal coil while serving in the hospital. That is what happened ultimately. She breathed her last in this hospital itself while doing some work sitting in a chair. Dr. Savitri has been continuing the good work initiated by Dr. Rajeswari. Dolly is also rendering great service.

In addition to these doctors, there are some specialists who come from the city to serve here - an eye specialist, a dentist, a liver specialist and an orthopedic surgeon. The doctor who is comparing this programme is an orthopedic surgeon. He worked in America before coming here. They are doing service with utmost devotion. All of them are highly dedicated and have love and concern for the patients. I want everyone to develop such love. Every doctor should have such love for the patients. They should talk to the patients with love and make them feel comfortable, and develop noble virtues of understanding and adjustment.

I wish to give you a small example to illustrate this. When I gave mementoes to the doctors, one doctor did not receive the memento as he came in the end. Immediately, one of the doctors offered the memento that was given to him. What a noble act it is! All these doctors are endowed with such selfless love. Love alone sustains the entire world. Love is God, live in love. Humanness cannot exist without love. God does not exist in the form of Vishnu, Siva, etc. He exists in the form of love. One doctor has practically demonstrated such spirit of love in action just now. None of you have taken note of it, but I noticed it. Only the fortunate few are endowed with such spirit of sacrifice.

There are many doctors in the world who are highly qualified and reputed, but they are after name and fame. They are interested in advertising their achievements, whereas our doctors do not care for name and fame. Service is their prime motive. It is because of such noble doctors that our hospital has earned good reputation.

I have noticed that the space available here is very less. There are four operation theatres here. Not an inch of space is left as all the five acres of land are occupied by this building. That is why before coming here, I laid the foundation stone of the new general hospital building in the ten-acre plot of land donated by our Adikesavulu. The Chief Minister of Karnataka also participated in that function. Actually, I am not interested in foundation laying ceremony. What I am interested in is the inauguration ceremony. I have already decided to inaugurate this new hospital on 23 Nov. 2001 (cheers) Then what will happen to this hospital? This hospital is also very important. This was like a tiny banyan seed that has now grown into a gigantic tree. It will continue to grow more and more. That general hospital is meant for treating ailments relating to disorders of lungs, bones, liver, etc. This hospital will be exclusively meant for mother and child.

Hospital For The Mother And Child

My opinion is that the mother and child care should be given top priority. Without the mother, how can the world exist? One should become the

recipient of one's mother's love and grace. Only then can one expect to win Divine grace. Here is a small example to illustrate this.

In the Mahabharata, Gandhari, a woman of chastity and virtue, blindfolded herself as her husband Dhritarashtra was blind by birth, She did not even see her own sons. After the Mahabharata War, when Krishna went to console her at the death of her hundred sons, Gandhari, in her moment of despair and anguish, severely castigated Him. She questioned Him, "Krishna, could You not save even one of our sons to perform our final rites? Why didn't Your vision of grace fall on any of them?" Krishna gave a fitting reply. He said, "Mother, did you ever see your own sons? How can My vision of grace fall on those whom their own mother does not look at?" One who cannot win one's mother's love cannot attain Divine grace. So, first of all one should try to become the recipient of one's mother's love. That is why the Vedas declare: Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava, Atithi Devo Bhava (revere your mother, father, preceptor and guest as God) It is because of men of sacrifice that our country Bharat has been able to enjoy peace and prosperity. The spirit of sacrifice, love and righteousness that is found in Bharat is not present anywhere else in the world. This is Thyaga Bhumi, Yoga Bhumi, Karma Bhumi and Yajna Bhumi (land of sacrifice, land of spirituality, land of action and land of Yajnas). Such a sacred land is being converted into a Bhoga Bhumi (land of pleasure) by modern youth.

The bliss that one experiences from Thyaga cannot be obtained from Bhoga. Bhoga leads to Roga (disease) and Thyaga leads to Yoga (spirituality). Imbibe the spirit of sacrifice and utilise your energy and education for the welfare of others. Understand that education is meant for serving society and not for doing business. There is no greater service than utilising your education for the benefit of others. Especially, doctors should make every effort to safeguard the health of the mother and child.

Selfless Service Of the Hospital Doctors

The culture of Bharat teaches, "Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara" (speak the truth and practise righteousness). Humanness will blossom in the world only

when this principle is put into practice. Truth is referred to as Neeti (morality), righteousness relates to Reeti (procedure) and sacrifice confers Khyati (reputation). Manava Jathi (human race) is the combination of Neeti Reeti and Khyati. But today morality is lacking in society. Of what use is education without morality? Life itself has no value without morality. Adhere to truth; practise righteousness; cultivate the spirit of sacrifice. There is nothing greater than this.

Embodiments of Love!

If you come across anyone who is suffering, make every effort to give him solace. This was the ideal demonstrated by Dr. Rajeswari. She spent all her earnings for this hospital. After her demise, Dr. Savitri has been working tirelessly day and night. At times, she even foregoes her food to serve the patients. I told her that it was not good for her health to work day and night without proper food and rest. I took a promise from her that she would take in time, food.

All the doctors who work here, including the visiting doctors, do not take even a Naya Paisa from us. This has been the case for the past 25 years. They bring all the necessary equipments and medicines also with them and serve the patients here. There is no dearth of doctors in our country. But most of them are after money and fame. Doctors should have compassion and concern for patients. We have many such noble doctors coming from various places to serve in this hospital. He alone is a true doctor who serves patients in a selfless manner. Vaidyo Narayano Hari (doctor is verily God). What does Lord Narayana do? He helps everybody. Likewise, doctors should also help everybody. With such noble feelings, the doctors are offering their services here and it is because of them that this hospital has earned a good name for itself. Whenever need arises, these doctors even go to Puttaparthi to offer their services.

In the Super Specialty Hospital at Puttaparthi, we have the departments of cardiology, urology, nephrology and ophthalmology. Dr. Hemanthmurthy, an eye specialist, goes every week to Puttaparthi to perform eye operations. It is

no ordinary task to go to Puttaparthi all the way from here, week after week to render service. How many doctors in this world have such a spirit of service? Even the dentist and anesthetist go from here. In Puttaparthi hospital, sometimes we have to perform a large number of operations. Then there is invariably a need for more anesthetists. We just make one phone call, and they immediately present themselves there. Very rarely do we find such service-minded doctors today. But in this hospital, we have many of them working tirelessly day in and day out. Dr. Hemanthmurthy is one among them who is performing eye operations with utmost care. I told him that I was ready to get all the equipments he required to do his work more effectively.

I always encourage those who dedicate themselves to service. I am prepared to establish any number of hospitals like this and give all the help needed. I am not interested in money and I have nothing to do with it. You may wonder as to how Sai Baba gets money for His projects. You may think that He creates money. No, not at all. I don't indulge in such bad practices, because money is related to government. I can create any object, but I don't create money. Whenever need arises, someone or the other will get the noble idea to donate the required amount. Just one word from Swami is enough; there are many Indian and overseas devotees who will do the needful at once. So, you don't need to have any doubts whatsoever. We have to develop this hospital further. Yesterday, a liver specialist came to Me and expressed his willingness to work in Swami's hospital. He has worked in America before. He can perform liver transplant operations. I gave him permission, saying Swami was always ready for any good work.

Drinking Water Project In Karnataka State

Today the food you eat, the air you breathe and the water you drink have become polluted. Consequently, people are suffering from heart and liver disorders. In olden days, such ailments never existed. The pollution of food, air and water is the main cause of the diseases. That is why I have resolved to provide pure drinking water to the needy. First of all, I started educational institutions and hospitals as education and health care are very essential for one and all. Then I started Drinking Water Project. I provided water not just by

getting borewells dug. Borewell water may contain excess fluoride, which is harmful for health. So, I made arrangements to get water from natural sources like Krishna river, spending crores of rupees. Now the Chief Minister of Karnataka has requested Me to provide pure drinking water to Bellary, Bidar and Bijapur districts of Karnataka State. I have agreed to do so. Wherever there is scarcity of drinking water, one should make every effort to provide it. We need not give money; it is enough if we provide safe drinking water to the people. There is no dearth of rich people in the country. But of what use is wealth if it is not used for sacred purposes? No one can carry even a fistful of dust at the time of departing from the world. Otherwise, there would have been rationing even for dust in the country. So, money should be utilised for the benefit of society. Hastasya Bhushanam Danam, Sathyam Kanthasya Bhushanam, Srotrasya Bhushanam Sastram (charity is the true ornament for the hand, truth is the true necklace and listening to sacred texts is the true ornament for the ears).

What is most essential in life? It is essential to develop intimate relationship with God. You will be charged with Divine energy when you come into contact with Divinity. Living in the company of God is true Sathsanga (good company). Sathsangatwe Nissangatwam, Nissangatwe Nirmohatwam, Nirmohatwe Nischalatattwam, Nischalatattwe Jivanmukti. (good company leads to detachment, detachment makes one free from delusion, freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind and steadiness of mind confers liberation.) But today man does not have a steady mind. All the time his mind wavers like a mad monkey. When you say, 'my body', 'my mind', 'my Buddhi', etc., all these are different from you. Then question yourself, who am I? The same principle of 'I' is present in everybody, right from a pauper to a millionaire. In order to understand this 'I' principle, you have to develop the spirit of sacrifice. Patients belonging to different religions, namely, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, etc., come here for treatment. All are treated alike. There are no differences whatsoever. All are children of God. This hospital stands for the ideal, 'Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God'. In all Sai Organisations, there are no differences of caste, religion, etc. Many seva dal volunteers from Sai Organisations come here to render service. There are at least 100 seva dal volunteers serving in the Super Specialty Hospital,

Whitefield everyday. The youth of today should cultivate such spirit of sacrifice. As they grow old, their spirit of sacrifice should also grow.

Today we are celebrating the Silver Jubilee of this hospital, but I am not satisfied with this. We should develop this hospital further and celebrate its Golden Jubilee. Many more doctors should join this hospital and all should work in a spirit of complete unity. Anything can be achieved with unity. The small hospital started by Dr. Rajeswari has grown into a big one. I wish it to grow further and serve the poor and needy. I bless you all and bring this Discourse to a close.

12. Human Birth Is To Experience Atmic Bliss

Date: 04 July 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: International Conference of Bal Vika Gurus

You may be highly educated, but without culture, how can you expect to be respected?

You may be highly intelligent, but without morality, how can you earn value in society?

You may be occupying position of authority, but if you cross your limits, how can people respect you?

Without charity and righteousness and without following the path of truth, how can you expect people to honour you?

It is a great mistake if you conduct yourself without fear of sin. What else is to be conveyed to this august gathering?

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

IF you deeply enquire and investigate, you will find that the water level in the earth is going deeper and deeper day by day. If you observe the present political scenario, you don't find any morality and integrity. The present-day teachers do not seem to possess the invaluable treasure of knowledge. Human values have become totally extinct in human beings. The ancient teachers were extolled as Thyagarajulu, Yogarajulu and Yathirajulu (kings of sacrifice, spirituality and renunciation), but alas! The modern teachers have become Bhogarajulu and Kamarajulu (men of pleasures and desires). Indian culture is the manifestation of truth that does not change with the passage of time and is unaffected by creation or dissolution. Having forgotten such eternal truth, man is wasting his precious life in the pursuit of ephemeral pleasures. He is unable to understand his own value. He is attaching value to Dhana (money) and not to Guna (character). He is dedicating his life to attain

selfish goals ignoring his innate value and character. Since times of yore, Bharatiyas have trodden the path of spirituality, derived bliss therefrom and shared it with others. Today man is unable to experience and enjoy such eternal bliss. Man has been able to accomplish mighty tasks, but he is yet to experience Atmic bliss. Human birth is meant to experience Atmic bliss. This truth is contained in the three letters 'M-A-N', which stand for overcoming the Maya (illusion) experiencing the vision of the Atma and attaining Nirvana (liberation). But today man is unable to understand the truth that he is born to realise the Atma.

Human Values Are Inborn

Embodiments of Love!

Once you recognise the value of human life, you will be able to understand human values. Human values are born along with man, not before or after. Man has to question himself, "What is the purpose of life?" Once man finds an answer to this question, he will be able to understand everything else in this world. Man is endowed with intelligence and knowledge, but he is in the pursuit of ignorance, which is far away from him, without making any enquiry into the knowledge that is within him. Consequently, there is a need to propagate human values today.

Man is getting carried away by Prabhava (worldly influences), himself forgetting his Swabhava (innate nature) and is ruining himself. One can describe Prabhava as Prarabdha (consequences of past actions) and Swabhava as the innate human qualities of truth, righteousness, peace and love. Man's true nature is to attain the four goals of life, namely, dharma, artha, kama and moksha (righteousness, wealth, desire and liberation). Today man has no desire for spiritual teachings. There are no divine feelings in his mind. In such a situation, how can he remain unaffected by Prabhava? He has to transform Prabhava into Swabhava. His Swabhava is to erase Prarabdha. Swa-Bhava, which means Atmic feeling, is man's Swabhava. Truth, righteousness, peace and love constitute Atmic feelings. Where is the need to search for them when they are his natural innate qualities? As he has

forgotten his natural qualities, he is under the influence of Prabhava, craving for name, fame, wealth and comforts. He is interested in Dhana, not in Guna. Is this the purpose of life? No doubt, money is required, but, among the four Purusharthas (objectives of life), money comes only after righteousness. It means that money should be earned in a righteous manner. But today man resorts to unrighteous, means to amass wealth.

Have Faith In Your Own Self

Embodiments of Love!

Today, you are being troubled by Prarabdha as you have classified the objectives of human life into four, namely, righteousness, wealth, desire and liberation. Club them together into two, namely, wealth earned in a righteous manner and desire for liberation. Only then will you be free from the influence of Prarabdha. You are unable to escape from Prarabdha as you have desire only for the world and not for liberation. Money is essential to carry on with your life, but it should be under certain limits. Man does not realise this. He is in mad pursuit of money till his last breath. Have you understood the meaning of the word MAN? You have to overcome Maya, understand the Atma and attain Nirvana. Ignoring such an eternal truth, man is leading an unsacred life.

Man aspires to attain bliss. What is the path to bliss? Can he attain bliss from material objects? No, not at all. The happiness related to the world is only temporary. First of all, man has to develop faith in the Self. You love your mother because you have the faith that she is your mother. Wife loves her husband because she has faith in him. So, where there is faith, there is love; where there is love, there is peace; where there is peace, there is truth; where there is truth, there is God; where there is God, there is bliss. You need not undertake any worship or ritual to attain peace. There are many who say that they are undertaking a particular ritual for world peace. It is but a mere stunt! You can never attain peace from rituals. Peace is contained in love. You can develop love only when you have faith in the Self. Today man has faith in the ephemeral and transient but not in God. His faith in God is not steady. He is filled with doubts. One should have total faith in God. One should believe

only God and not the world because all that is seen in the world is bound to perish one day or the other. God alone can grant the true and eternal bliss and one who experiences it is a true human being. When Buddha was about to attain Nirvana, his cousin Ananda, who was by his side at that time, started shedding tears. Buddha said to him, "O simpleton, why are you grieving over my attaining Nirvana? In fact, Nirvana is the true goal of human life. Overcome Maya, have the vision of the Atma and attain Nirvana." Ananda followed the teaching of Buddha and ultimately attained Nirvana.

Draw Bliss From Within

Embodiments of Love!

What you need to do is not rituals like Yajnas and Yagas. First of all, you should understand the truth that the changeless and eternal bliss is within. It is described as, Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathanam Niketanam, Nithya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam (attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). The Vedas declare, Sarvam Vishnumayam Jagat (the universe is saturated with Divinity), Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman). In order to understand these divine statements, you should cultivate sacred qualities. One without noble qualities cannot understand them. Every individual, every living being, every object in this creation is a manifestation of Divinity. All the five elements are the forms of the divine. To understand this truth, you have to take to the spiritual path.

You are making efforts to understand the human values, namely Truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence. What is meant by Truth? It is that which is changeless. Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma (Truth, Wisdom and Eternity are Brahman). It is a mistake to think that truth is related to speech alone. Trikala Badhyam Sathyam (Truth is that which remains changeless in all the three periods of time). So, Truth is God. What is meant by Dharma (righteousness)? It does not mean actions of charity and rituals like Yajnas and Yagas. It does not mean good actions alone. Dharayati iti Dharma (that which sustains is dharma). True dharma is to put into practice

the Truth that originates from the heart. When Truth is translated into action, it becomes dharma. What is santhi? It is the feeling one experiences at the time of attaining Nirvana. Peace is the crown that man should aspire to wear. Everybody wants peace in this world. Where is peace? It is within you. Keep reminding yourself, "I am the embodiment of Truth, I am the embodiment of Peace, I am the embodiment of Love, I am the embodiment of Righteousness. I am everything". Have total faith in the principle of the Atma without which whatever you say or do cannot be called Truth or righteousness.

Today the education that students pursue is only worldly in nature. They study books, write examinations and get degrees. They do all this only for the sake of their livelihood. A foolish person boasts of his high education and intelligence, yet does not know himself. What is the use of all the education he has acquired, if he 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)

Sacred Actions Only Can Ensure World Peace

Man specialises in various subjects not for the welfare of the world but for his own self-interest. If you sincerely want world peace, undertake sacred actions.

Love your fellowmen. Make them happy. Human values are not mere verbal expressions. They originate from the heart. People are mistaken as they go only by the letter without understanding the spirit. First of all, develop faith that everything is within you. Without faith, human life will come to ruin.

There should be transformation at three levels: individual, social and spiritual.

This is what 'SAI' is bringing about. The three letters in SAI stand for Spiritual, Association, and Individual change, respectively. SAI also denotes Service, Adoration and Illumination corresponding to work, worship and wisdom. You have to understand the inner meaning of every letter of this word SAI to sanctify your lives.

Today, thousands of Bal Vikas Gurus have gathered here. Worldly education too is essential, but children should be taught spiritual education from the young age. In the conference held elsewhere, you find an ocean of difference between the number of delegates who are supposed to participate and the number of people who actually take part in the deliberations. But our conference is unique in the sense that all the delegates attend it. Nobody gets up in the middle except a few who do so only out of physical constraints. You cannot find such conferences being held anywhere else in the world. Though I know everything, sometimes I watch the proceedings of the conference from behind the screen or from above. All delegates are attending the meeting with utmost sincerity and devotion. Such conferences should be held more frequently. Many more members should be trained and should be taught new procedures. Only then will the whole world get benefit out of this. Yesterday our Prime Minister Vajpayee sent a letter to Me through Indulal Shah, "Swami, our government with all the power at our disposal cannot undertake such noble tasks. It is not possible for anybody except You. Please take up more and more responsibilities and involve even the Government in this matter." They write such letters out of love, but we do not involve ourselves in the matters relating to Government because their temperament and influences do not match with our activities, experiences and happiness. So, we take care of our activities without involving others. Many conferences are being held here, but do you find collection of funds here? No. Each one takes care of their own requirements. They come here wholeheartedly and enjoy the bliss. Such conferences should be held not once but thrice a year. Each time, new delegates should be given a chance. Be prepared to put any amount of effort for education purposes.

Let There Be Less Talk And More Action

Today students are acquiring various degrees. They are becoming doctors and engineers, but they are not doing the work that is expected of them. What is the use of their education? Can you call them educated at all? The modern field of education has become highly corrupted. Even those who cannot read a thermometer properly, manage to get a doctor's degree these days! Even the engineering education has become a sham. In our institutions, you may call even a First Standard boy and ask him a question. He will give the correct answer. Our boys are well educated but they are not putting their knowledge into practice. They say, "Swami knows everything. Whatever He tells is good for me". When you believe that whatever Swami says is good for you, why don't you follow His command? I do not want such people. One must practise what one says. You may be teachers, but you should be good students in the first instance. If a student takes to bad ways, he ruins himself, but if a teacher takes to evil ways, he will be spoiling the lives of many students. So, teachers have to be very careful. It is not enough to merely attend here and keep quiet. You should go outside and propagate all that you have seen and experienced here. Be heroes in practice, not merely in platform speeches. Share the bliss that you have experienced here for the last three days. Talk less and work more. That is what I am doing precisely. For the last ten days, I have not been talking to people much. Why? There may be a few narrow-minded people who might feel that Swami is telling them to talk less, but He is not following the same. That is why I am talking less now. I am doing so only to teach them. There is limitless bliss in limited talk. Bliss cannot be obtained from outside, it comes from within. The good or bad that you see in others is nothing but the reflection of your own inner feelings. Once you understand this truth, you will never talk bad about anybody. All that you experience in this world is nothing but the reflection, reaction and resound of your own feelings. So, you should be good to everybody and take them along with you with the spirit of love. Take care that you do not forget your Swabhava, which is the true Purushartha (objective of life).

Follow Your Conscience

Many speakers have taught you many things on the basis of their

experiences. I have been hearing them. Try to understand their experiences, put their teachings into practice and teach the same to others. I tell you only one thing. Having been born as human beings, you should overcome Maya, have the vision of the Atma and attain Nirvana. This is the purpose of your life. Where is the Atma? It is your very form. You are not the physical body. Body is temporary, it is like a water bubble. Mind is like a mad monkey, do not follow the body, do not follow the mind. Follow the conscience, which is your true form. How can you have the vision of the Atma? You need not search for it outside. Turn your vision inward. Only then can you have the vision of the Self.

A person remained silent though he was being criticised. When his friend wanted him to react, he replied, "The same Atma is present in me as well as in the person who is criticising. So, why should I be annoyed when he is criticising himself." A deep enquiry into the truth will reveal that when you love or hate others, you love or hate your own self. In fact, there are no 'others'. You consider yourself different from others because of body attachment. Once you give up body attachment, you will realise that there are no others and all are yours. That is the true vision of the Atma. The Atma does not have a specific form. Bliss is Atma, Consciousness is Atma. Conscious means related to the senses; conscience is the inner witness and Consciousness is the all-pervasive Atma. Understand the unity of these three. Take to the path of service. Then you can proceed along the path of adoration and ultimately attain illumination. To the extent possible, serve everybody. True happiness lies in service.

Love And Sacrifice Will Confer God's Grace

You may be disappointed that I have not spoken to you in the last two days, but I have been with you and listening to you all along. I do not have anger on you, nor am I disgusted with you. But I am disappointed in the sense that you are not paying heed to My words. Then how can you come up in life? What is the use of My talking to you or moving closely with you? This is the reason I have not spoken to anybody. But some people are unable to understand this truth. How can the narrow-minded understand My broad feelings?

How can you attain God's grace? Here is a small example. You toiled hard, earned money and deposited it in a bank for safety and security. No doubt that the money belongs to you, but the Bank Manager will not give it to you on your mere asking for it. There are certain rules and regulations for the withdrawal of money from the bank. You can withdraw the money only when you sign the cheque and surrender it to the Bank Manager. Likewise, you have deposited the 'money' of meritorious deeds with God, the Divine Bank Manager. Affix the signature of love on the cheque of sacrifice and surrender it to Him. Only then will He confer the wealth of His grace on you.

Man's mind has become polluted because of modern education. When the mind is polluted, how can man come up in life? He may be highly educated and occupying positions of authority with name and fame. But all his achievements will prove futile if he does not know what he is supposed to know. What is it that he is supposed to know? It is the principle of the Atma. In order to lead a blissful life in this world, it is enough if you know that you are the embodiment of the Atma and everybody else also is the same. You are subjected to misery as you are unable to understand this subtle Truth. Tomorrow I will tell you in detail the Truth of human life, the goal of human life and the pathway to bliss.

13. I And You Are One

Date: 05 July 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Guru Purnima

One who cultivates the crop of love in the field of one's heart
is a true Christian, a true Sikh, a true Hindu and a true Muslim.
In fact, he is a true human being and a true Guru.
(Telugu Poem)

Know The Secret Of The Five Elements

GOD is all-pervasive and is the indweller of all beings. Likewise, the five elements, which are nothing but divine manifestations are also all pervasive and allpowerful. The whole world is pervaded by the five elements, bound by the five elements and it functions because of the five elements. It cannot function even if one of the elements is absent. Therefore, for every man, the five elements are like his five life principles. No one can comprehend the power of these elements. However, every man must necessarily know the significance of these elements. He alone is truly blessed and meritorious who understands their significance and acts accordingly. In fact, he would have achieved the objectives of human life, i.e., the Purusharthas. It is the bounden duty of every man to recognise the import of these elements. The five elements are the cause for man's pleasure and pain, good and bad. The five elements confer on man happiness or misery depending on how he makes use of them. Their names and forms may appear simple, but they are highly powerful.

Having been born, man lives for a few years, and ultimately gives up his body. The five elements are responsible for man's birth, growth and death. The five elements are spread right from both microcosm and macrocosm. They are present in man from top to toe. So, it is imperative that man should

know the secret of these elements. Having understood the significance of the five elements well, Buddha made concerted efforts to gain control over his five senses. He taught *Buddham Saranam Gachhami, Sangham Saranam Gachhami*. He used his intellect to understand the truth and shared his wisdom with society. First of all, he exercised control over his vision. Among the five senses of perception, the eyes are endowed with immense power. They have 40 lakhs of light rays in them. Today man is putting his senses to misuse and, as a result, his body is becoming weaker day by day. His life span is being reduced by his unsacred vision and the sensual pleasures that he is indulging in. Lakhs of light rays in his eyes are being destroyed because of his unsacred vision. That is the reason man is developing eye defects. Today many people undergo cataract operations to set their vision right. The doctors may say, man develops eye defects because of cataract, but in fact, it is the result of unsacred vision. So, one should have proper control over one's vision. Whatever be the spiritual practices that one may undertake, one cannot derive their benefit without having control over one's vision. All the *Sadhanas* like *japa*, *thapa* and *dhyana* confer only temporary satisfaction. These practices cannot help you to have control over your vision. In fact, the entire *srushti* (creation) is based on your *drishti* (vision). The *netras* (eyes) are verily the *Sastras* (sacred texts).

Keep All Five Senses Under Check

Along with control over vision, one needs to have control over one's tongue. There are 3 lakhs of taste buds in the tongue. As man has become a slave to the taste, he consumes various delicacies and, in the process, spoils his tongue. Not merely that he makes his tongue utter unsacred words, but also hurts others' feelings by using harsh words. His life span is further reduced by the misuse of his tongue in this manner. Likewise, all the senses are losing their power as they are being put to misuse, thereby cutting short his lifespan. So, first of all, man should keep his eyes and tongue under check. When these two are controlled, man's energy is revitalised. The power that one cannot attain from years of penance is obtained when man puts his eyes and tongue to sacred use.

O tongue, the knower of taste! You are very sacred.
Speak the truth in the most pleasing manner.
Chant the Divine Names of Govinda, Madhava and Damodara incessantly.
This is your foremost duty
(Sanskrit Verse).

Do not cause pain to others by using harsh words. In fact others are not others but your own self as the same principle of Atma is present in all. The one who causes pain and the one who suffers from it are one and the same. So, never speak in such a way as to hurt others. That is why I tell you often, talk less, but you are not taking My words seriously. You are unable to understand to what hazards will excessive talk lead you in future.

See no evil; see what is good.

Only then will your eyes attain the sacred power by which you will be able to visualise the Divine Cosmic Form. Spiritual practices will yield greater rewards if senses are kept under control. Unmindful of the power of the senses and without making proper use of them, man is under the delusion that he can achieve great rewards by undertaking various practices which are physical and worldly in nature. But in reality, one cannot get anything out of these practices except temporary satisfaction. First of all, man should exercise control over his senses. Never listen to anything that is evil. If any situation arises, leave the place immediately. Hear no evil, see no evil and talk no evil. Make every effort to be away from evil. Only then will spiritual power grow in you more and more. Why did our ancient sages and seers go to forests to spend their lives in solitude? It is only to control their senses. True spiritual Sadhana lies in controlling one's senses. Without sense control all spiritual practices will prove futile. Instead of using the tongue to utter evil words, why don't you chant the Divine Names like Rama, Krishna and Govinda? You are

piling up sins because of the misuse of the senses. The sins that you have piled up may not be visible to the naked eye, but they are sure to put you to suffering. That which is not seen will make you eat the fruits of your action. O man, understand this secret of karma (action).

Embodiments of Love!

Senses are like life principles for every man. Once you rein your senses, your life will be peaceful. You should not only avoid evil talk, but should also talk less. Your speech should be short and sweet. Sages like Valmiki, Vyasa and great devotees like Potana composed sacred texts and sanctified their lives. Emulate their ideals and make your life exemplary. Read sacred texts composed by such noble souls. Today people read books that pollute the mind. It is a very bad practice. Be it reading, writing, seeing or talking, let everything be good. Do not commit any mistake knowingly. You can experience divinity in humanity by putting the senses to proper use. One can visualise the Divine manifestations and become Divine himself only through sacred use of the senses. Man, unaware of his innate divine potential, considers himself low and leads a life of delusion. He thinks there is a power superior to him and makes efforts to attain it. There is no power superior to him.

Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanthi
(Truth is one, but scholars refer to it by many names).

There is only one, not two. It is a sign of ignorance to think that there is something different from you and be in search of it. Multiplicity is your own imagination.

Ekoham Bahusyam
(I am one, I will become many).

You can understand this truth once you control your senses.

People are under the mistaken notion that they derive happiness when their desires are fulfilled. In fact, happiness results not when desires are fulfilled but when they are controlled. One can enjoy the state of bliss by controlling one's desires. One who craves fulfillment of his desires is always restless. Desires correspond to *pravritti* (outward path) in which there is no happiness whatsoever. You are deluded by your thinking that there is happiness in the world, whereas you are distancing yourself from *nivritti* (inward path).

Embodiments of Love!

For everything, love is life. To attain that state of love, make proper use of your senses. Buddha visited many noble souls, studied sacred texts and undertook various Sadhanas. Later, he realised that all those related to *Pravritti* (outward path). Ultimately, he realised that happiness lay in making proper use of the five senses. He stopped reading sacred texts, he did not visit noble souls any more and gave up all the spiritual practices. He understood that whatever Sadhana was done with this ephemeral body would yield fleeting happiness only. True and eternal bliss will result only when Sadhana is done with pure and eternal feelings. When Buddha started exercising control over his senses, he experienced infinite bliss, which he could not contain in himself. He hugged his cousin, Ananda, who was by his side then and said, "Ananda, I have attained the state of Nirvana and am unable to contain the bliss within me. I am ready to give up this mortal coil." On hearing this, Ananda started shedding tears. Then Buddha said, "Oh simpleton, instead of rejoicing over my attaining this state of bliss, why are you grieving over it?" You are looking for fleeting happiness in worldly matters, whereas Buddha strived to attain bliss in the spiritual realm, which is true, eternal and immortal. As you are immersed in worldliness, you are distancing yourself from immortality. Though you are committing many sins, you do not consider them as sins. You think that they are quite natural to human beings. You keep committing mistakes, yet you pray for pardon.

Actually, one should never seek pardon for the mistake committed. One should be prepared to undergo the punishment. Only then can you be free from defects. If a person commits a serious offence, he is put in jail. He is released only after he undergoes punishment for the required period. Likewise, you will be redeemed once you atone for your sins. Likewise, if you want redemption, you should be prepared to face punishment for your mistakes. Exercise control over the senses and see that you do not repeat them.

By chanting the Vedic verses, which are sacred, one gets immense bliss. That is why even Buddha, who did not believe in the Vedas in the beginning, developed interest in them. People were under the impression that Buddha opposed the Vedas. Later Sankaracharya tried to erase this misconception, saying that Buddha was never against the Vedas. He said that people themselves were going against the Vedas out of ignorance. Buddha conquered desire, which is not possible for everyone. One need not do any great Sadhana to conquer desire. You will not be troubled by desire once you understand the inner meaning of life. Today man is prepared to stoop to any level for money. He pretends to be a great devotee of the Lord and tries to cheat people. Is this what he is supposed to do? No. He should conquer desire and control the senses.

Students!

You are young and yours is the right age to exercise control over the senses. You can make use of them in a sacred manner. Once you know the proper path, you will never give up. You can understand the teachings of the Vedas only when you cultivate good qualities. You can cultivate good qualities only by good practices. There may be a few obstacles in your path, but never give up.

God Is Your Guru

Today we are celebrating Guru Purnima. Purnima means full moon day. Then who is a Guru? The modern Gurus whisper a Mantra into the ear and stretch

their hand for money. Such people are not fit to be called Gurus.

Gukaro Gunateethaha Rukaro Rupavarjithaha
(one who is attributeless and formless is a true Guru)

A Guru is necessary to make you understand the formless and attributeless Divinity. Since it is difficult to get such Gurus, consider God as your Guru.

Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnu, Gurur Devo Maheswara
Gurur Sakshat Para Brahma, Thasmai Sri Gurave Namaha.

Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheswara. Consider Guru as your everything. In this world, everything is a manifestation of Divinity.

Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma
(verily all this is Brahman).

All are embodiments of Divinity. In fact, all that you see is nothing but the Divine Cosmic Form (*Viswa Virat Swarupa*).

Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Padh
(With thousands of heads, thousands of feet and thousands of eyes, Divinity pervades everything).

This means all the heads, all the feet and all the eyes that we see in this

world belong to God. When the Vedic statement, Sahasra Seersha... was made, the population of the world was only a few thousands, but now it runs into a few hundred crores. In those days, people considered everyone as Divine. They believed in the Vedic dictum,

Sarva Bhuta Namaskaram Kesavam Pratigachhati
(salutations to all beings reach God).

Easwara Sarva Bhutanam
(God is the indweller of all beings)

Isavasyam Idam Sarvam
(the entire universe is permeated by God).

Divinity is not restricted to a particular place. God is here, God is there and He is everywhere. You are developing differences out of delusion, but Divinity is One and only One. It is the duty of a Guru to propagate such principle of oneness.

Today there are many good disciples, but it is very difficult to find a true Guru. We have many good boys among our students. However, even if one or two are bad, all of them will earn a bad name and will have to face punishment. Here is an example. When you sleep at night, you are bitten by one or two mosquitoes. The next morning, you spray insecticide and kill all the mosquitoes though you were bitten by only a few. Likewise, God punishes those who join bad company. That is why it is said,

Tyaja Durjana Samsargam;
Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam;
Kuru Punyam Ahorathram
(run away from bad company;
join good company,
and perform meritorious deeds day and night).

Chant Divine Name To Counter Anger, Jealousy

Whenever bad qualities like anger and jealousy crop up in you, do not be carried away by them. Control them. Keep telling yourself, "Anger is a bad quality. It will lead to bad actions and ultimately put me to ruin." When you are angry, sit quietly in one place and drink cold water. Chant the Divine Name. Then your anger will gradually subside. If your anger persists, go to a place of solitude and walk briskly for half a mile. There are many easy paths to control one's anger. But the youth today are not making any effort to control their anger. When they get angry, they take it as an opportunity to hurl abuses at others. It is the worst sin. Through prayer and contemplation on God, you should try to control the evil qualities in you.

Embodiments of Love!

First of all, control your vision and tongue. You are incurring a lot of sin because of evil vision and you are bound to face its consequences. When you make use of your senses for evil purposes, the children born to you will also be evil-minded. So, see no evil, hear no evil and talk no evil. In olden days, people used to take care to see that pregnant ladies did not see or hear anything bad. They used to narrate to them sacred stories of the Lord, give them good food and convey only good news. They did so because they knew that if the mother had good feelings, then the children born to her also would have good minds. The sins committed by the parents will certainly affect their children too. When Subhadra was in the family way, one day Arjuna was

describing to her the intricacies involved in entering the *Padmavyuha* (lotus maze). He had described to her in detail how to enter the Padmavyuha and when he was about to tell her how to come out of it, Krishna appeared on the scene and took away Arjuna saying, "This is not the proper time to talk about these matters. It is not Subhadra but the child in her womb who has been listening to you all along." That is the reason why Abhimanyu knew only to enter the Padmavyuha and did not know how to get out of it. As a result, he was caught in the maze, and ultimately he was killed.

God is watching all that you do. You may think that others do not know what you are up to. You may hoodwink others, but can you ever hoodwink God? He knows everything. So, always do good. All your sins will be atoned when you make proper use of your senses. When you become angry, you lose all your power of discrimination and behave in an inhuman manner. So, whenever you are angry, leave the place immediately. It is better to be away from sin rather than commit sin and repent later.

No More Padanamaskars

I want to tell you one more point. You may feel pained by what I am going to tell you now, but I am happy about it. From today onward, I am not going to give Padanamaskar to anybody because I and you are one. God is present in all.

Easwara Sarva Bhutanam
(God is the indweller of all beings).

Understand this truth. From today onward, I have resolved not to give *Namaskar*, to anybody. You may do Namaskar to your parents as they and you are not aware of the truth that God is present in all. Since I know the truth, I shall follow it. The same Atma is present in you, Me, and everyone else. So, no one needs to do Namaskars to anyone for that matter. If you still

want to do Namaskar, do it mentally. Bring your palms together and say, "Swami, I offer my ten senses to You". That is enough. You don't need to touch My feet to do Namaskar. Understand the truth that God is in you and act accordingly. Then you become God. If somebody is given Namaskar, others are feeling jealous. I am stopping this practice of giving Namaskars only to see that such feelings of jealousy do not sprout in you. Wherever you are, offer your Namaskar mentally. That gives Me happiness. I have told you this many times, but you have not put it into practice. Touching Swami's feet and extolling Him are wrong practices.

From this Guru Purnima, develop sacred feelings and enjoy supreme peace and bliss. Everyman aspires to attain Ananda. How can he attain it? There are five *koshas* (sheaths) in man *annamaya* (food), *pranamaya* (life), *manomaya* (mental), *vijnanamaya* (wisdom) and *anandamaya* (bliss). Make every effort to reach vijnanamaya kosha. Only then can you attain anandamaya kosha.

Lead a happy and blissful life and share your happiness with others. You do not know how great this ananda is. Just as a small piece of wood becomes fire when it comes into contact with fire, so also when you are close to Me mentally, you become Divine. Your mind will be illumined and will dispel the darkness of ignorance in you.

Do not feel dejected that Swami has spoken to you in this manner. Consider it as good for you. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. When I am walking amongst you, others will find it disturbing if you fall at My feet. From today onward, make proper use of your senses and follow what has been told to you about Padanamaskar.

14. Love Can Unite The Entire World

Date: 16 July 2001 / Location: Chakur, Maharashtra / Occasion: Sai Nandanvanam

God controls the entire world. He is the Embodiment of Truth.

(Sanskrit verse)

Embodiments of Love!

THE whole world is permeated with love. The world does not connote only the form but the people also. You are all the embodiments of love. You may or may not have any other quality, but every one of you does have love. In this world, there is nobody without love. There are, however, two types of love in this world - one is worldly while the other is spiritual or divine.

Have The Vision Of God Through Love

Divine love is totally selfless. It is love for love's sake; there is no other consideration. God has no selfishness whatsoever. He does not expect anything in return. But worldly love is tainted with selfishness, and it craves for material possessions. Where there is selfishness, there is fear. Where there is no selfishness, there is no fear. Man should have no trace of selfishness in his love. He can have even the vision of the Divine through selfless love. Love is selflessness; self is lovelessness. God has no specific form. Love is God; live in love.

Love is the form of God and God is full of love.

It is necessary to connect love to love.

You will have divine experience and wisdom when you strengthen love in you.

(Telugu poem)

Divine love is Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Shuddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam (attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). Such divine love is all-pervasive.

Love is the magnet that attracts everybody. Love is the cause of attraction between us. This magnet of love is present in every one of you. It is because of love that you have come here to see Me and I have come to see you. You are not merely human beings; you are Virat Purushas (cosmic beings). Man is endowed with such tremendous power which none of the other denizens possess. There is limitless power in each one of you, but you are unable to recognise it. When you love others, they will love you in turn. Therefore, first and foremost, you should love all. By experiencing love in this way, a human becomes divine. But man today is focusing his love on fleeting and ephemeral objects. He limits his love to his wife, children and material objects.

Here is a small example to illustrate the nature of worldly love. When a young man gets married, he considers his wife as his very life for the first two or three months. If he happens to find a thorn on the way while going out for a walk, he pulls her aside immediately with great concern, fearing that it might prick her feet. After a period of six months, if the husband finds a thorn on the way while walking together, he merely cautions her. After one year if the same situation arises he will shout at her, saying, "Can't you see? There is a thorn on the road. Worldly love declines in this manner day by day, but divine love will never decline. It is steady and changeless. You should make efforts to attain such true and eternal love. You are not able to experience this love due to your limitless desires. Life is like a long journey and desires are the luggage. Less luggage, more comfort make travel a pleasure. You will be free from worries and problems once you reduce your desires.

There is nothing in this world that is not divine. Divinity permeates each and every object of the universe. Man commits mistakes, because he is unable to recognise this principle of non-dualism. (Swami showing His handkerchief)

What is this? It is a handkerchief. It is made up of a number of closely interwoven threads. The threads are made up of cotton. Therefore, the cotton, the threads and the cloth are one and the same. Likewise, prakriti (nature), jivatma (individualised soul) and Paramatma (God) are one and the same. 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). You are neither the body nor the mind; you are the embodiment of the Atma. The body and the mind are mere instruments.

Do Not Forget Your Divinity

Embodiments of Love!

You don't need to talk about spirituality which all cannot understand. It is enough if you hold on to the principle of love in your daily life. The principle of love is the same in everybody, right from a pauper to a millionaire. Even a millionaire has to live on food; he cannot partake of gold. Food is therefore necessary for man. It sustains his body. Food is God. The body is made up of food; but the mind, which is a bundle of desires, is the root cause of man's delusion. Man's life today is full of delusion as he harbours limitless desires. You should have the firm conviction that you, being the embodiments of love, are basically divine. Your life will be redeemed once you know that you are the spark of the Divine. You forget your divine nature as you get deluded by various names and forms in this world.

Is it possible to build a temple for God who pervades the entire universe? Your heart is the temple of God. Turn your vision inward and find Him there. It is a very easy path to Divinity.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is the prime feeling of man. All other feelings originate from love. Once you understand the principle of love, you can understand the entire universe. First and foremost, man should have strong faith. Where there is faith, there is love; where there is love, there is truth; where there is truth, there is peace.

You don't need to search for peace elsewhere. It is within you. Likewise, you are the repository of truth and love. In fact, the whole world is within you. Thousands have assembled here. Your names and forms are different, but the same five elements are present in all of you. In this world, you don't find anybody without the five elements, which are nothing but the forms of the Divine.

Truth is present in everyone. It is divine. But today man is ignoring this divine principle.

The creation emerges from Truth and merges into Truth,

Is there a place where Truth does not exist?

Visualise such pure and unsullied Truth

(Telugu Poem)

Understand The Principle Of Unity In Diversity

Man's mind is the cause of his pleasure and pain. Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandha mokshayo (mind is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). When you insert the key into a lock and turn it to the left, the lock gets closed. When you turn it to the right, it opens. It is the same lock and the same key, but the side to which you turn the key matters. Likewise, the heart may be compared to a lock and the mind to a key. When the mind is turned towards the world, you are attached to the world and when it is turned Godward, you get detached and attain liberation. Today man is bound because his mind is turned towards the world.

Human life is divine. Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham (out of all the living beings, the human birth is the rarest). Man is wasting such a divine and auspicious life. Human body is a gift of God, which has to be utilised to realise one's Self. The body is an instrument for self-realisation. Just as ears, nose, hands, etc., are the limbs of the body, likewise body is the limb of society,

society is the limb of Nature and Nature is the limb of God. Body cannot exist if the limbs are separated from it. Likewise, the country cannot exist if there is no unity among its 'limbs'.

In olden days, the Bharatiyas considered their country as their very home. They would proudly proclaim that they belonged to Bharat. Unfortunately, such patriotic feeling is lacking today. People identify themselves with their respective States, saying, "I belong to Maharashtra, I belong to Karnataka, I belong to Tamil Nadu, etc." By thinking in this sectarian way, the spirit of unity is lost. When a limb is cut off from the body, it leads to severe pain and loss of blood. The country also suffers the same fate if the various regions are separated from it. You are all Bharatiyas. Develop the feeling of nationality.

Embodiments of Love!

You belong to the human race. So, develop human values. Today the world is fragmented as man has forgotten human values. Unity of the world can thus be strengthened by developing human values. He is a true human being whose thoughts, words and deeds are in perfect harmony. Your life will be wrecked if your thoughts, words and deeds are in disharmony. Develop the spirit of oneness. All are one, be alike to everyone. Different bulbs have different wattages and colours, but the current that flows through them is one and the same. Likewise, God is present in men of all colours, races and nationalities. Easwara Sarva Bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings).

Flowers are many, but worship is one,
Jewels are many, but gold is one,
Cows are many, but milk is one,
Beings are many, but breath is one
(Telugu Poem)

Make every effort to recognise the divinity in everyone. Though God is present in everyone, you search for Him elsewhere and thus waste time. Wherever you see, there is divinity in this world. It is because of the divinity within that you are able to speak. Is it not sheer madness to search for God in the external world when you have divinity within you? You are the embodiment of truth and love. So, do not hate or harm anybody. Hurting others amounts to hurting your own self.

You will become divine when you realise the oneness of all human beings. You belong to the same universal family. Such being the case, why should you give room for hatred and conflicts? Love everybody. Love is eternal, immortal and nectarean. However, it is being turned into poison because of evil qualities like hatred, jealousy and anger. Never allow such evil qualities to enter your heart for God dwells in it. God and the individual are not different; both are one. Lead your life with the feeling that you are divine. Truly speaking, man has no misery. He is the embodiment of bliss. But man subjects himself to misery because of his limitless desires. Sukhadukhe Samekruthwa Labhalabhau Jayajayau (one should remain equalminded in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat). Your mind is responsible for both pleasure and pain. You feel elated when your desires are fulfilled; otherwise, you are depressed. You will be blissful only when you control your desires. Do not get carried away by pleasure and pain.

Power Of Love Is Immeasurable

Embodiments of Love!

Being the embodiments of love, you should not hate anybody. Only through love can you attain immortality. There is love in everybody, but it is used in a perverted manner. With love, one can achieve anything. One can even control the five elements. When you gain control over the five elements, the whole world will be under your control. It is out of ignorance that you consider yourself weak. In fact, all powers are in you. It is only love that can dispel the darkness of ignorance. Love is God. God is love. Love can unite the entire world. What is the relationship that exists between you and Me? This body

was born in a remote village of Andhra Pradesh. You belong to the State of Maharashtra. What is the connection between you and Me? It is love and love alone. It is only out of love for Swami that you have all gathered here. Your love has made Me very happy. How much is the power of love? It is infinite. None can fathom its depth.

Do not hate anybody. All are your brothers and sisters. Cultivate the spirit of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. Serve all with love. "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) No amount of money can procure the bliss that you attain by serving others. Money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows. There have been many men of affluence in this land, but what happened to them ultimately? They had to leave the world empty-handed. No one can carry even a fistful of dust at the time of departing from the world. Otherwise, there would have been rationing even for dust in the country. When you leave the body, you carry with you only the good and bad that you have done in your life.

Aspire to become good, not great. Ravana was great, while Rama was good. Why? Rama put into practice His innate noble qualities. Ravana also had noble qualities in him, but he did not make use of them. Greatness is like a passing cloud. You occupy an exalted position, you earn a lot of money, but nothing remains with you. Earn a good name for yourself. People should respect you because of your goodness. Only goodness gives true happiness. Do always good. Never indulge in evil. If you want to be happy in life, you should try to become a good man.

Take Refuge In The Divine Name

Embodiments of Love!

Today people fight for their rights, but do not carry out their responsibilities. A true human being is one who has the noble qualities of adherence to truth, duty, devotion and discipline. These are the things that man should learn.

Today man is filling his Masthaka (head) with all that is contained in Pusthaka (books). First of all, he should cultivate noble qualities. Otherwise, all that he has learnt will prove futile.

Man can achieve anything with self-confidence. Therefore, it is necessary to cultivate selfconfidence. It transforms man into divine. Why are you born in this world? What is it that you have achieved? What is the purpose of life? Is it khana, peena, sona, marna (to eat, drink, sleep and die)? No. Even birds and beasts do the same. At least they have a reason and a season, but today's man has no reason and no season. He misuses his senses. He should make proper use of his senses to become a good man.

There is nothing greater than having love for God. Love is God and through love alone can you merge in God. Mira was a great devotee of Lord Krishna. She used to spend all her time in the temple of Krishna singing His glory. When the Maharana ordered her to leave the temple, she was shocked. She did not know where to go. She meditated on Krishna and sang. "O mind, go to the bank of the Ganga and Yamuna. The cool waters of Ganga and Yamuna will make the body placid and serene" (Hindi song). She considered Ida and Pingala as the rivers Ganga and Yamuna, which meet each other at Sushumna. In order to reach Sushumna all that one has to do is to sing the glory of the Lord. When one contemplates on the Lord incessantly, one will certainly attain Brahmaloaka. There are many noble souls in Maharashtra. In fact, they are everywhere. But how are we leading our lives? What is the use of having a tongue that does not chant the Divine Name and hands that do not serve others? Chant the name of Easwara with love.

There Is Immense Strength In Unity

Embodiments of Love!

Each of you is a spark of the Divine. Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavadgita: Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). When you identify yourself with your body, you consider yourself as human being. But in reality, you are divine. P r

e m Easwar Hai, Easwar Prem Hai (love is God, God is love). Divinity is the same in everyone, be he a Hindu, a Muslim, a Sikh or a Christian. There is only one religion, the religion of love. There is only one caste, the caste of humanity. So develop unity, chant the Divine Name. What an exalted position will the country attain if all its people were to chant the Divine Name unitedly! Once you take refuge in the Divine Name, the whole country will progress. Then you need not run after other countries for help. The greatness and grandeur of Bharat is unparalleled. Since ancient times, Bharat has been occupying the position of a leader to the rest of the world. What can be said of the great good fortune of Bharat for God incarnated in this land many a time to lead humanity to divinity! You may belong to any religion, but consider God as one. Do not have any differences whatsoever based on religion. You may be a Hindu, a Muslim, a Christian or a Sikh, but all are one in the eyes of God. One who cultivates the crop of love in the field of one's heart is a true Christian, a true Sikh, a true Hindu and a true Muslim.

Embodiments of Love!

I am extremely happy to see that so many people of Maharashtra have gathered here to express their love for Me. I bless you all to lead a happy, peaceful and blissful life. Unity and love are fast disappearing. It is only in villages that you find unity and love. If you all stand united, you can achieve anything. When you conduct yourself with the spirit of unity and love, the country can attain any height. It is not possible for a few ministers to run the whole country. All of you should stand united and extend your cooperation to them. A thread can be snapped with two fingers, but when many threads are woven to form cloth, it will be strong. There is immense strength in unity. When the people and the government work together, any mighty task can be accomplished.

Embodiments of Love!

I am very happy and I bless you all to lead a meaningful and purposeful life by working for the welfare of society. Pray to God for timely rains and good harvest, so that all are blessed with plenty and prosperity. With these words, I

bring my Discourse to a close.

15. Sacrifice Is My Enjoyment

Date: 11 August 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Krishna Jayanthi

There is no disease equal to greed, no enemy equal to anger,
no misery like poverty or joy equal to wisdom.

SICKNESS is not confined to the body. The mind and senses are equally afflicted by diseases, the chief among which is greed. All know the ill effects suffered by Duryodhana and his brothers because of their greed. Greed is one of the chief diseases afflicting mankind. I do not suffer from any kind of physical illness because there is no trace of greed in Me. Hence, bodily sickness is unknown to Me.

There is no enemy equal to anger. I have no feeling of aversion to anybody nor does anyone have adverse feelings against Me. I love all and equally everyone loves Me. The life principle in everyone is the same. The entire creation is one mansion. The relationship between members of the entire humanity is like that of various members of a single family. Hatred and anger are the source of all feelings of division. There is no trace of anger or hatred in Me and hence everyone loves Me.

There is no misery equal to poverty. I am not poor in any sense. The love in Me is My wealth. How can greed touch Me when I am so replete with wealth? There is no poverty in Me. It is essential for all people to avoid these three negative tendencies. Because of this I am in permanent bliss. Worries do not bother Me at all.

Balakrishna Responds To Garga's Prayer

Embodiments of Love!

Garga was highly respected by both the Pandavas and the Kauravas. He was the Kula Guru (family preceptor) of Nanda and the Yadavas. He was a great scholar replete with knowledge and wisdom. He went to the house of Nanda and Yashoda for the naming ceremony of the two babies.

There are a few esoteric matters that are not widely known. Incarnations generally occur in three categories of *Shukla* (white), *Aruna* (orange) and *Pita* (yellow). But here was a baby who was black. Hence, Garga considered and found the name *Krishna* (black) as most appropriate. After the naming, Garga narrated several episodes that were to take place in the life of the child and, after staying on to experience and enjoy some of them, he departed.

After a while, Garga visited Nanda's house again to see Krishna. He was a very austere person and was used to preparing his food with his own hand. He would not eat food even touched by anybody else. Yashoda therefore provided a secluded place for him to prepare his meal. He asked for a little flour, jaggery (molasses) and milk. Sugar as a sweetener was not known then. Sweets were made with jaggery. Garga put the constituents into a vessel and prepared some sweet pudding and, as was his wont, offered it to Vishnu before partaking of it. Suddenly the boy Krishna dashed into the room and started eating the sweet pudding in the vessel. Garga, who was praying, opened his eyes and found the child eating the food that he had prepared for himself.

He called Yashoda and told her, "Mother, do you see what your son Gopal is doing? I am hungry and He has eaten the food before I could. Yashoda caught hold of Krishna and admonished Him for His action, saying, "Don't you know that the venerable Garga is the Guru of our clan and you have defiled his food. Is it not our duty to honour our guests in a befitting manner?

Krishna replied, "Mother, I have not done anything on My own. It was he himself who called Me to eat the pudding." Yashoda then asked Garga why he called Krishna whom she had kept safely away. Garga protested that he had not called Krishna. Krishna remonstrated saying, "Oh sage, why are you uttering a falsehood? To whom did you offer the food in prayer before

partaking of it? Is it not Myself to whom you prayed? How can you offer everything to Me first and then start complaining?"

Garga was perplexed for a moment, but he recognised that Krishna was none other than Vishnu Himself. He prayed to Vishnu and Krishna responded. With this realisation, Garga was happy to partake of the leftover of the pudding eaten by Krishna.

The Miracles Of Child Krishna

When was Krishna actually born? He was born 3228 years before the Christian era on 20 July at 3 a.m. As this is 2001 A.D., today He will be 5229 years old. In the auspicious month of Sravana, in the Bahulapaksha (brighter fortnight), on Ashtami day (8th day of the phase of the moon) under the star Rohini, the holy child was born. This confluence of Ashtami and Rohini has resulted in the occurrence of many marvelous events.

At that time, there was a demoness named Balanthaki. Her real name was not known to any and she was generally known by the name Poothana. It was her practice to wander from village to village and kill infants with poisoned milk. In the course of her wanderings, she came to Repalle. She took on a beautiful form and entered Yashoda's house and started feeding her poisoned milk to the infant Krishna. The infant Krishna sucked out along with the milk and the poison her entire lifeblood until she fell dead. Yashoda came running to Krishna as she heard the thud of Poothana falling down. Seeing the dead demoness, Yashoda questioned Krishna as to why He went to her. Krishna replied, "Mother, I did not go to her, in fact, it is she who came to Me. It is my duty to kill this cruel demoness who had come with the evil intention of killing Me."

As He grew up, He started taking the cows for grazing every day into the forest along with other cowherd boys. One day as they were lost in playing games, the cows moved to some other forest. Suddenly there was a big surge of flames in the forest. Frightened by the fire, the gopalas started praying to Krishna to save them and their cows. Krishna dispelled their fear by saying

that everything would be all right and told them to close their eyes for some time. Gopalas never disobeyed Krishna and did as He said. After some time, the raging fire was extinguished and the cows started returning safely. Amazed by this experience, the gopalas went about sharing this miracle with others in the village. They said, "Krishna is no ordinary being, He is verily God as it is not possible for anybody to perform such a miracle."

The following day, they again went into the forest. After playing for some time, Krishna said that He was hungry. When the gopalas wanted to go to the village to fetch food, Krishna told them to go to a nearby place where a sacred Yajna was being performed and ask the Brahmins for food. The Brahmins bluntly rejected their request by saying that they would give only the remaining food after the final offerings were made and after partaking of the food themselves. Seeing the gopalas returning disappointed, Krishna said, "Only the mothers know the sufferings of children. Go and ask the wives of the Brahmins for food."

In the spiritual path, particularly it is women who readily recognise Divinity. The gopalas went to the wives of the Brahmins and said, "Mother, our Krishna is very hungry. He wants food." The mothers' joy knew no bounds as Krishna Himself, who protects the entire universe, was asking them for food. They at once packed the food without even telling their husbands and went to Krishna. They served the delicacies to Krishna and gopalas and experienced bliss in His proximity. Krishna told them to go back as their husbands would be waiting for them.

Karthavyam Yogamuchyathe (discharging one's duty is yoga).
Do your duty. Do not delay.

They returned to their husbands and told them what had happened. Krishna's Will transformed the minds of their husbands. They were very happy and in fact asked for the prasadam of Krishna. It was evening by the time the

gopalas along with Krishna started homeward. On their way, a demon in the form of a serpent by name Agadha, was lying on the ground. Kamsa sent him. If the mighty serpent opened its mouth, even cars could get in. The demon swallowed all the cows and was ready even to swallow the gopalas. The gopalas clamoured for help from Krishna. "What would we answer if our parents asked for the cows?" Krishna pacified them and at once entered into the mouth of the demon, enlarged His body till the demon's body tore open and rescued the cows. The gopalas, awestruck with this incident, started spreading the glories of Krishna. The gopalas experienced such miracles every moment.

Kamsa's Stratagem Recoils

As days passed on, Kamsa realised that it was impossible for him to kill Krishna. Kamsa sent his minister, Akrura, to bring Balarama and Krishna to attend the sacred yaga performed by him. Knowing very well the evil intentions behind this invitation, Akrura went to Repalle to bring Balarama and Krishna as it was his primary duty to follow the command of the king. Seeing Balarama and Krishna mounting Akrura's chariot, the gopikas and gopalas blocked the pathway, thereby not allowing Akrura to take their Krishna away from them. They prayed, "Oh Krishna, don't leave us. Who will be our saviour? Don't go to that evil King, Kamsa."

Krishna consoled the grief stricken gopikas and gopalas as with his gentle and sweet words appropriate to the moment. They reached Mathura. Kubja, a short woman with a hunchback was assigned the task of carrying perfumes to King Kamsa. On seeing her, Krishna asked, "Oh dwarf lady, what are you carrying?" She replied that she was carrying the perfumes to Kamsa, as he was very fond of them. Krishna went near her, deftly stepped on her feet and with His hands under her chin lifted up. Kubja, who was short with a hunch on her back, became straight and good-looking. These *leelas* (miracles) were well expounded by Thyagaraja;

You are beyond all decription and human comprehension. Is it possible to estimate Your glory and splendour even to Brahma? We have been waiting for Your grace. Oh Lord! Listen to my agony and redeem me. You are the one who brought back to life the dead son of Your preceptor. You are the one who suppressed the serpent Kaliya, freed Vasudeva and Devaki and saved Droupadi from humiliation. You fulfilled Kuchela's desires, You made ugly-looking Kubja beautiful. You protected the Pandavas and protected the 16,000 Gopikas. You are beyond all description and human comprehension. (Telugu Kirtan)

The stories of Krishna's glory and miracles started spreading in the entire village, which added fuel to the fire of hatred in Kamsa toward Krishna. As a part of his plan to kill Balarama and Krishna, he sent Akrura to invite both of them to fight with the wrestlers in his court. When they were passing through the streets, even ladies who were inside their houses came out to greet Balarama and Krishna. They whispered among themselves, "Who are these children with radiant forms? Perhaps they are sons of an emperor."

Balarama and Krishna entered Kamsa's court, where the wrestling competition was in progress. The competition did not produce a winner as none of the wrestlers gained an upper hand over the other. Suddenly, Balarama and Krishna leapt onto the dais from where Kamsa was watching the proceedings and pulled him down. Kamsa fell on the ground. Putting His foot on Kamsa's stomach, Krishna tore him to pieces and killed him. Kamsa had two wives, Asthi and Prasasthi. As it was not possible for them to stay there, they went back to their parents' house. Their father too was a mighty demon. The moment he heard Kamsa's death, he became furious and set out to kill Balarama and Krishna. He went many times to fight with them but was defeated every time and had to return humiliated. The miracles of Krishna were twofold: firstly to protect the pious and secondly to kill the wicked. This was the dharma for the Dwapara Yuga and not for the other Yugas. With sweet words and by being an ideal, man has to be set on the right path.

Reward For Selfless Love

One day a lady brought some fruits in a cloth to sell them. In those days there were no monetary transactions, only a barter system. Fruits were bought in exchange for grains. She was lost in bliss on seeing their beautiful forms. She called them near, selected a few good fruits and gave them. Krishna said that He had to give something in return for the fruits. So, He went inside the house and with His baby palms brought a few grains of rice and even of that half He spilled on the way. The old woman received the few grains left in Krishna's hands in her cloth. She paid little attention to the offering from the Divine child. In her daily exchange of fruit for grains, she hardly noticed the little offering from the hands of a child. Lo and behold! When she went home and opened her bundle, all the grains of rice had turned into shining diamonds. Such is the nature of the marvelous acts of the Avatar. Their significance is wondrous and is beyond the grasp of human mind. As the Upanishads say,

Yatho Vacho Nivarthanthe Aprapya Manasa Saha
(these are of a nature where the words and thoughts rebound in futility without comprehending them).

The Divine nature of Krishna was experienced and enjoyed by the cowherds. Living in those days was essentially sacred. People were engaged in selfless activities rather than in selfish deeds. All were always engaged in helping others and never in hurting. In this manner, they could directly recognise Divinity. Therefore, we should always direct our activities in a selfless manner and never indulge in selfishness. As I say frequently,

Help ever, hurt never.

As the cowherds were constantly acting in this manner, many people noticed

the marvelous nature of the child Krishna. The situation is not the same today. Strange news floats around at times. Someone says that Sai Baba is angry with X or Y. Sai Baba has no ill feeling toward anyone. Equally, nobody is hostile to Swami. Everyone loves and none hates Swami. Swami's mission is well known.

Free Education, Medical Care And Drinking Water

You are aware what 'educating children' involves these days. To admit a child in a Primary School, one needs to spend something like 20,000 rupees. On the other hand, in the Sai Institutions, education is imparted from K.G. to P.G. free of cost without any kind of discrimination. Even doctoral work is done free of cost. Our Institutions do not collect even a naya paisa from any of the students here. Thousands of students have enjoyed these benefits. The whole world knows this fact.

In the same manner, in the field of health-care, you know how much a heart operation costs. Each operation may cost some two to three lakhs of rupees. Is such treatment available to the poor? Wherefrom will they get such amounts? This is not a happy state of affairs. With the aim that high level health-care should be available to all, Swami had the Super Specialty Hospital constructed at Puttaparthi. In these institutions, no aid is received even from the Government. Even the salary of the teaching staff is fully met by Swami. You know how the salary levels of educational staff have gone up these days. Swami's Institutions are paying wages in full compliance with government regulations. Irrespective of one's own nature or status, one should not go against rules and regulations.

The same is the case with the Super Specialty Hospital in Puttaparthi. It is ten years since the Super Specialty Hospital of Puttaparthi started functioning and already 12,000 heart operations have been performed. I leave it to your imagination to appreciate who is responsible for saving these many lives. Early this year, Bhagawan started another Super Specialty Hospital in Bangalore. Within a period of six months, 1,500 operations have been successfully performed there. Who helped the suffering there? The specialist

doctors are highly paid. Some of them receive a lakh of rupees. When contrary opinions were raised, I said that no compromise should be made regarding rules and regulations. When I am looking after payments, why should anybody bother?

Take the water project in Anantapur. Even now there are some areas where there is scarcity of water. I have spent 300 crores of rupees and made water available to the extent possible. Take Mahboobnagar; it is another water-starved area in Telangana. I asked the Chief Engineer Kondal Rao, what it would cost to arrange for water supply there. He gave an estimate of about 60 crores of Rupees. I told him not to bother about crores but to go ahead and carry out the project. There is no point in putting up a project from a depleting source like bore wells and pumps and so I arranged for water to be brought from the Krishna river at a cost of about 110 crores of Rupees. Now we have gone to Medak district and the project for water supply there is in progress.

Many other similar projects are coming up and will be dealt with in a similar manner. These hands are forever engaged in helping not in hurting. There are some jealous and petty minds that spread false and imaginary propaganda. I take no note of this. I am only concerned with My functioning and not with the comments of others. I am aware that all love Me as much as I love them. In the single family of humankind, where is the room for jealousy or hatred? These are all imaginary. Whatever is anyone's imagination, My truth is unwavering.

Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam
(speak the truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth).

There is nothing greater than truth in this universe.

Truth is God; love is God; live in love.
Love is My wealth. Sacrifice is My enjoyment.
What greater joy do I have?

I have been spending all this time in the same state of joy and all My actions are fruitful. All I do is for the good and good actions should not be criticised. Good actions always succeed.

All may not be aware of the state of affairs. The Bangalore Hospital involves an expenditure of 3 crores of rupees per month. Special medicines, artificial heart valves, etc., have to be imported from America. Similarly, the Prasanthi Nilayam Hospital costs about 2 crores of rupees per month. I do not desire any assistance or support from the government nor are they giving any. Again, there are educational institutions in Prasanthi Nilayam, Anantapur, Bangalore, Muddenahalli and Rajahmundry. These cost about 1 crore of rupees a month. In this manner roughly the expenses come to 6 crores of rupees per month. Wherefrom does it all come? However, I am giving it. It would require a corpus of 600 crores rupees in deposit, which will yield an interest sufficient to run the Hospitals and Educational Institutions. If this is done, this level of free health-care and education can be maintained.

There are thousands of you here and I have never asked any for assistance. My hand is always above (giving) and never below (receiving). My hand is stretched only for love, but none realises this fully. What I needed was 600 crores rupees and only today I have received the news that a sum of 600 crores of rupees is arriving from the U.S. If this amount is apportioned as 300 crores for Bangalore Hospital, 200 crores for Puttaparthi, and 100 crores for the educational institutions and invested, the interest accruing will take care of the running expenses. I have no personal desires. My entire being is selfless. There is no selfishness in Me at all nor have I asked anybody. Will any body simply give a 100 crores of rupees as gift for the mere asking? None. But a single individual has come forward to give 600 crores. I have no direct contact with that person. The message says, "Swami, you will receive

the amount on Monday noon. Please deposit 300 crores on Bangalore Hospital account and 200 crores on Puttaparthi Hospital account as fixed deposit as soon as the amount is received".

It may be hard to find entirely selfless people, but if you undertake selfless work, resources flow of their own accord. Bharat is a land of *Thyaga* (sacrifice), *Yoga* (spirituality) and not of *Bhoga* (sensual enjoyment).

Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaikena Amrutatthwa manasu
(immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth. It is attained only by sacrifice).

It is this spirit of sacrifice that makes such achievements possible. I have many other projects in mind.

Uphold The Honour Of Women

First thing in the morning, you look at the newspaper; it is full of obscene pictures and news totally opposed to our culture. How sacred is the code of conduct of the women of Bharat! From ancient times, how highly have women been held in our tradition. All energy emanates from the female principle. This sacred feminine principle is grossly perverted in unsightly and immoral forms by the films and magazines. Such vulgar exhibitionism is destructive of Bharatiya culture. We have to protect our culture and restore proper status of the feminine behaviour.

We have to seek some suitable method for achieving this. Swami desires to fund a few lakhs rupees for those who can come forward with appropriate activities for the restoration and upholding of true feminine values and traditions in the media. With money, you should achieve worthy objectives like this. In this world, much is achieved by money, and there is no harm in using money in the work of upholding righteousness. All manner of obscenity

must be eliminated from the newspapers and the other media. Exposure of young people to such images affects their minds adversely and even ruins their lives. To work against this trend and to strengthen Bharatiya culture, I am prepared to help to any extent. Truth must be expressed, righteousness extolled, injustice and evil opposed, obscenity expunged, and honour and respect of womanhood upheld. The respect of Bharatiya culture is based on the high regard it bestows on women. Welfare of women is the true welfare of Bharat. We are converting the goddesses of welfare into objects of vice.

Our Krishna Kant (the Vice President of India) is here. His mother is a very pious lady. She is constantly God-minded. In fact, it is his mother's influence that is responsible for the exalted position occupied by Krishna Kant today. Many great men of this country owe their greatness to the influence of their mothers. I am very happy to see such persons. Even now she advises her son in the right path as if he were a little child. Krishna Kant is also a model son and respects his mother highly and abides by her desires with great humility.

Today's need is for more such mothers and children. If mothers are good, children are also good. To ensure proper mother and childcare, I am proposing to construct a mother and child health centre in Bangalore. The relationship between parents and children is far from the ideal today. While the parents are abusive, the children are disobedient. This is a very unhappy situation.

Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava, Acharya Devo Bhava, Atithi Devo Bhava

(Revere your mother, father, preceptor and guest as God).

Parents spend their entire lives for the welfare of their children, who should realise this and behave appropriately in return. Krishna Kant is affectionate to his mother and has been obedient and has lived with great happiness in her love. Such examples must be widely emulated in our country.

Rehabilitate The Orphans And Destitutes

Unfortunately, today in this country, there are many fatherless and motherless children in great distress. My resolve is to identify such children and provide them with proper amenities by way of residence, studies and other facilities so that they become ideal citizens. I have spoken about this to the local district Collector. He has agreed to help and has allocated some land for this purpose. The construction has to be commenced shortly. There is no matter of hide and seek in My actions. All I do is transparent. Bring to My attention any such deserving orphans or children without fathers and I shall arrange to allocate to them one lakh of rupees per child to be kept in fixed deposit for their upbringing until they are able to support themselves. All I do has a great ideal behind it. I have already instructed the Chair of Nagarjuna Constructions, who recited his compositions just now, to take up the construction of the building and complete it expeditiously. He has assented. The project is to construct one house per fatherless family, provide the wherewithal for livelihood and schooling until the children are educated and made capable of discrimination. Today educated children abound, but many lack discrimination. Education should always lead to discrimination. My firm resolve is to disseminate such discrimination widely. What others say is of no concern to Me, for what I am proposing is good. I have no ill will against anybody and I love everybody equally. Love all equally, and everyone will love you in return. Love for love and from heart to heart. Disregard every manner of adverse comments. Hold firm to your resolve.

Having resolved what ought to be,

Hold on until you succeed

Having desired what ought to be, Hold on until they are fulfilled. Having asked what ought to be,

Hold on until you get it.

Having thought what ought to be, Hold on until the thought is realised. With heart mellowed, the Lord must

yield to your wishes,
Or forgetting yourself, ask Him with
all your heart.
Persevere, be tenacious, and never
give up,
For it is the quality of a devotee never
to retreat, abandoning his resolve.
(Telugu Poem)

Pursue your resolve without concern for yourself and make Me yield by your sheer perseverance. This should be the relationship between you and Me. Be active in good deeds, act righteously, respect womanhood. The welfare of women is an index of the welfare of the country. The history of Bharat is replete with the stories of great women such as Savitri who brought back her husband from the jaws of death and Sumathi who could make the sun stand still. We are treating such womanhood with utter disregard, treating them as worthless. This is a very wrong attitude. The country's welfare is closely linked to the welfare of women. Therefore, we have to uphold the respect of womanhood. This is the highest of education. Take to heart this lesson.

Going abroad and acquiring some foreign qualification and earning a lot of money is not a sign of greatness. You have to stand firm in Bharatiya culture and uphold the honour of your country. Engage in good works. Love those who even abuse you. I am a standing example for this.

My life is My message. You should be the same.

The good runs into several impediments. Trees bearing fruits have stones thrown at them. Similarly, good people receive brickbats. This should not make us waver. Rough diamond acquires value as it is cut and polished. In

the same way, abuses turn into ornaments. Hence, we should disregard abuse and hold to our righteous ideals firmly. The cowherds surrounding Krishna and Balarama became ideal persons. In the same manner, I want all students here to become ideals. Serve your parents, respect them, and obey them implicitly. That indeed is the essence of Bharatiya culture.

Lokah Samasthah Sukhino Bhavantu
(May all the worlds be happy).

This is our goal. Don't seek your own happiness; crave for the welfare of the entire universe. Abandon selfishness and pursue the welfare of others and attain *Paramartha* (supreme goal). That is true education.

Embodiments of Love!

Your education is not merely to earn wealth, but for the acquirement of good qualities. You desire wealth, health and friendship; but without character, they are of little consequence. Therefore, you should build up your character. You must emblazon the greatness of Bharat all over the world. With this the whole world will be one with Bharat.

On this sacred Krishnashtami day, I affirm to you that soon the entire world, be it Pakistan, China, Germany, Russia or any other country big or small of this world, will be our friend. This shall be our resolve. Our natural goodness is an assisting factor for this. That is the root cause of this hope for unity. Unity contains purity and purity leads to Divinity. You should strive to achieve the triad of unity, purity and divinity.

16. Vinayaka - The Master Of Siddhi And Buddhi

Date: 22 August 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ganesh Chaturthi

Oh man! Examine and Enquire for yourself what kind of happiness have you achieved? From the moment you get up from your bed, till you retire, spending all the time in acquiring knowledge and earning degrees while forgetting God, what kind of happiness have you got? Examine for yourself.

HUMAN life is the noblest, most rare and the only one fit to be lived. It is the primary duty and responsibility of every man to work for his redemption and liberation by his daily effort, by working hard and by discharging his duties.

To fill your small belly, you face many problems in life. You acquire various forms of knowledge from various fields. You are not able to enjoy total bliss. Really, you are wasting your human life.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

You strain so much for filling this small stomach. Does this satisfy you? There is no contentment at any point of time. Based on this, Lord Vigneswara said, 'Na Sukhat Labhyate Sukham' - you cannot derive happiness out of happiness. Happiness is the fructification of difficulties. You want all the comforts and happiness, but this will not give you Peace. If you want to have a taste of happiness and peace, obstacles are necessary.

As long as it is alive, the tree bears fruits for others; even after it dies, by splitting itself, it becomes useful as firewood.

(Telugu Poem)

Tree is the very symbol of sacrifice. For the ideal of sacrifice, trees are the best exemplars. In this human life, sacrifice is essential. Without sacrifice, you cannot enjoy the state of bliss anytime. Cultivate the spirit of sacrifice right from now onward.

You may extend hospitality and kindness to a mean-minded person, but he will certainly harm you due to his very nature. Because of the 'poison' that gets into one's psychology, human life is ruined.

(Telugu Poem)

Therefore, we should never be mean-minded. We should be noble and broad-minded. We should uphold the pristine glory and esteem that man is supreme in the universe. In ancient times, the sages erred occasionally, but repented and atoned for their sins. They were great personalities. You should follow such mighty, eminent personalities. Modern man is weak. In modern times, people commit sins, but they neither realise their mistakes nor do they repent. In those days, the elders corrected their mistakes and led a pure life, being very grateful to God. Repentance is the basis for the glorious life that follows. To recognise this truth, you worship Lord Vigneshwara.

The Ideal Path Finder

Who is Vigneshwara? Who is Ganapathi? The word 'Ga' is related to the intellect. 'Na' refers to wisdom. Ganapathi is the head of all the secular and spiritual knowledge. Vinayaka has no master above him. He is the master

unto himself. Vinayaka will never put you to suffering in anyway. Vinayaka blesses all your endeavours, efforts and confers success. He will never allow anything evil to reside in you. He has the mouse as his vehicle. A mouse stands for darkness as it moves about in the darkness at night. Vinayaka helps you to dispel this darkness and spread light. Divinity is not limited to mankind alone. We find divinity present in birds and beasts too. To demonstrate this latent, immanent divinity, we have Vinayaka having an elephant's head, with a mouse as his vehicle. The elephant is highly intelligent, faithful and loyal. It never leaves the path that it lays all by itself and stands as a symbol for gratitude. Gratitude is a very sacred quality. Forbearance is Truth, dharma, Veda, Nonviolence, and everything. The elephant has got great patience and forbearance. It is prepared to sacrifice its life, but it can never tolerate its master's suffering. When there is no path for us to tread in the jungle, it is the elephant that walks through and creates a path for us. Similarly, in this jungle of life, it is the elephantheaded Vinayaka who shows the ideal path for all of us to tread.

On this day of Vinayaka Chaturthi, various kinds of offerings are made. But He does not accept any oily or fried preparations. All preparations are cooked in steam and offered to him. They offer him Kudumulu and Vundrallu, made by using rice flour and til (sesamum) seeds. Why is such an offering made? For humanity, health is wealth. Those who partake of food cooked in steam remain very healthy. But today, man is running after various delicacies. But, for the elephant health is all-important. Vinayaka too teaches us the same. This preparation of rice flour and til sesamum seeds frees us from all defects of the eye like spots and cataract. A combination of jaggery and til seeds prevents all defects and diseases caused due to bile, wind and phlegm. The rice flour preparation made using steam helps in digestion too.

We have learnt how to worship Vinayaka, but we do not recognise His inner principle. This will make everyone of us an ideal person. Students worship Vinayaka more on this day, as it will improve their memory and intelligence. Music concerts begin with a prayer to Vinayaka. But because of the effects of the age of Kali, we have forgotten this fact. For the misfortunes of the day, the root cause lies in the neglect of the worship of Vinayaka. Today, man is

after temporary, fleeting, ephemeral pleasures, forgetting eternal joy. We should strive for permanent joy and peace. We can achieve that only by praying to God. As days pass, the very humanness is lost. Human values have disappeared. Man is not following his prescribed code of conduct. If human values are followed, divinity can be attained. Once anything is told, it should be remembered throughout the life. For any act of help, whether small or big, gratitude must be expressed. Bereft of gratitude, one turns wicked. We should offer our prayers to the Sun God, the Lord of Effulgence. The light in our eyes is due to Sun God. It is because of Sun God that we are able to see. Even if Sun is present, if our eyes are closed, we will not be able to see anything.

Vision is the reflection of the Sun God. Sun withdraws from the eyesight of the man who does not show gratitude (i.e. he turns blind). Man cannot discharge his duties when he is blind. A person may be a great scholar, but if he is blind, he cannot do anything.

Therefore, netra, the eye, is the Sastra, the scripture for our life. Our scriptures are nothing but the reflection of the effulgence of the Sun God. Therefore, we need to pay attention to our eyesight. Eye defects certainly imply lack of gratitude.

Vinayaka Is The First Worshipped

Vinayaka has many teachings that help man liberate himself. Worship of Lord Ganesha has been followed from very ancient times. In the Narayana Upanishad, Lord Ganesha is praised first. In the three Vedas, we find the mention of Lord Ganesha. Even in music, they pray to Ganesha for his grace. Do we have the qualities of Vinayaka? Lord Vinayaka has a pure heart. In fact, Siddhi and Buddhi (fulfillment and intellect) are his two eyes. He considered them as his consorts. For intelligence, we need to have Buddhi. For Buddhi, we need to have gratitude. An ungrateful man can never become an intellectual. Without intellect, one can never be successful. Vinayaka confers success. So, we need to know the inner significance of Lord Vinayaka. Today, before we start any work, we pray to Lord Ganesha. Without praying to the

master of masters, Vinayaka, and thereby, acting in an egoistic way, we are bound to fail. Vinayaka Chaturthi is the first festival of the year, followed by other festivals. Bharatiyas begin their daily prayers with a prayer to Lord Ganesha. Vinayaka is the head of spiritual, mental and physical levels. We should sustain and protect all these levels.

In our college, we have M.B.A.- meaning, Master of Business Administration, but it is not that. It stands for Mind, Body and Atma. We need to understand the integration and coordination of all the three. Mind is given to enquire. Body is granted to perform. The Atma monitors the performance of these two. Atma is permanent. Mind is fickle and has to be made steady. It should be exercised properly. One should constantly enquire whether one has a mind like that of a man or a beast. We should not act according to our mind. The body should not do what the mind has decided. Intellect has the capability to discriminate whether a thought is good or not. If the thought is good, the intellect acknowledges it to the Atma. Man should realise that he is the combination of Mind, Body and Atma. He has to purify the mind. An impure mind is not acceptable to the intellect that transcends all the senses. We follow the mind and senses. Mind is the master of senses, but it is not controlling the senses. One may have a sensitive mind, but it is only an animal mind. So we should master the mind and be a mastermind. To exercise the control of mind, worship of Vinayaka is important. Vinayaka does not react, but remains as a witness. Atma, the spirit, is eternal. It is the witness and so also, it watches everything, but does not interfere.

Good Thoughts, Feelings And Good Conduct Constitute Good Character

At one time, Valmiki prayed to Narada and asked him whether there was anyone who upheld truth, enjoyed bliss, was ever smiling and forgiving, who did not commit any mistake, expressed gratitude for any small help, who always helped others, etc., and enumerated 11 noble qualities. Narada replied thus: "Oh! Sage, why do you take so much trouble? Not just eleven, but 11000 noble qualities are in a single person who has taken birth in this world." There is no one who attaches value to character now. The three

essential things that constitute character are good thoughts, good feelings and good conduct. If you have good thoughts, your actions will automatically be good. Good qualities are the very personification of Divinity. A person with such divine qualities only took birth in human form as Lord Rama. Lord Rama faced many problems and difficulties, but he never strayed away from His path. He never gave up Truth; rather, whatever He spoke became Truth. This was the sacred path taught by Narada. Narada was not a conflict maker as we all think. He was verily the beacon of light that spread sacred wisdom. He propagated and spread the Gayatri Mantra given by Sage Viswamitra. 'Bhur' pertains to physical matter, which is the body. The body is the combination of various materials like calcium, lead, etc. 'Bhuvah' is the vibration that comes out of the mind and makes the body function. 'Suvah' is the radiation, which is the Atma. Man is the combination of matter, vibration and radiation. As the feeling, so is the vibration. Everyday, morning and evening, bhajans go on here. You think that the bhajans are going on in the Bhajan Hall. No. The vibrations of bhajans are there all over this place. You can certainly hear the bhajans even from this table if you listen carefully, with a steady mind, pure and selfless heart. Everything is Divine vibration the walls, the roof, and this mike. The great sages were the ones who had these vibrations. The Veda was heard through sound, through vibrations. If you sit down and listen with a pure heart, you too can listen to it. Why go so far? Just close your ears and you can hear the Aumkar from within. Everything originated from the Aumkar. The same air produces seven different notes through different reeds in the harmonium. Similarly the Aumkar is one; all other sounds are 'vikaras'-modifications of the Aumkara. Vinayaka, who is the master of all these vibrations, gifts these vibrations to you. You may listen to any sound, but the most sacred is Aumkara. If your body is full of wicked vibrations, everything will be wicked. Never allow a wicked man to come near you. Run away from bad company to avoid the wicked vibrations from getting into you.

Avoid bad company; foster good company. Perform good deeds day and night; discriminate between permanent and temporary.

(Sanskrit Verse)

If you are good, your body will be full of good and divine vibrations. Bad thoughts give rise to bad vibrations. All that you see is the reflection of what is inside you. If you call a person bad, it is just that the bad in you is reflected in him. It has got nothing to do with him. Good or bad is the reflection of your inner being. Never consider that good or bad exists separately from you. But modern students do not have the capacity to understand this truth. They have only bookish knowledge and not the knowledge of the heart. They read all that is in the books, go to the examination hall, scribble on the papers and come out emptyheaded. The student does not even know what he has written in the examination hall. All this is artificial knowledge; it is not true education.

Even after acquiring various forms of knowledge, one cannot give up meanness. It will only lead to argumentation, but not to total awareness. After all, one has to die in spite of all his worldly knowledge. So, study that which makes you immortal.

All this education is being used to fill this small stomach. All this knowledge is superficial. Mere physical education cannot sustain your life, give you a long life, or satisfy the heart. Therefore, we should learn that which is related to the heart. Saraswata explains in detail, the prayer that is offered to the Sun God. He says that man is bound by attachment. Attachment, greed and possessiveness are responsible for illusion.

"Saraswathi Namastubhyam, Varade Kamaroopini
Vidyarambham Karishyami, Siddhirbhavathume Sada"
(Sanskrit Poem)

All these teachings promote the power of discrimination. You are not filling your lives with divine, noble and novel thoughts. You are wasting your lives with bad thoughts, bad vibrations and bad actions. The ancient sages, who realised their mistakes and repented, were yogis. Today, you are bhogis who

do not realise your mistakes. Bhoga is bound to cause roga (disease). Therefore, you must realise your mistake and repent wholeheartedly. This should not be done merely with words or writings. In fact, all the vibrations must be unified. Then, the reality will reflect and reveal itself.

Share And Sustain Love And Compassion

Embodiments of Love!

All that is happening in this world today is destructive, divisive and extremely unnatural to man. Everywhere, we find atrocities, killings, conflicts and quarrels. Having been born as a human being, what happened to your humanness? What happened to your compassion and kindness?

What happened to sacrifice, love and nonviolence? There is no trace of all these. We find only useless exhibitionism. You have to repent wholeheartedly and pray. God is the personification of Love and compassion. Sometimes He may appear unkind, but there is kindness in that too. You do not have the capacity to understand this kindness. You can understand kindness only with kindness, Love with Love and hatred with hatred alone. You are born as humans and therefore, you must live as humans. You must practise humanness, propagate and experience humanness, and enjoy and share with your fellowmen, the bliss that results. When you have such sacred thoughts in you, naturally, you will become a divine person. You call yourselves human, but, in reality, there is no trace of human qualities. The behaviour is always perverted and the mind is full of bad thoughts. Where are the good feelings of love and compassion? We should share and sustain Love and compassion. One without compassion is a demon (danva). One with compassion is man (manava). With compassion and love, you can achieve anything.

In this barren land without love,
For the seeds of love to sprout
With all the emotions and the downpour of love,
For the incessant flow of rivers of love,
Oh Krishna! Sing for us.

This was the prayer of all Gopikas. From where was Krishna singing? Was it

through the flute, which was made of wood? What is flute? This body with nine holes is the flute. From this instrument (body), proper and melodious tunes should come out and not discordant ones. Oh Krishna! Play on, holding the flute of my heart and sing tunes full of Love. Listening to that tune coming from the flute of Krishna, Radha merged herself in the divine melody. Who is Radha? She is not just a woman. Radha is Dhara, the earth. The earth is the flute. Therefore, we call Radhakrishna. The name of woman comes first - nature (Prakriti) and then God (Paramatma). That is why the names Radhakrishna, Sitarama, Lakshminarayana and so on. Therefore, you should worship nature and do good deeds. Then, you will enjoy the presence of God. There is nothing that is impossible for God.

Vinayaka Is The Master Of Sacred Qualities

Today is Vinayaka Chaturthi. The nature of Vinayaka is found everywhere. Vinayaka is the master of Siddhi and Buddhi. We have to pray to such a Lord. If the leader is good, you will certainly reach the goal. Today, we do not have good leaders. Who is a good leader? Our conscience is the leader, but you have polluted that conscience. It is full of bad traits and wickedness. Vinayaka is the one who annihilates all such bad traits in our conscience. Mice smell everything wherever they go. Vinayaka has such a creature as his vehicle. He put the mouse under his foot. This means that he is not affected by any bad traits. As he is the master of all sacred qualities, sages and spiritual seekers praise him. We have to recognise and understand the significance of Vinayaka, who is there in our hearts. We have to think of him constantly. He is the presiding deity of all Gods. Shaivites as well as Vaishnavites worship Vinayaka. He symbolises all the religions. He stands for auspiciousness. Once you recognise this and worship accordingly you will redeem your lives.

Swami's Love Recognises True Devotion

Today, in Prasanthi Nilayam, we have many here, who have been serving with unwavering mind, unmindful of obstacles and difficulties. That is the true quality of devotion. One should have a steady mind and one-pointed vision. Swami has chosen this day to felicitate all of them. This is not an opportunity,

but a reflection of Swami's love toward you. All this is nothing but reflection, reaction and resound. In future, many more things are going to happen like this. Continue to serve with steady devotion. We have here with us, Professor Radhaswamy, who has been here for the last ten years or more. When he is given some work, he says, "Swami, you have given me life. My bypass surgery was also done in the Super Specialty Hospital. I do not want anything in this world. I like to serve you." Do you find anybody with such a sacred heart? There should be more and more such people in the future. We have a doctor from Italy, where he has a lot of work. Nevertheless, he wanted to work in the proximity of the Divine. He came and settled here and he is working in the department of cardiology. Another doctor Keshav Prasad, a young man from U.S.A., could have done great work there. However, he wanted to do Swami's service. Therefore, he came here with all his baggage and settled here. For outsiders, all these people look very ordinary. If you go deep and enquire about them and their bio-data, you will find them very special and unique. They are good leaders and specialists in their fields. Such leaders are leading unostentatious lives in Prasanthi Nilayam. They work very hard, day and night, just for the sake of Swami's love. You have seen Dr. Alreja. When Swami visited Bombay thirty years ago, he was there in the crowd, at which time he sustained a heart attack and collapsed. Swami got up from the dais and ran up to him, made him lie down and patted on his chest. Then a stretcher was brought and he was taken away. Later, he came to Parthi, and from then onward, he has been here and has never gone home. When Swami told Alreja, "You are 90 years old. You cannot climb the stairs. It is very difficult for you to walk. You can go in a car," he replied, "My body is a car. As long as it is healthy, I will walk. You don't have to take any trouble. I don't want the car." He goes walking everyday to the hospital.

Earlier, there was Seshagiri Rao in Prasanthi Nilayam. He was a great officer. He used to offer Arati. He lived for a 100 years. Another person, by name Kishappa, came after Seshagiri Rao had passed away. He used to come from a far off place by foot, sit through the bhajans and offer Arati to Swami. He too lived for 101 years. Surayya, a huge personality from Venkatagiri, with a height of 6 feet and 3 inches, was also here. He was a celibate too. When Swami takes rest at night, he used to come slowly and massage Swami's feet.

When Swami says, "Surayya, my feet are not paining; you need not press my feet," he will say, "Swami, you do not have any pain, but if I do not press, I will feel pain. So let me massage your feet." After Swami closes His eyes, he would leave the room. He did this work till his last day. He too lived for a 100 years. Karunyananda Swami also lived for a 100 years. Kasturi was supposed to have died very early. But after entering Prasanthi Nilayam, he lived for ninety years. Whoever came here lived long. What is the reason? They were thinking of God all the time. It confers long life. There are many people who go for jogging and take medicines, but without any avail. But these people never used to take medicines. If they had any problem with health, they came to Swami to take Prasadam. They led their lives in this manner. There should be more and more such people. Youngsters today have monkey mind; not just monkey mind, but something worse. What is said is forgotten the very next moment. The tongue has no bone and hence it can be twisted in any way. You have to hold on to a promise you have made till you die. Many people say, "Swami, I am losing my teeth. What is the use after I lose all my teeth?" Swami says, "You may lose your teeth but the tongue is still there." All the teeth are strong. Strong things go first. The tongue that is soft remains. When you go, the tongue always goes with you. The tongue should be kept safe. That is why it is said, 'you cannot always oblige but you may always speak obligingly.' Talk softly and sweetly. Speak the truth. Follow righteousness. Chant the name of the Lord and make others listen to it. Do you know why the tongue is given? Is it to eat everything? Do you know why the feet are given? Is it to go around in the lanes and bylines? Each limb of the body has its own purpose. You should do good and perfect deeds. Body is gifted to undertake sacred activities. You should never be unrighteous and never utter falsehood. Let your body tread along the righteous path. Swami expects you to earn a good (sarthaka) name.

17. Happiness Is Union With God

Date: 31 August 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Onam

Indha Pujiyamaya Onam Divasam Ella Janangalukum

Endey Paripurna Anugraham Asirvadam

(On this auspicious day of Onam, I confer my bounteous grace and blessings on all of you)

WHAT happiness did the demon Somakasura attain by stealing the Vedas and hurling abuses at God?

What was the fate of the ten-headed Ravana who abducted the consort of Rama?

What did Duryodhana, who refused to give the Pandavas even as much land as would a needlepoint occupy, take with him at the end?

What happened to the wicked Kamsa ultimately who indulged in the gruesome act of slaying infants?

The same will be the fate of the wicked today. If not today, at least tomorrow, they are bound to meet their doom.

Oh man! Do not entertain excessive desires. Better that you lead a life of moderation.

Truth Is The Basis For The Whole Universe

Embodiments of Love!

The whole world is permeated by Truth. Truth is all-pervasive. All types of wealth, comforts and conveniences are based on truth. Bereft of truth the world cannot exist. Today man is facing hardships as he has forgotten truth. Truth neither can be hidden nor be changed.

Trikala Badhyam Sathyam

(Truth is that which remains the same in the past, present and future).

Since ancient times Bharat has been able to enjoy peace and prosperity because its people adhered to truth. Bharatiyas propagated the message of spirituality to the entire world.

Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu

(May all the worlds be happy!)

has been their motto. Such a sacred ideal is forgotten today.

Sathyannasti Paro Dharma

(there is no Dharma greater than adherence to Truth).

Truth is the very life of man. All human values are based on truth.

Truth is the noblest of all virtues. You might have heard the story of king Harishchandra, who sacrificed his kingdom and even his wife and son for the sake of truth.

The creation emerges from Truth

and merges into Truth,

Is there a place where Truth does not exist?

Visualise such pure and unsullied Truth.

(Telugu Poem)

Truth may sound like a simple word, but it is very important to know its greatness. All that is, is embraced by Sathya (truth). The entire universe is dependent on truth. If the very basis is lost, what is left of our life? There is no place where truth does not exist.

Emperor Bali based all his actions on truth. Looking upon his subjects as his own children, he performed his duties. Bali was a very generous person. He was compassionate and was a shining sun of truth. The very fact of his reign in the land of Kerala is the cause for the prosperity and happiness of the people there. He had conquered all the lesser Gods with his great prowess. He performed a sacrifice called Viswajit, in commemoration of his victory, on the banks of the river Narmada.

The Lord incarnated as Vamana at that time. He was born as the son of the saintly couple Kashyapa and Aditi. They lived in a hermitage known as Siddhashrama. The young Vamana walked towards the site where Bali was performing the sacred ritual. The boy was brilliant and effulgent, and everyone looked with wonder at his great beauty. Vamana was the very personification of the attractive magnetic field. Ratnamala, the daughter of Bali saw the young boy and developed a desire in her mind to have Him as her own child and fondle Him in various ways.

But, in the meantime, as you know, Vamana had pushed Bali down into the *Pathala* (netherworld). This event turned her love towards Vamana into hatred and she felt that she could kill the child herself. The all-knowing Vamana noticed what was passing through the mind of Ratnamala and pronounced *Tathasthu* (may it be so!).

Sarvatah Panipadam, Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham,
Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thishthati
(God, since He is omnipresent, with hands, feet, eyes, heads,

mouth and ears pervading everywhere, He permeates the entire universe).

He is constantly pronouncing this blessing on all. Nothing escapes His attention. That is why we should always keep our minds filled with good thoughts. He told Ratnamala, "Mother, you first desired to breast feed Me. But seeing your father's downfall, your desire turned into hatred. You felt like feeding poison and killing Me. You will be born in Dwapara Yuga as Poothana and feed Me with poisonous milk, and you yourself will die." Therefore, it is essential for all of us to have constantly good thoughts as God is pronouncing blessing of fulfillment incessantly. In view of the ignorance of this reality, mankind fills its mind with many forms of evil thoughts.

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

Hence, if your thoughts are pure, you are blessed with purity. We fill our minds and spend our time in activities and associations replete with evil; but when we reap the consequences and suffer, we are filled with misery. As every thought emanates from the mind, its consequences are determined. Such was the fate of Ratnamala. When you are subject to misery you blame God, but do not realise that your distress is the consequence of your own thoughts. This is why you should have good thoughts and seek good company.

Bali Was An Adherent Of Truth

Emperor Bali was the personification of generosity. To uphold his promise, he

sacrificed everything. Young Vamana requested three paces of land. Bali promised without a moment's hesitation.

His preceptor Sukracharya however dissuaded him. He told Bali, "The person before you is Vishnu Himself. Once you promise Him anything, you cannot transgress it. So, do not make any hasty promises." Bali replied to Sukracharya that there was no greater sin than going back on one's words and, notwithstanding the specific command of his own preceptor, he upheld the promise made to Vamana.

Bali was prepared to undergo any misery while maintaining truth. So, Lord Vishnu sent him to the netherworld and gave him all the comforts of living. Being in Pathala, he attained eternal life. He however prayed to Vamana that He should return every year to the land of Kerala and grace it with His blessings. That is why the people of Kerala have named this day "Onam" and celebrate it with fervour.

Emperor Bali was an extremely virtuous person. Though born in a family of demons, he was filled with divine thoughts. It is the consequence of the great merits of Bali that is manifesting as the benefits that people of Kerala enjoy today. Onam does not mean merely the preparation of sweet pudding, various delicious dishes, etc., and eating ourselves to the full. We must relive the experience of the encounter between Bali and Vamana. Today Vamana is supposed to be physically present in the land of Kerala and hence this day should be celebrated with gaiety and joy. We should lead an ethical, moral and spiritual life.

Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam
(speak the truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth).

These three values are ethical, moral and spiritual, respectively. All the three values ultimately depend upon truth. Following the path of truth and without

swerving from a spiritual life, we should work for the welfare of the whole world. Kerala has the political identity of being communist. However, every individual Keralite, irrespective of his political colour, never swerves from the daily duties of a purifying bath, smearing of holy ash on his forehead or wearing a sandalwood paste mark, visiting the temples, etc. Their divine love and devotion is unmatched. Kerala is a beautiful state. People there are replete with spiritual attitudes. But time has had its toll and the tender hearts of people have turned hard. Why is this? It is our own attitude that is responsible. The good and bad habits of the individual of a region have their effect on the whole land.

Keep Anger, Jealousy And Greed At Bay

If money is lost, nothing is lost;
If health is lost, something is lost;
If character is lost, everything is lost;

Therefore, character, above all, is the quality that has to be safeguarded by one and all. This alone is God's desire forever. People, not recognising this truth, spend their time in the acquisition of wealth and in other selfish activities. This selfish attitude should be uprooted from the heart of man. All are one, be alike to all. The entire humanity of the world is a single family. Whether you are an atheist or a theist, youth or aged, you should recognise that you are all part of the single race of humanity. You have to develop human values. Without this, you are human merely in form not in fact. Man is filled with qualities such as anger, desire, greed, jealousy, etc. These are animal qualities.

Anger is the nature of a dog. Wavering mind is the quality of a monkey. You are neither a dog nor a monkey. When you are in a fit of anger, remind yourself constantly that you are not a dog and your anger will diminish. Many animal qualities are rampant in human beings today. This is a situation that

must be corrected.

What are the human qualities? Compassion, truth, forbearance, empathy, etc. These are the human qualities that we must cultivate. God's actions vary and their significance is not evident to all of us. So, we form our own reactions and attitudes to these situations. Such reactions are our own creation and do not conform to the reality of the event. The anger in you appears as if it is that of the other person. In the same manner, the various attitudes like greed, jealousy, pride, delusion, etc., are our inner attitudes projected on others. God is pure, attributeless and selfless and on such a Divinity, you project your own inner defects.

You attempt to repress and suppress such negative impulses in you. There is no use in such attempts for, sooner or later, they are bound to erupt. Your effort should be to prevent the very entry of such attitudes and feelings in you. Several fuels like petroleum, coal, etc., are extracted deep from the earth. Where did they arise in the first place? Over a long period of time, they have accumulated deep inside. Now they are making their appearance outside. In the same way, evil tendencies like desire, anger, hatred, etc., are accumulated in you, hidden in you. Sometime or the other, they are bound to come out. So, take care that they do not even make their entry into you. This is the true human value. The very attempt to control or restrain your anger is a sign of weakness. In fact, you have to cultivate your nature in such a manner that the very feeling of anger does not enter you.

Exercise Discrimination To Let In Good Qualities

Embodiments of Love!

There are manifold human qualities. It is not possible to restrict all of them from entry or to evict them. You should discriminate and ensure that only good qualities enter you. You ingrain them and be an example to others around you. This is the true human value. First of all, is "Love".

Love is God; live in love.

We should have pure love filled in our hearts. If our hearts are full with sacred love, no evil tendency will enter them. The heart is like a single seat-sofa, not a double sofa, nor a musical chair. There is room for only a single tendency and be it divine love.

Start the day with love;
Spend the day with love;
Fill the day with love;
End the day with love;
This is the way to God.

Love emanates from truth and truth emanates from love; one does not exist without the other. Truth is an internal current and love is its external flow. The Vedic pronouncement,

Anthar Bahischa Tatsarvamvyapya Narayana sthithaha
(That all-pervasive God is present within and without)

is an expression of this truth. The Narayana principle is the expression of this unity. The inner flow is continuous. This symbolises Saraswathi. You may have seen the rivers Ganga and Yamuna. Saraswathi is the invisible undercurrent. The eternal inner flow of the Saraswathi principle represents speech.

Our faculty of speech is the divine Saraswathi principle and, as such, should not be abused or misused. Control of speech is of vital importance. If your feet slip and you fall, there is no great harm; but if you slip in your speech, it

causes irreparable damage. Of all the human faculties, speech is of great importance and should be used with extreme carefulness. Never speak in a manner as to hurt anybody or untruly. One may think that it is a difficult job, but it is very easy. In fact, more than your teeth or other parts of your body, your tongue is under your control. It is extremely flexible and has no bone in it. You can turn it any way you want and the words you utter seem to dance to any tune that you make. Therefore, you must utter only sacred words through it: *Nirgunam*, *Niranjanam*, *Sanathana*, *Niketanam*, *Nitya*, *Suddha*, *Buddha*, *Mukta*, *Nirmala Swarupinam* (attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness).

Sounds emanate from the tongue.

It is said that God is a word made in form:

Sabda Brahmayi, Characharamayi, Jyothirmayi, Vangmayi,
Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamay, Sreemayi
(God is the embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech,
eternal bliss, supreme majesty, delusion and wealth).

Therefore, always speak sweetly. For the proper evolution of humanity, truth and love must have a sound basis.

Embodiments of Love!

Emperor Bali attained his eternal life through truth and love only. While the body perished, the mind remained eternal. Body is like water bubble, mind is like a mad monkey; don't follow the body, don't follow the mind; follow your conscience. This is the lesson of Bali's life.

Conscience is deathless. The universal consciousness has neither birth nor death. It has no beginning, middle or end. He is omnipresent as the Atma of everything.

(Telugu Poem)

How can you comprehend such an entity? All your conceptions are mere reflections of this reality.

Get Attuned To The Divine Vibration

The sounds that you think you produce are allpervading. All the fine things that were spoken here and the sweet songs that were sung had reverberated through this hall. Where have they all gone? They are all parts of the divine vibration. They are pervading and existing in every soft or hard article or object here. Occasionally, you hear some words or music from here or there, but the divine vibrations are eternal and omnipresent. That is why the Vedas declare, "Sarvatah Pani-padam ..." this divine vibration pervades all of us from top to toe. Only if you practise consistently the proper use of your speaking faculty, divine vibrations will fill you and you will feel divine bliss.

Without fear of sin and filled with ignorance, irreverent,
can you call such a one bereft of all humanness a human being?
This is the enemy of universal peace (Telugu Poem).

What is the source of all the violence and disturbance in the world? Individual's existence is a reflection of the world's condition. If each individual is good, then the world is peaceful. Speak well and act well. Transform your life into a sacred one. In this manner, distribute goodness all around. Talk with love. Sing with love. This is what the Gopikas sang.

In this barren land without love
For the seeds of love to sprout
With all the emotions and the downpour of
love,
For the incessant flow of rivers of love, Oh, Krishna! Sing for us.
(Telugu song)

Music is a reflection of love. All phenomena are reflection, reaction and resound. Life is a reflection, heart is the reality. When the reality is clear, the reflection and the resound will be true representations of that inner reality. Therefore, today we should fill our hearts with love. Love is a loose word. It means many things. There is worldly love, there is physical love, etc. LOVE is one. All others are transient. Spiritual love that emanates from the hearts is true love. The spiritual love flowing out of the heart alone is positive and all other kinds are negative. Even the rituals you perform, meditation and worship are all in fact negative. You are sitting in meditation rotating the beads of your rosary, but your mind is doing purchases in the market.

Control of the mind is true worship. Letting your mind wander while your hands are performing the motions of worship, is no worship at all.

Manah Eva Manushyanam Karanam Bandhamokshayo
(mind alone is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man).

Your mind should be focused on God. Consider this as lock and here is the key. Put the key in the lock and turn it to the right and the lock opens; turn it to the left and it is locked. Your heart is the lock and your mind is the key. Turn your mind to God and you are free. Turn it to the world and you are bound. Our mind is constantly turned towards the world. It is obsessed with

the world. We are not directing it toward spirituality. Of course, the world is there, but our experience there is impermanent, ephemeral. There is only one truth and that is spiritual. To become spiritual is to 'merge'. The worldly life is like a 'marriage' no, not even a marriage, actually a 'mirage', an illusion. A mirage is visible but there is no reality behind it. Marriage takes place, but there is no oneness between the husband and the wife. If one says 'yes', the other says 'no' and there is endless strife. Does marriage produce unity? No. Unity alone is reality.

Ekam Sath Viprah Bahudha Vadanthi

(Truth is one, but sages refer to it by many names).

Oh man! Forgetting the lotus-eyed Lord and running after this and that for the sake of filling your stomach, from the moment of wakening till dropping off to sleep what joy do you achieve?

You struggle hard in life merely for the sake of filling your belly. You acquire many forms of knowledge from various fields. But you are not able to enjoy total bliss. Instead, take refuge in God and contemplate on Him. He will certainly show you the proper path.

(Telugu Poem)

Morality First, Wealth Next

For the sake of filling this belly, we enter into studies, acquire professional qualifications and engage in business activities, all for the sake of accumulating wealth - endless accumulation of properties and possessions. Is there anybody who has taken any bit of it along with him (after death)? A certain amount of money is necessary for leading a good life. Money is a

double-edged weapon that can be used for good or bad.

Money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows.

So, it is necessary to acquire a stock of morality, first of all. Students today are keen to acquire wealth, strength and friendship, but show little interest in developing character. Without character, wealth, strength and friendship are worthless. A true man is one with a sound character. For their physical needs, animals have reason and season, whereas man has no reason or season. What is the use of such unrestrained life?

The people of Kerala must, endeavour to preserve their ancient culture. All the seeds for the cultivation of their culture are still alive and strong. Emperor Bali was the one who encouraged pure and sacred thoughts and activities. He was called Mahabali, as he was truly great in every aspect of his character. Kerala, established by such a great personage, is not to be reckoned lightly. In the map of the world, Kerala may look small, but it is a centre of great divinity. It is full of bliss. This land gave birth to Bali, Vamana and it was where Viswamitra performed intense penance and revealed the sacred Gayatri Mantra which is prefixed with the triple syllable Bhur Bhuvah Suvah. Bhur represents materialisation, Bhuvah-vibration and Suvah-radiation.

The universe is entirely constituted out of these three components. Radiation is Divinity, vibration is the life principle and materialisation is the body. All these three are in you.

You are not one, but three, namely,
the one You think you are (body),
the one others think you are (mental) and,
the one you really are (the Atma).

Only when you recognise these realities, you achieve your humanness. Do not get too much attached to your body. So long as you are alive, you must keep your body in a healthy condition. For Karma Yoga, body is the basis. For meditation and worship, mind is the basis. For realisation, heart is the basis. You must recognise the unity of all these three. There are several three-fold unities that can be recognised, for example,

Trigunam Trigunakaram, Trinetrancha Triyayudham;
Trijanma Papa Samharam Eka Bilvam Sivarpanam.

Always Remember You Are Divine

What is the proper offering to God? It is said, *Patram*, *Pushpam*, *Phalam*, *Toyam* (a leaf, a flower, a fruit and water). What are these? Your body is the leaf; your heart is the flower, your mind is the fruit and the tears of bliss is the water. Instead of attaching undue importance to this ephemeral body, emphasise on the Atmatatwa (Atmic principle). The body is also to be surrendered unto God. How? By acts of worship and other sacred deeds.

Embodiments of Love!

It is not necessary to go in search of temples and shrines for worship. Your body itself is a temple.

Deho Devalya Proktho Jeevo Deva Sanathana
(body is the temple and the indweller is the eternal God).

God is not to be found in the temple or in a palace. Find Him in your heart. All of you are embodiments of Divinity. As the Rig Veda says,

Sahasra Seersha Purusha Saharaksha Sahasra Pad

(with thousands of heads, thousands of feet and thousands of eyes, Divinity pervades everywhere).

Keep this thought in your mind, "I am not a mere man, I am the embodiment of God." Keep this conviction firm in your mind and you will realise this truth. As it is said,

Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi

(the knower of Brahman becomes verily Brahman).

If you perceive yourself as Divine, you become Divine. If you consider yourself a human being, you will remain so. While your form is that of human being, there is the Atmic principle in you. To recognise this Atman, you have to keep your heart pure and empty. To purify our hearts, we celebrate these festivals. The main aim of these festivities is purification of the mind. Where there is unity is very important for humanity. Perform your daily duties in the light of the principle of love.

Be Firm In Your Faith, Do Not Change Allegiance

Embodiments of Love!

These days there are many impediments in the path of spirituality. But these are temporary and surmountable. Man's mind is, by nature, wavering, and the world adds opportunities to enhance this. Focus your mind on one goal and do not allow it to waver. You have to hold on to it till the very end. Such fixity of aim is not common these days. What is the reason? There is a host of so-called spiritual guides with various names of Mathajis, Swamijis and Babajis. Because of this, man's mind gets confused. There is only one Divinity. Stick to

any one God of your choice and hold firm to it. Unnecessarily, do not go around to various places, confuse yourself and ruin your faith. If you keep transplanting a sapling from one place to another frequently, how can it grow healthily into a tree? You have to plant it in one place and feed it with fertiliser and water regularly until it grows into a firm, strong tree. This is true devotion. If you keep changing your spiritual guides frequently, your devotion gets adulterated. Do not resort to such a course. Choose any one and trust that God is in all. As the Gita says,

Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana
(the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being).

Trust that God is in all, but if one keeps on changing from one God to another, it is false devotion. Do not change your allegiance. Be firm in your faith. No matter what difficulties or whatever grief, you should get over them and go forward. That is true devotion. Many great souls had to go through such ordeals.

What difficulties Mira and Sakkubai did not go through? But they held themselves firm to their faith and never deviated from their chosen deities. Mira's husband the Maharana himself found fault with her and sent her out of the palace. Mira was taken by surprise for a very brief moment, but she recovered her composure very quickly. Consoling herself, she thought of going to the banks of Ganga and Yamuna.

(Swami rendered the Bhajan in His Divine voice, "Chalo Re Man Ganga Yamuna Teer...")

We have to develop such staunch devotion. Sankaracharya also taught in a similar way. He advised a wayside Brahmin against wasting his time learning by rote some grammar rules and asked him instead to concentrate on the name of Govinda. "You fool, concentrate on worshipping Govinda, for when

the time comes for Yama to call you, your rules of grammar will not come to your aid. So, worship Govinda."

All the teachings of these great personages are true and eternal. You should remember such teachings. If you keep changing from day to day, you will ruin your heart. Have control over your wavering mind and deluding vision. This is the main trait of a true devotee. Worship God in any form or with any name. In fact, God has thousands of names and a myriad forms.

Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Nam
(the one Lord has many names).

Worshipping the Lord with a thousand names, you should be fully aware that it is a single Divinity you are addressing. Rama, Krishna, Govinda, Allah, Jesus, etc., are all names denoting the same Divinity. Hold this faith firmly in your heart and make your life worthwhile. Live ever in bliss. Happiness is union with God. Worldly connections only lead to pain and misery. Your life is shattered to bits.

Several people come to Me asking for peace. I tell them, "Son, peace is not outside, what you find outside are only pieces." You are the embodiment of peace, you are the embodiment of God, you are the embodiment of Truth and you are the embodiment of *dharma* (righteousness). When you are yourself the personification of peace, why are you looking for it outside? Follow your heart and you will reach your goal. Understand the unity of all Atmas. With that your life will be sanctified.

Man runs into several difficulties.
Birth is a pain, living on the earth is a worry,
worldly life is a worry, death is a worry, youth is a worry,
old age is another, every inauspiciousness is a worry,

your Karma is your worry, difficulties are another worry,
even happiness and wonder are worries.
All these worries vanish when your mind is turned to God.
(Telugu Poem)

Why Dig Wells When The Ganges Is Nearby?

If you dig a well by the side of the sea, you will get only brine. If you dig a well near Ganga, you will get pure water of the Ganges itself. When the pure waters of the Ganges flow nearby, why waste your efforts by digging wells here and there? God is like Ganga in floods. There is no need for any well anywhere. Be near God and be dear to Him and enjoy bliss.

The people of Kerala are lucky. Staying in their homes, they would perhaps celebrate this occasion each in his own small way. They will not get the opportunity to celebrate it in this fashion with several thousands like this. The people of Kerala are the subjects of Bali and are blessed by Vamana. Hence, they are all very lucky and full of merit. Keep in mind your ancient culture. That is your life and your sustenance. These days our culture is declining. If you lose your culture, what are you left with? Everything is lost.

The seeds of ancient Indian culture planted in your land are alive and growing. Ensure that they do not ever wilt, but they grow stronger. Believers and non-believers, all are imbued with this culture. Ensure that this is nurtured and developed. This is My wish. I don't want anything for Myself. I have no personal needs. All I want is your happiness and your love.

18. The Life Principles Of Man

Date: 09 October 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Paduka Mahotsava Day

Fear of sin has declined; wicked deeds have become the order of the day; devotion to God has diminished. We find acts of violence all around. Oh man! Understand that you will attain peace and happiness only when you take refuge in the Lotus Feet of the Lord and chant His Divine Name
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

THE Universe is visible to the naked eye. It consists of mobile and immobile objects called Prapancha, because it is a manifestation of the pancha bhutas (five elements). There is no world without five elements. They are the very forms of the Divine. That is why people reverentially refer to the five elements, namely, earth, water, air, fire and ether, as Bhudevi, Gangadevi, Vayudeva, Agnideva and Sabda Brahman, respectively. It is on this basis that Divinity is extolled as Sabda Brahmamayi, Characharamahi, Jyothirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi, Sreemayi (the embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, supreme majesty, delusion and wealth). These are the attributes of the five elements, which sustain the world. The five elements are present in every being. The Spirit or the Atma which is the very form of God, is not visible to the naked eye, but the pancha bhutas can be seen, heard felt and experienced by one and all. One who understands the principle of these five elements becomes God himself.

Consciousness Pervades The Whole Body

The Gayatri Mantra begins with the syllables Bhur, Bhuvah, Suvaha. Bhur

represents materialisation, a combination of materials. Bhuvah represents vibration, it is related to wind. Suvaha represents radiation. It is supreme knowledge. This morning during the course of Puja, the Pundit described Dakshinamurthi as the embodiment of supreme knowledge. The four Vedas have given four Mahavakyas (divine axioms) to the world. They are: Prajnanam Brahma (Consciousness is Brahman), Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman), Tat Twam Asi (That Thou Art), Ayam Atma Brahma (This Self is Brahman). They represent the essence of the Vedas. What is Prajnana? Is it bookish knowledge? Is it the knowledge that is forgotten with the passage of time? Is it related to the experience of the body? No. Not at all. Prajnana is the unchanging and eternal principle, which is in you at all times and under all circumstances. People call it supreme knowledge but the correct translation for this term is Constant-Integrated-Awareness. Just as the air is pervasive, so too is the Constant-integrated-Awareness. How is it that man is not able to recognise such all-pervasive divinity, which exists in all the three periods of time, past, present and future? The Vedas describe divinity as that which does not move but appears to be moving and that which exists everywhere but cannot be perceived. Though God is present within, man goes in search of Him thinking that He is present only in a particular place. It is tantamount to somebody going in search of his own self elsewhere. Being himself verily divine, he looks for Him outside. How ignorant man is! He does not realise that the five elements present in him are the very forms of Divine. It is foolishness on his part to look for God outside ignoring his innate divinity. Divinity is present in every being. The life principle that flows through each and every nerve of the body is verily divine. The life Principle that sustains our body is Prajnana. On this basis, it is said, Prajnanam Brahma. The same thing is reflected in another Mahavakya, Ayam Atma Brahma. It can be interpreted as 'I am Atma and Brahman.' The third one is Tat Twam Asi. Tat denotes that which is outside and Twam stands for innate divinity. It means that the same divinity is present within and without. Antarbahischa Tatsarvam Vyapya Narayana Sthithaha (That all pervasive God is present within and without). That which is seen, heard and experienced outside is nothing but the reflection, resound and reaction of the inner being. When reality is within, why crave for its reflection outside? It is sheer madness. Prabhava is the term used to describe the manifestation of latent divinity.

This also happens to be the name of the first year of the Indian calendar. Man is the embodiment of time. He is the master of time. In order to understand his reality, man has to control his mind. Hence, it is said, master the mind and be a mastermind. The five elements that are seen outside are present in man. He is the master of the five elements. You should master the mind; do not become a slave to it. You all know what happened to Kaikeyi who, being a queen herself, paid heed to the words of her maidservant Manthara. She lost her husband and was despised by her own son and earned a bad name for her. Today you do not find any lady bearing the name Kaikeyi. Similar will be the fate of those who yield to the vagaries of the mind.

Look Inward For A Vision Of Your Innate Divinity

Man is the embodiment of the five elements. He is their master. They are highly potent. But man, out of his ignorance, considers himself very weak and mean. God, who is the embodiment of creation, is present in microcosm as well as macrocosm. On this basis, the Vedas declare, Anoraneeyan Mahato Maheeyan (God is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). Such divinity is present in man. How can man comprehend his innate divinity? It is possible only when he turns his vision inward. But today man's vision is always directed to the external world. All that is seen outside is also a manifestation of divinity, but man fails to realise this. Pashyannapi Cha Napashyati Moodho (he is a fool who sees yet does not recognise the reality). All that man sees and experiences in the world is divine. But man is not able to understand his divine nature.

God has no distinctions or differences. No one can stipulate dos and don'ts for Him. He can do anything, as He is in everything and is everything. He has no master above Him. If man wants to visualise God, he will see Him only in the form of a human being far superior to him in all respects. It is said, Janthunam Narajanma Durlabham (Out of all the living beings, human birth is the rarest). It is also said, Daivam Manusha Rupena (God is in the form of man). So, man should know the nature of a human being to begin with. All the sacred texts have described God as having human form. It does not mean that God is confined to a human form. All forms are His. However, man cannot but

visualise God in any form other than a human being. If a buffalo wants to worship God, it can think of Him only as another buffalo having a gigantic form. Similarly, a frog thinks of God as another gigantic frog. God has no differences; He can assume any form and do anything. He has no trace of selfishness in Him. Whatever He does is for your own welfare. No one can say that God has a particular form. He is present all over. All forms are His. Each form is composed of five elements. So, develop faith that God is in the form of five elements. You love your mother because you have faith that she is your mother. The husband loves his wife because he has faith in her.

Where there is faith, 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.

One can attain divinity only when one has steady faith. First of all, one should have faith in one's own self. Develop self-confidence, which will lead to self-satisfaction. When you have self-satisfaction, you will be prepared for self-sacrifice. Only through self-sacrifice, can one attain self-realisation. Self-realisation means to realise that you are everything. Self-confidence is the foundation, self-satisfaction is the wall, self-sacrifice is the roof and self-realisation is life. No one can live in a building without roof. Roof cannot be laid without walls and walls cannot be raised without foundation. So, self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice are very essential for self-realisation. Today man has lost self-confidence. If one loses self-confidence, one loses everything. Only through self-confidence can one have the vision of the latent divine effulgence.

Verily Man Is God

Embodiments of Love!

All are essentially divine. Wherever we see the five elements, there is divinity. As man is made up of five elements, he is verily God. God has no specific form. People attribute various forms to God. Here we have idol of Dakshinamurthi. This form is but your own imagination. It is not the reality.

How can you visualise God who is the very form of the universe? The Viswa (universe) is made up of five elements. The human body also consists of five elements. Hence, it is called Viswa. The Veda says.

Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad

(with thousands of heads, thousands of feet and thousands of eyes, Divinity pervades everything). It only means that all heads, hands eyes and feet are His. Unable to understand this truth, man considers himself to be an ordinary human being and develops attachment to the body. You are human only in form but divine in spirit. So, have the firm conviction that you are God. Develop total faith in the teachings of the Mahavakyas. When you say, this is my handkerchief, you are different from the handkerchief. Likewise when you say, this is my body, my mind, my buddhi my chittha, etc., you are different from all these. Then who are you? Put this question to yourself. These are mere instruments and you are the master. Once you realise this truth, you will transcend all these.

This plate, tumbler and spoon are made up of silver. Their names and forms are different, but silver is common to all of them. Names and forms can be changed but silver remains unchanged. Likewise, a child becomes a boy, then a man and later on a grandfather. The form keeps changing but the spirit remains unchanged. Do not repose your faith in the body, which constantly changes. Body is like a water bubble; mind is like a mad monkey. Do not follow the body, do not follow the mind. Follow the conscience. Conscience is the Atma (Self). Have total faith in the Atma. You are bound to face problems if you rely on the body, the mind and the senses. However, so long as you live in this world, you have to discharge your duties using your body and the mind as instruments. Also you have to make use of the five elements for your worldly existence and ultimately you become one with them.

You are the embodiment of Prajnana. It is not worldly or secular knowledge. This true knowledge is within you. It is not something that you acquire after you are born. It is with you right from your birth. This knowledge is with you always and it shows you the right path. But you have forgotten this truth and

consequently, you suffer from delusion. In this world everything is an illusion, nothing is permanent. All are passing clouds. Atma alone is true and eternal. You have to carry on with your life's sojourn and discharge your duties keeping in view the eternal Atmic principle.

Limbs Are Instruments, Basis Is The Atma

Today you conducted the Paduka worship. What is the significance of the Padukas? Head is the most important part of the body. That is why it is crowned. Such a precious head cannot go anywhere without the help of the feet. The feet bear the weight of the head.

Chandrama Manaso jataha Chaksho Suryo Ajayata (Moon is the presiding deity of the mind and Sun is the deity presiding over the eyes). Eyes are very important in the body. Without the Netra (Eyes), you cannot go through the Sastra (sacred text). Without Drishti (vision) one cannot see the Srishti (creation). But all these limbs are mere instruments. The fundamental basis for all this is the Atmic principle. Man ignores this fundamental basis and attaches importance to the instruments. As a result, he is subjected to misery. It is the Bhrama (delusion) that is responsible for one's misery. So long as one is engulfed in Bhrama, one cannot attain Brahma. The term Brahma means vastness. Similar is the meaning of the term Vishnu. So, God symbolises vastness and broad-mindedness. But He appears narrow-minded to the narrow minded. Yad Bhavam Tad Bhavathi (As you think, so you become). God is filled with broad feelings. It is not possible for anybody to comprehend God's Will. Unable to understand the Divine Will, people forget the yathartha (reality) and lead themselves into anartha (difficulties). They are carried away by padartha (worldly objects) and ignore Parartha (Divinity). Take Parartha as the fundamental principle. Do not repose your faith in the physical world. However, you have to play your role well in this drama of life. You have to discharge your worldly responsibilities. To that extent, you can keep the world in your mind. If you have firm faith in God, you will perceive divinity everywhere, no other thought will enter your mind. Once you understand the principle of the five elements, you will understand divinity.

Embodiments of Love!

The five elements are the very life principles of man. There can be no life even if one of the five elements is absent. The air is present in you, around you and below you, but you neither can see it nor can catch hold of it. You cannot deny its existence for you cannot survive without air. It is present in you in the form of breath. So long as there is breath in you, you are Sivam (auspiciousness); otherwise you become a Savam (corpse). So, the breath is the very form of Easwara. Thus, we see that God resides in man in the form of breath and sustains his life.

God Has No Specific Form

First of all, give up the notion that God has a specific form. All forms that are attributed to Him are man's own creations and imagination. God is depicted to be having four hands holding Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma (conch, discus, mace and lotus). If God were really to be born with four hands, people would certainly put Him in exhibition. What is the inner meaning of God having these four insignia? Shankha represents sound, Chakra denotes the wheel of time. Gada symbolises power and lotus stands for heart. It is only to make you understand that God is the master of sound, time, power and heart that He is depicted to be having these insignia in His hands.

Of all forms of God, human form is very significant. Daivam Manusha Rupena (God is in the form of human). You should have full faith in this. Make proper use of your senses. Only then can you become a true human being. Who is a human being? The proper study of mankind is man. It means the thoughts, words and deeds would be in harmony with one another. The unity of thought word and deed is true humanness.

Tridalam Trigunakaram Trinetrancha Triyayudham; Trijanma Papa Samharam Eka Bilvam Sivarpanam.

(Offer the trifoliate Bilva leaf to Lord Siva, the three-eyed Lord having trident in His hand, which destroys the sins of three births). Offer your thought, word

and deed to God.

Though God is present in you, with you, around you all the time, you waste a lot of time looking for Him outside. Do not waste time, for time is God. That is why God is extolled as Kala Swarupaya Namah, Kalateetaya Namah... (God is the embodiment of time, He transcends time...) When you are in the company of God all the time, why should you give room for worry? To understand that God is not separate from you, undertake sacred deeds. Help others.

Hastasya Bhushanam Danam, Sathyam Kantasya Bhushanam, Srotrasya Bhushanam Sastram

(Charity is the true ornament for the hand, Truth is the true ornament for the neck and listening to sacred Sastras is the true ornament for the ears).

These are the Bhushanas (ornaments) which God wants you to decorate yourself with. But man

craves for worldly Bhushanas and thereby subjects himself to Dooshanas (criticism).

Embodiments of Love!

Love is the common principle in all of you. It is sacred and changeless. But you are directing such sacred love on the physical world and subjecting yourself to blame and censure. Undertake sacred activities and earn a good name for yourself. God sustains your body. So, utilise it for noble causes.

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.

Engage Your Body In Sacred Activities

Sanctify all the limbs of the body in selfless activities. But it is not that easy to

practise. There is always some self-interest in whatever man does. Selfinterest is also necessary, but it should be within certain limits.

God is the ocean of bliss. As is the size of your container, so is the amount of water that you can collect from an ocean. If you want to collect more bliss from the ocean of bliss, i.e., God, you have to increase the size of the container, which means you have to cultivate expansion love. Expansion love is life; contraction love is death. Develop love in you and share it with others. That is true sacrifice. Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyagenaikena Amrutatthwamanasu (Immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth but it is attained only by sacrifice). Everything belongs to God. There is nothing that you can lay claim as yours.

O God, I offer the heart, which you have given me. What else can I offer at your Lotus Feet? Please accept my salutations.
(Telugu Poem)

This is the true offering that one should make to God. But the modern man, though highly educated and intelligent, is immersed in ignorance.

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)

Today man acquires education only to eke out a livelihood. The more he

studies, the more he starts doubting God. Such a person cannot be called a human being at all. A human being should have a pure heart without a trace of doubt. Only then can he understand divinity.

You know why God has given you the eyes? Is it to see everything that comes your way? No, no. The eyes are given to see God. But there are some people who close their eyes and start meditating even while sitting in front of God. Such meditation is false piety. People who close their eyes in front of God might have been blind in their previous births or will certainly become blind in the coming births. It is an unhealthy and unholy practice to close your eyes in front of God. Open your eyes and see Him. Open not only the physical eyes, but also the eye of wisdom.

Why God has given you the tongue? Is it to partake of delicious food? No, not merely for that. The tongue is given to chant the Divine Name and to talk sweetly and softly. Do not talk as you please which may hurt the feelings of others. Some people may not pay heed to you if you talk softly and sweetly. It is their fate. They may listen or not, but you should always talk in a pleasing manner. If that is not possible, observe silence. When you are silent, there can be no conflict. Only those who do not recognise the Divinity, act in a foolish manner. In fact, man himself is Divine. Only then can he become a perfect human being.

Whatever you do, do it in a perfect manner.

There was a person by name Antony, who used to make violins for his livelihood. Being a perfectionist, he used to take one full year to make one violin. Once his friends chided him saying, "Antony, if you take one full year to make one violin, how will you be able to support your family? We feel you are wasting your time." Antony replied, "Brothers, what I am doing is God's work, who is the embodiment of perfection. So, I take care that the violin I make is also a perfect one." That is why Antony's violin became very famous. Whatever you do, do it to satisfy God. Then only you will find fulfillment in your work. All your actions should be beneficial to one and all. Only then will you be dear to Me and I will become your friend. Even if you offer a morsel of

food, do it in a proper manner. Yesterday our boys took great pains and went to far off villages to do grama seva. They distributed food packets till 10 o'clock in the night. No doubt it is a good work, but they did not use their power of discrimination. The food was prepared in the early hours of the day. How can it remain in good condition till 10 O'clock in the night? Would it not get spoiled by then? Is it proper to serve such food to people? If the food has gone stale, you should get back and take fresh food next day. When this was told to the boys, they realised their mistake. In fact, they got involved in food distribution so much that they did not realise this aspect. The boys should have taken some rest after their lunch. It is said "sleep awhile after lunch". But this was not the case as they set out for seva again, going to different villages immediately after their lunch. Consequently, some of the boys had stomach ache and developed fever. One should exercise one's power of discrimination in whatever one does. God always does things perfectly. Whenever I materialise a ring for a devotee, it exactly fits his finger. Even a goldsmith who takes measurement and makes the ring may commit mistake. But God, the life-smith, always does things in a perfect manner. Whatever service you undertake should be done perfectly. The one who serves and the one who is served, both should be satisfied. That is real service. The bliss that results out of such service cannot be found anywhere else.

Do Not Be Devalued By Selfishness

Students Boys and Girls!

You are the future citizens and future parents of this country. Develop sacred qualities and undertake sacred activities. Only then will your lives become sacred. The Upanishads say, human life is most precious. The value of man cannot be estimated or compared. Who attaches value to gold and diamonds? It is because of man that gold and diamonds have acquired value. Men are more valuable than all the wealth of the world. So, do not lose your value by indulging in selfish deeds. Fish is better than selfish. Fish cleans the water of its dirt, but the selfish man pollutes the society as he lives in it. Undertake selfless actions. Only then are you fit to be called a human being.

Man has the sacred name manishi. When reversed, it reads as shinima (cinema). Today man has become a cinema manishi meaning leading an artificial life. You should be a true human being. Man has another name manava. Ma means ajnana (ignorance); na, without; and va, to conduct oneself. So, manava means one who conducts oneself without ignorance. There lies the fulfillment of your education.

Students!

Let your conduct and behaviour be role models for the rest of the world. Today the world is plunged into utter chaos and confusion. You find misery, sadness, sin and anger everywhere. In such a situation, it is your bounden duty to give peace to the distraught. Where is peace? It is within you. You are the embodiment of peace. In the outside world, there is no peace, only pieces. Man's selfishness is responsible for this.

In olden days, education and health care were provided free of cost. But today the fields of education and health care have become business-oriented. Even to admit a child in Kindergarten, one is expected to pay a donation of twenty to twenty-five thousand rupees. One spends 10 crores on a hospital expecting a profit of 100 crores. How can the poor afford such costly treatment? Today even in the field of spirituality, we find people indulging in business. Spirituality is meant to promote love, not business. Everything will be spoiled if business finds its way into the field of spirituality. Even God's name will be tarnished. Nobody spends anything for My sake nor do I accept anything from others. The Madurai devotees have spent some money in conducting this function, which includes travel expenses, food expenses, etc. They may collect as much money as is required for the function, but they should not prescribe membership fees. Love is the membership fee in the field of spirituality. So, share love with others. Do not indulge in business. I want our organisations not to collect any fees from anybody. All of you are aware that I don't take even a naya paisa from our students. In our hospitals also, patients are given costly medicines free and surgeries are performed totally free of cost. If your intention is good, money comes to you of its own accord. But if you have any selfish motive, you will certainly be put to loss. Do

not crave for money. Money comes and goes; but morality comes and grows. So, cultivate morality. In spiritual organisations, no fees whatsoever should be collected from people. Who can estimate the value of the Atma? It is infinite and beyond estimate. Only when you understand this principle and act accordingly, will the entire world take to the path of spirituality. Only then peace will prevail in the world. Today we find restlessness and agitation all over the world. Every newspaper stands ample testimony to this. Make efforts to transform this country of Bharat into one of peace. If you are peaceful, the whole world will be peaceful. Lead your lives peacefully and give peace to others. Follow the ideal of Antony and let all your actions be perfect. Some people make their own lives miserable by their wicked qualities and evil deeds. Moreover, they argue that they are always right. It is utter foolishness. Such an attitude is never going to help them. Do good and make everybody happy. That is true human life.

Embodiments of Love!

Let all your activities, be it studying or doing a job, be suffused with love. Lead your lives with love and uphold the prestige and honour of your country.

19. Good Mothers Are Nation's Pride

Date: 19 November 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ladies Day

Was not Savitri who got her husband back to life, a woman of India?
Was not Chandramati who by her steadfast adherence to truth put out
raging fires, a chaste woman of India?
Was not Sita who demonstrated her purity by entering fire, a daughter of
this land?
Was not Damayanti who reduced the wicked hunter to ashes, an exemplary
woman of this land?
This land of Bharat surrounded by the seven seas enshrines in its heart the
holy principle of chastity and this sacred land is the teacher of all nations!
(Telugu Poem)

FROM time immemorial, women of India, by their adherence to ideals have bestowed joy on this land and so occupy an exalted position, which is higher than that of men. Women embody the aspect of Mother Nature and the ancient sages found solutions to problems in life by recognising this truth. What is the cause for misery, conflict and suffering in the world today? It is the absence of purity in the hearts of men and women. The behaviour of men and women is responsible for the rise or fall of a nation. The country would not lack in anything, if there were men and women with pure hearts. But today hearts are completely polluted. Here is a piece of pure white paper. But what is written on one side makes it appear dirty. So too is the case with a man's heart; dirty feelings pollute it. Newspaper of today becomes a waste paper tomorrow. The paper by itself does not have any smell. The same paper when used to pack jasmine flowers smells of them; it will smell of 'Pakodas' or even of dry fish if it is used to pack them. When the heart is purified, it shines with compassion. Bad feelings and bad thoughts pollute the heart of man.

Women Deserve Greater Honour And Better Treatment

Ever since ancient times, women have maintained their hearts pure. Savitri was one such great woman of India. She brought her husband back to life by winning over the Lord of Death. There are many such cases of women who have revived their husbands from death; but history does not speak of a single man reviving his wife from death! Women of such exalted character have set great ideals of womanhood in Bharat. Today's society is polluted because there is no encouragement for women to cultivate such high ideals. In modern times the ways of life are so perverted that only evil thoughts, evil feelings and evil behaviour rule the roost. In this situation Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations are encouraging women through opportunities in the wings like Mahila Vibhag, to develop good ideals of character and propagate them to the world at large. Only if the women come up in society, the whole world will turn sacred. The Organisations of women have achieved many great things, but men do not recognise their good work. Women are capable of ruling the nations and even the whole world if they make up their minds. Men should not consider women as mere slaves. Today our country is on the downslide because we take our women very lightly.

There is nothing in this world that women cannot achieve. Recognising the nature of such women we must encourage them and give them equal opportunities in society. No such encouragement is being given today. Men do not tolerate women joining together for a good cause in an Organisation. Because of their own selfish interest, men are unable to recognise the good that women can do to the society. Generally the women are selfless. Their hearts are full of compassion and love. They take a lot of pains to bring up children on the right path, a task that is almost impossible for men. Mother plays a very important role in shaping the character of the child. The contemporary education is largely responsible for the gradual deterioration of children's behaviour. In olden days mothers initiated their children into studies by chanting sacred words like OM NAMAH SIVAYA or OM NAMO NARAYANAYA. Thus at a very early age, these sacred words got imprinted in the hearts of children. But today's parents initiate their children into

education, not by chanting holy or sacred names of God, but by rhymes like 'Ba Ba Black Sheep' Nowadays children are being taught all types of wrong terminology. In earlier days, children used to welcome guests in their homes with humility and reverence, whereas these qualities are missing nowadays. Today's children aspire for wealth, power and friendship but not for character. What is the use of wealth, power and friendship bereft of character? Money comes and goes but one must teach them morality and righteousness. Earlier, children were taught such sacred values. Today parents want their children to pursue higher studies and become great, whereas earlier, parents preferred their children to be good rather than becoming great. Since those parents wanted their children to be good, Bharat stood as an ideal to all nations of the world.

Emulate Ideal Parents Of Yore

Nowadays students are not being taught good qualities. Instead, when they come home, mother immediately puts on the television and the father too joins the son to watch the television. Earlier, the moment children returned home, parents took them to the Puja room and revised whatever was taught to them by teachers in the class. Nowadays parents want their children to pursue higher studies so that they may get rich fathers-in-law. In those days parents never wanted a rich father-in-law but wanted a virtuous wife for their son. This is the reason why those days were prosperous and peaceful. What is the reason for chaos in the world today? As there are no ideal parents today at home, there are no ideal children also. The first school is the home itself. If the home is good, when such children enter society, they will learn good qualities there also. Today's students must recognise that whatever knowledge, wisdom or good qualities they have learnt, were taught by the society. So they have to ask themselves as to what they are doing for the society after receiving so many benefits from it. Students receive lot of benefits from the society but they don't contribute anything good in return. Thus, men are becoming ungrateful. We must be grateful to those who help us. What is the use of all education if we cannot show gratitude and respect to our benefactors? All the education thus becomes useless. First and foremost we must learn to respect the society because we are born, brought

up and remain a part of the society till we die. Those days mothers used to teach their children that they could lead an ideal life only when they respected society.

Take for example the episode of Abhimanyu. He prostrated before his mother and sought her permission to go to the battlefield. Initially his mother hesitated to permit him and said, "The great warrior Drona has devised a difficult strategy in today's battle - Padmavyuha (Lotus Formation). Bhishma has joined hands with Drona. Your father and uncle are not here. Your wife is pregnant. We do not know what can happen on the battlefield. Therefore I advise that you may not go to war now!" He replied, "Mother, this is not what you should teach me; you should encourage me to pounce into the battlefield like a lion and destroy the Kauravas. Instead, you are discouraging me. Is it right on your part to do so? I pray that you grant your blessings to me to be victorious in the war." Subhadra immediately realised her duty in that situation and blessed him, "My dear son, may you have a long life, may you earn a good name for the family, may you earn the blessings of your uncle and father; may the Lord be by your side and protect you on the battlefield!" It was obligatory for the son to earn good reputation for the family. But in these modern times parents do not impart such good teachings to their children. Parents distribute sweets as soon as the child is born and celebrate the child's birthday. But in ancient times parents would celebrate the son's birthday only on the day he brought good name to the family.

"Father does not feel the joy of begetting a son merely because the child is born. Only when people praise his son for his good deeds and achievements does the father feel joyful!" Thus, we find a gulf of difference between the cultures of those days and of today. Since time immemorial, it is the mothers who brought up the children. The lap of the mother is the child's first school. That is why even the Vedas say, "May mother be your god, may father be your god, may teacher be your god." Thus, first honour is always given to the mother. Let us take for example the names of deities, Sita Rama, Radha Krishna and Parvati Paramesha; the feminine aspect of God comes first.

It is the mother who shapes the child's life. Even when she punishes the child

for any of its mistakes, she does it with love, to lead it on to the right path. Today we need such mothers.

"In this sacred land of Bharat patience is our treasure. Among all the vows, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. Sweetest of all feelings in our land is the love of the mother." Easwaramma - The Ideal Mother There is nothing more sacred than motherhood. We need children who fulfill the aspirations of their mothers. We also need women who embody motherhood. In order to foster such lofty ideals we have chosen the 19th of November to celebrate as 'Ladies Day'.

The mother of this body was Easwaramma. She was not a scholar. She did not know even alphabets. Yet, she always spoke good things in life. Her heart was filled with compassion. One day she approached Swami and said, "Swami there are so many rich people in this region. Yet, the children of our village have to walk all the way to Bukkapatnam to attend school. My heart grieves to see these little children walk miles. Swami, could you please build a small school in our village?" I replied, "I don't have money!" She immediately removed the gold chain from her neck, gave it to me and said, "Swami, please sell it and build a school." I told her, "Don't be hasty, it is only to test you I said so, I will definitely construct a school." On the following day, the foundation was laid, and within a short period the school building was ready. Then I asked her if she was happy. She did not appear completely satisfied. I asked her, "What else bothers you?" She replied, "Swami, when children fall ill, their mothers carry them all the way to Bukkapatnam for medical treatment and things may go wrong on the way. So please build a small hospital in the village." Thus, she always thought of the welfare and happiness of others. She used to say; "It is not enough if these facilities are available only in our village. They must be available to all the villagers around, and everyone should be happy." Once I took Easwaramma to Brindavan. It was during the Summer Course. Students from colleges all over the country were attending the course. There were many foreigners also. She was very happy at the noble things taught to them in the classes and also Swami's discourses in the evenings. One day I asked her, "Are you happy now?" She replied "Swami what more do I need. People of so many countries

are getting benefited. This is enough for my happiness." She had a broad mind. Today we see only narrow-mindedness everywhere. People desire that only their family and children should be happy. But Easwaramma was not like that. She wanted everyone to be happy. Even though she was not educated she taught such noble qualities to everyone. Our country Bharat attained great fame because of such mothers. There were men and women of character who brought good reputation to the nation. One day, after her breakfast, she was sitting in the hall; Swami was upstairs; suddenly she called out, 'Swami' (three times). I told her, "I am coming, don't go!" Gokak, who was there, was surprised why I was saying that. I rushed down. She held My hands and said, "I am completely satisfied with this Summer Course. It is not only students who are getting benefited. Even I have developed a broad mind. Swami I am going!" She offered her pranams to Me and passed away peacefully. Everyone aspires for a peaceful death. People who have evil feeling will not die such a death. Easwaramma did not have even a trace of evil feeling in her. That is why she was always joyful. Even at the age of 96 she used to walk 3 miles from Brindavan to the house of Gojimeni family. When I asked her, "Why do you want to walk so far? Why don't you go in car?" she would reply, "Swami, I desire to see them. I do not feel comfortable in car. I do not need a car, I prefer to walk!" She always aspired to see others happy. Because of such mothers there was great progress and prosperity in society.

When this body was twelve years old, I was in Subbamma's house. I asked her to stitch a long gown for Me. She did not like it. She said, "Why do you want to wear a gown? You can wear dhoti." I replied, "No, time has come to do it". She obeyed Swami's command and stitched a gown for Me. It cost two annas at that time. When I put on the gown, she asked Easwaramma to come to her house to see Me. She came, saw Me, and started shedding tears saying, "Swami, did you call me here for seeing this form of Yours?" I told her, "Don't grieve, I am setting an ideal for the whole world. When one wears the ochre robes, one's evil desires will vanish." They were satisfied to hear this.

Faith Versus Adversity

Today Jayamma is translating the Discourse. She used to look after

Easwaramma during those days. Easwaramma stayed in Jayamma's house at the time. Jayamma would serve her day and night and listen from her about Swami. I do not know what Easwaramma told her. Jayamma did not like to enter family life. But parents prevailed upon her to get married. The marriage was arranged. I was in Puttaparthi. Jayamma sent a telegram to Swami, which read, "I am going to hell today!" I tried to persuade her parents against the marriage, but they did not pay heed to My words. Her husband was a man of good character. Even Jayamma's mother was a very good woman. To be as virtuous as Easwaramma, was her earnest prayer to Swami. Jayamma's marriage was performed, but Swami did not go for the wedding. Her husband's name was Gopinath. He was noble and well educated. He had just then returned from America after his education. He got his posting in a big company in Rajahmundry. When Swami visited Rajahmundry, he served Swami by arranging conveyance wherever Swami wished to go. Gopinath's constant prayer was that he and Jayamma should find a place at Swami's Lotus Feet. Swami kept advising him not to be hasty and that there was a long life ahead. When Swami returned from Rajahmundry there came a telegram that Gopinath had expired. Jayamma immediately locked her house and rushed to Brindavan. She had smeared vibhuti on her forehead and sat under a tree. Swami asked her, why she had applied Vibhuti on her forehead and not kumkum. She replied that it was ordained by Swami. She informed Swami that her husband was no more and said that she would not go anywhere away from Swami's Lotus Feet. Swami then sent Karunyananda and Rama Brahman to Rajahmundry to get all her belongings. Swami instructed Jayamma to teach in the college at Anantapur. Jayamma had got a gold medal for her proficiency in English. She also learnt Sanskrit at Maharani College, but still was not satisfied. She revealed to Swami her desire to secure a doctorate. With Swami's blessings she got the doctorate under Gokak's guidance. Jayamma has strong determination and she continued to work in the institute since then. She used to come to Puttaparthi from Anantapur every Sunday till Swami instructed her to concentrate on her duty without wasting time. Jayamma promptly obeyed Swami's command. She had come to Swami as a child of four years when Swami resided in the old Mandir. Wherever Swami went she would follow with a towel in her hand. She grew up this way with noble feelings.

God is the embodiment of love. He is completely selfless. Those who follow Him should be selfless too. When your hearts are filled with divine love, you would be able to pursue oneness in the whole creation. When this unity pervades our hearts, there would be no scope for hatred towards others. The eternal love will get established in our hearts with the experience of unity of all existence. Therefore, those who follow the Divine and inculcate the Divine love are truly fortunate.

Give Up Selfishness, Become Selfless

There is not even a trace of selfishness in Swami. Swami is completely selfless. When you inculcate this selfless love, you too become selfless and your love exhorts others on the ideal path. There is a trace of selfishness and self-interest even in the love of mother, father and friends, but divine love is untainted by selfishness. Why don't you crave for such selfless love? Today, people go after the physical and worldly pleasures and fortunes. All that is worldly constitutes the negative. Only God's love is positive. Only when you attain this love, you can be truly powerful and perform ideal deeds. Let people think whatever they wish, you need not worry about it. Inculcate divine love.

Fear of sin and love for God have vanished from the heart leading to decline of humanness in man. This is the cause for restlessness in the world. (Telugu Poem) You should not be misled by others' words and lose sight of the sanctity of divine love. The people are like crows and speak whatever they like. But you should exercise your discrimination. You should be pure at heart and be fearless. People who are jealous may concoct several stories. But it cannot harm us. Instead it will help us. We should be ready to face any difficulty because true happiness springs out of hardships. Censure turns into praise if we are determined. In fact, criticism adds to the sacred fame of the Divine. You should not be bogged down by criticism.

For those who say yes, it is yes

For those who say no, it is no
No and yes are only for you,
But for SAI, it is always YES, YES, YES!
(Telugu Poem)

I never say No. I am always in Bliss. I know nothing other than Bliss. We should welcome even death happily. Everything happens for our own good. Once you are born, can you escape death? Birth and death are inseparable twin birds. Till this day, I have had no desires except for one. That is, "All should be united!" You must recognise the oneness of the principle of Atma residing in one and all. Always contemplate upon the principle of love. You must have reverence for all. Love your parents.

You may make mistakes knowingly or unknowingly. But brooding over those mistakes is not advisable. Past is past. Forget the past. Future is not sure. Present is very important. It is not ordinary present. It is Omnipresent.

So be happy in the present. Swami expects all parents to achieve fulfillment in their lives by moulding their children into virtuous persons. They should always aspire for the goodness and well being of their children. It is a good boy who becomes a god boy.

How did the term good boy get modified? During the British regime, they used to say good boy. Later it became good-bye. Thereafter, the word 'good' vanished and 'bye' has remained. In this way, with the passage of time, various words have become perverted. But what we should accomplish is, being a good boy. Give up selfishness and become selfless. Self is lovelessness and love is selflessness.

Obey the commands of your parents and become ideal parents in future. Teach the same to your children, too. In order to teach these ideals, I have proclaimed November 19 as Ladies Day, which is very auspicious. The

importance of this day lies in propagating and realising the sanctity of motherhood, which is founded on the principle of selfless love. Children should be fostered on the principles of piety and virtue. This day will be celebrated by posterity for aeons.

20. Educare Is True Education

Date: 20 November 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: First Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Schools

No harm can ever befall a person whose heart is full of compassion, whose words are adorned by Truth, and whose body is dedicated to the welfare of others

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

FIRST and foremost, we must investigate into 'panchatantra' or the five principal aspects of education.

These are: 1. What is education?

2. What type of education should we pursue?

3. What is the main aim of education?

4. What is the uniqueness of education?

5. What are we gaining from present-day education?

Only when we recognise the inner significance of these 'panchatantras', can we know what is true education.

What is education? It is of two types: The first type is collection of facts and knowledge about the external world and sharing them with students. The

second type is educare. Educare involves the deep understanding of the knowledge that springs from within and imparting it to students. But today's education gives the students knowledge only about the external world. Only culture or refinement can develop good personality and not this type of education. So, both education and culture are important. Today's education is devoid of culture and is like a counterfeit coin. Even a beggar does not accept a counterfeit coin. Then how can experienced and intelligent people accept such education? So, to satisfy everyone we must develop educare. Education without refinement is like a dark room. Only bats can live in dark rooms; such rooms are filthy. So, by pursuing such education devoid of culture, our hearts have become dark rooms and hence many animal qualities find their way into it. Education without culture is like a kite with a broken string. No one knows where it will fall and what damage it will cause to others. Therefore, such education does not benefit anyone.

Proceed From Superficial To Practical Knowledge

Only if education is blended with culture, it will shine forth as true education. What is culture? It is the cultivation of discrimination between good and evil, sin and merit, and truth and untruth that we experience in our daily life. It is also removal of one's evil thoughts, feelings and qualities, and cultivation of good thoughts, feelings and good qualities. Not only this, culture makes one broad-minded by getting rid of one's narrow-mindedness. This morning, a song "I and you are one!" was sung. Even this is also a kind of narrow-mindedness. It will be better to say, "All are one!" A celestial voice told Jesus, "All are one, my dear son, be alike to everyone!" Educare develops such broad-mindedness. Today's education comprises only bookish knowledge. It is only superficial knowledge and it changes every moment. So we must add 'Educare' to this bookish knowledge. Educare is practical knowledge. There are a few steps between the superficial knowledge and practical knowledge. From superficial knowledge we must proceed to general knowledge. After analysing this general knowledge one gains discrimination knowledge and knows the difference between good and evil. From this discrimination knowledge we proceed to practical knowledge. This practical knowledge is changeless. True and eternal education never changes when the heart is filled

with compassion; it becomes sacred and aspires for the welfare of one and all. An educated person should not have bad qualities and must not indulge in bad deeds. Today's education imparts only bookish knowledge, which really degrades a person. How long will this bookish knowledge last? It lasts as long as we keep it in our mind. It is not possible to put bookish knowledge into practice. We fill our heads with bookish knowledge, go to the examination hall, fill our answer paper with it and return with empty heads! In effect, the head always remains empty.

To acquire discrimination knowledge one requires general knowledge, which consists of ordinary cleverness and intelligence. Discrimination knowledge also has in it common sense. Both are essential for life in this world.

Students and Teachers!

What we need today is not bookish knowledge though we require it to a certain extent to cope up with life in this world. But what is essential to us is the knowledge of the Atma. Spiritual education is the highest education, says the Bhagawadgita. It starts with discrimination knowledge, which is like a perennial river. In perennial rivers the quantity of water may vary but not the quality. Thus students should understand that quality of education is more important than its quantity. Degrees are not important, but the knowledge accomplished out of education is important. What is the meaning of education? 'Education is not mere knowledge, it includes action, too.' Education, which originates from within has a sound basis and is permanent. It is referred to as Sathyam. A step higher than Sathyam is Ritam as proclaimed in the Vedas. What we normally refer to as truth in daily life is merely a fact.

Education Is For Life Not For Living

People mistake bookish knowledge to be true education. No one today bothers about the aim of education. Education is for life and not for living. Today's education is aimed at merely eking out a livelihood. If mere living is the purpose, then how birds and beasts live without any education? Even ants

and mosquitoes, which do not have any education live their lives. Is education for merely earning one's bread? What is the essence of education? The essence of education is the concentration of the mind and not the collection of facts. Mere collection of facts will not serve any purpose. For example, a washerman in a village goes from house to house collecting clothes for washing. In each household the number of clothes, which are given for washing, are noted down in a notebook. But the washerman does not have an account. By evening he returns the clothes to the respective houses. This is general knowledge. For acquiring this general knowledge education is not necessary. Even a washerman possesses it. Many educated men lack the acumen of even a washerman. General knowledge cannot be acquired by mere study. It is learnt from the book of life.

What is the end of education? People answer this question by saying there is no end to education. Definitely there is an end to what we study from books. The end of education is character. Education without character is useless. Earlier in Gurukulas the sages took the students along with them wherever they went and taught them without conforming to any time schedule. This education was a continuous learning process. But today in the schools and colleges education is limited to strict time schedules. Therefore, education has become limited. But true education, which moulds character, has no limits. When we learn about that which is 'limitless' we attain the end of education. Our character is reflected in our words, behaviour and conduct in daily life. So we should speak pleasantly and not hurt others with our harsh words. It is true that we cannot always oblige but we can speak obligingly.

While cooking, ladies select appropriate vessels according to the quantity of rice to be cooked. It does not make sense if a large vessel is chosen to cook a small quantity of rice. Discrimination should be used to select the vessel and the intensity of the flame required for cooking. In the same way, discrimination should be used to enrich one's character.

Fact, Truth And Absolute Truth

When elderly guests visit the house, even if one cannot offer them anything

to eat, one should at least welcome them inside, speak affectionate words and make them happy. Instead, if one asks them rudely, "Why have you come?", it is not good. Even when the father is at home, one tells them that he is not there. This is not proper education. speak good words and tell the truth. There are three types of truth. They are fact, truth and absolute truth. To say as it is what you have seen is a fact. Suppose I see you wearing a white dress and say that "you are wearing a white dress". This becomes a fact. Later at home you might wear a blue shirt. Then what I had said earlier does not hold good anymore. Thus a fact is subject to change.

Truth, on the other hand, does not change with time. A person may change any number of dresses, but the person remains the same. Thus truth is the same at all times. I often say that you are not one but three. The one you think you are: the physical body. The one others think you are: the mind. Mind is invisible. One's happiness or misery is based on one's actions. Ritam (absolute truth) transcends both good and evil. This is the one you really are, the Atma. You are a combination of body, mind, and Atma. Body is subject to change. It is Atma, which is eternal. This is referred to as Ritam in the Vedas. It is changeless and has no attributes. It is described as attributeless, pure, eternal highest abode, permanent and unsullied. One may say that one has acquired three postgraduate degrees. But what are these degrees? These are mere certificates.

Who is the one who has earned all these degrees? It is 'I'. This 'I' is the absolute truth. Only when you are awake you travel physically, see many sights, eat many dishes and experience many things. But in the dream state you create yourself! You do your work and travel to far off places like Delhi, America, without even purchasing a plane ticket. In deep sleep state one does not go anywhere. It is a changeless and steady state, which remains a witness. The same 'I' experiences all these three states. In the deep sleep you enjoy bliss. In the dream state you create various scenes and experience them. But in the wakeful state you experience everything physically through the senses.

Adi Sankara has cautioned us about the truth of what we experience through

the senses. Vagaries of the mind are many. In order to control them, Sankara introduced a practice in his ashram. The disciples would walk from one end of the ashram to the other repeating, "Be careful! Be careful!" Once a feeling arose in Sankara's mind that he was the head of the ashram with a large income. At that moment he heard the sentinels cautioning, "Be careful! Be careful!" This alerted him and brought about a change in his feelings.

Birth is a misery, old age is a misery, family is a misery,
the last moments are full of sorrow, so Be careful! Be careful!
(Telugu Poem)

One might consider oneself to be great. As of now, one might be enjoying name and fame. But what will happen when one is faced with misery towards the end of one's life? Sankara wondered who would come to one's rescue at the fag end of one's life.

Neither mother, nor father, nor relatives nor brothers,
not even wealth or possessions will come to your rescue in the last
moments. Hence be careful!
(Telugu Poem)

In earlier days, this was taught in the Gurukulas to the students by the preceptors. This ancient educational system originated from absolute truth. This is what is EDUCARE. It is also reflected in the letters ABC as ALWAYS BE CAREFUL. Sankara preached the same principle. So, it is necessary to impart spiritual education along with secular education. General knowledge devoid of spiritual education is negative. General knowledge is like the bulb and spiritual knowledge is like the current flowing through it. Only when positive

and negative meet is darkness dispelled. So, we must develop positive along with negative.

It would be enough if we have only positive aspects. The divine power is latent in every being, which is positive. Man today accumulates negative aspects in excess. Birth, growth, sustenance, and death are all negative.

He is the Eternal One with no birth and death, He who is the Primordial One does not have a beginning or an end,
He is neither born, nor does He die, nor is He slain by anyone. He is the Atma, which is the Eternal Witness.

(Telugu Poem)

Spiritual Knowledge Is Foremost And Fundamental

Hence, the path of spirituality forms the basis for all forms of knowledge. The fundamental knowledge, which comprises spiritual knowledge, is greater than both practical knowledge and general knowledge. So, this should be imparted along with the secular education. How long can we lead a truthful and ideal life in the world without trying to discover the Absolute Truth (Ritam)?

We are making a mistake by identifying ourselves with the body. For example, a mother died leaving behind her fifteen-year-old son. The son was grief-stricken since there was none to look after him. The body of the mother was right in front of him; then why was he sad? It was because life had left the body of his mother. So, mother is not the body but the life principle. Life principle has no death. Body is like the dress; death is like change of dress. Everything in this world undergoes change. But there is one thing that is changeless. That is the Fundamental Truth. We should learn that fundamental education. Once you have mastered it, it follows you wherever you go. Gradually you should get rid of attachment to the body and develop Atmic

consciousness.

You are pursuing different types of education in different countries. But ultimately education should converge into educare. That can be achieved gradually. Therefore, mere acquaintance with books and what is written on the black-board cannot constitute education. True education throws open the doors of the mind. How can you enter a house with the doors closed? You desire many comforts and pleasures, and also aspire for virtues. For that you have to open the doors of your mind first. Only then absolute truth will manifest in us. This absolute truth is all pervasive.

In our organisation, we should not only wear a uniform dress, we should also develop uniform mind. The basic thing to be achieved is purity of mind.

Embodiments of Love!

There are many aspects in modern educational system that we must understand. But we are not learning what we ought to. Instead we are gathering irrelevant information. Mere learning of the contents of a book constitutes secular education. Education must be combined with educare. Only then will you experience the bliss. What is the difference between 'education' and 'educare'? Education is like insipid water, educare is like sugar. Merely adding sugar to water does not make it sweet. It is only on stirring, does the sugar mix with the water making it sweet. The heart is the tumbler, divinity is the sugar, and secular education is tasteless water. With intelligence as the spoon and enquiry as the process of stirring, we experience the all-pervasive divinity. That is true wisdom, which enables us to recognise the unity of all creation.

This is a cloth. It is not just cloth. It is a bundle of threads and more fundamentally it is cotton. The cotton, thread and cloth are one and the same. Without cotton, there is no thread and without thread there is no cloth. Recognition of the unity in multiplicity is the ultimate goal of education.

You should learn to face adversities boldly without blaming God. God would have planned to grant you some benefit through the hardship. You should accept both pain and pleasure as gifts of God, and develop the attitude, "whatever God does is for my own good!" You will have many discussions in the conference. Let the discussions be filled with love and not with criticism. You should not criticise any religion, because it is the same God whom you worship, be it in a church, a temple or a mosque. A true devotee of God will not criticise anyone. Share your love equally with everyone. Tomorrow I shall answer any doubts or questions that may arise in your discussions today.

21. Pari Prashna The Divine Answers

Date: 21 November 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: First Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Schools

(Bhagawan answered the questions raised by the delegates of the conference)

When things go wrong in ventures that one undertakes,
If one is undeterred and unshaken and welcomes everything with a smile
giving up all worry,
The heart of such a one is filled with wisdom
(Telugu Poem)

Q: What is the relation between religion, spirituality and educate?

Embodiments of Love!

IT is surprising to me to note that you have been unable to recognise the relation between religion, spirituality and educate. First and foremost understand what religion is 'Religion is realisation'. Only when you realise the truth about yourself, will you understand what religion is. Spirituality is not merely singing bhajans, performing worship, going to temples or on pilgrimages or undertaking any other good activity. Spirituality is recognising oneness of all beings. Here is an example. When we close our eyes we cannot see anybody. But the moment we open them we can see thousands of heads in this hall. Where have these heads come from? If you enquire into the truth, you will recognise that your eyes notice all heads. They have not come from anywhere outside.

To recognise unity in diversity is spirituality. The basic truth to be recognised is that there is only one Atma in all beings. The questions and doubts arise

when you see multiplicity in unity. The entire creation has emerged from love. Therefore, there is no difference between religion, spirituality and educare.

Religion is realisation of your Self. Spirituality also is discovering who you really are. For example you say, "This is my handkerchief, this is my plate this is my hand and this is my body". Then who are you? There must be someone to say that he owns the tumbler, plate, hand and the body. When you enquire into this truth you will realise that you are separate from all these and in fact, you are the master of all these. That master is the Atma.

The next aspect is educare. How can you call yourselves educated if you do not understand what educare is? The word 'education' is derived from the Latin root 'educare'. While education refers to collection of worldly facts, educare is to bring out from within. Education is for a living while educare is for life. Education is for 'Jeevana Upadihi' (livelihood). Educare is for 'Jeevitha Paramavadhi' (the ultimate goal of life). It is easy for us to recognise things outside us and difficult to look within. There are many things inside us, which are not manifest. When you join the three letters G, O, D, we get the word GOD. When you look at the letters individually they have no meaning of their own. Our effort lies in putting together these letters to get the meaning. This is educare. Educare means to bring out from within. The Atma is our innermost reality. That is what educare should bring out. Therefore, there is actually no difference between the three-religion, spirituality and educare.

Whatever we see in others is only a reflection of our own self. If we accuse somebody as bad, it is just that our feeling toward that person is bad. Whatever impression we have about others is a reflection of our feeling towards them. Everything is just reflection, reaction and resound. Therefore, you should not find fault with others. You do not have the right to find fault because your assessment of a person is limited to your experience with him. There are so many aspects of the personality of that person you do not know. For example, you look at Anil Kumar, you will know only his dress, his complexion, his height and weight. But Anil Kumar is not merely what you see. There are so many qualities like love, compassion or anger, which are in him that you cannot see. Therefore, if you want to know a person completely

you should investigate into all the aspects of his personality. In modern times, people go by the physical appearance and judge people based on their external actions. This is wrong. Hence, defect lies in the vision and not in the creation. When you put on red glasses everything appears red and when you put on blue glasses everything appears blue. Only those foolish people who fail to recognise this truth resort to criticism. Even in the case of an ordinary human being your assessment is wrong, then how can you assess God?

God has many invaluable things in His store. But you come and ask, "Swami, give me a locket." You ask Him for a locket because you do not know what precious gifts He can bestow upon you. There is no dearth of anything in His store. Therefore, you should not ask God for anything in specific. When time is ripe, He will give you. God knows and acts appropriately, based on the right time, place and situation. That is why you find sometimes that He Himself comes and gives you things unasked. It is therefore very difficult to understand God. An ignoramus, who fails to understand this principle, often misinterprets it. But you should not fall prey to such calumny.

Thus educare, spirituality and religion are not different from one another. Here is a ring, a chain and the earrings all these are different forms of the same gold. If one realises this unifying truth then where is the scope for multiplicity? Therefore, God is One though He may appear to you in different forms. The fundamental basis for everything is love. This is what you should aspire for. Do not worry about religion. There is only one religion, the religion of love. Educare means to bring out the divine love latent in man. that is why it is said, Love is God, live in Love. Then there would be no conflict in the world and all would live together happily. Only when there are differences, there is conflict. Push aside these differences and live with the feeling of oneness.

There is only one language, the language of the heart; there is only one religion, the religion of love; there is only one caste, the caste of humanity.

Religions are many but the path is only one and we need to discover this path. "O heroic sons of Bharat! No religion is bad for the one who has a good

sense of understanding". It is incorrect to see differences among religions. In our daily life, we need to realise the limitations of education. What you read for the first time may look new to you but when you read it again and again it is no more new. Here is an example. Once God wanted to grant liberation to a person and sent Yama, the God of death, to him. When Yama approached this devotee, he questioned whether the devotee knew him. But the devotee answered that he (Yama) was a stranger to him. Then Lord Yama told him that he would return to him only when he could recognise Yama. When Yama returned after three days the same question was posed to him. Now the devotee answered that Yama was no longer a stranger to him because he had already seen him. Everything appears strange and new before acquaintance. But once we acquaint ourselves we tend to shed differences.

Basically, you have to get rid of the sense of differences and develop the sense of oneness. Then you will know that religion, educare and spirituality are one and the same.

Q: What relationship should Sri Sathya Sai Schools have with Government?

Sri Sathya Sai education and Government education are two separate entities. Nevertheless, Sathya Sai Schools should have good relationship with the government. Sai belongs to everybody but government does not belong to everybody. Sri Sathya Sai Schools should obey all rules of the government, but with Sai, the only rule is Love. In Sri Sathya Sai Schools we follow all rules of discipline with love. The Government enforces its rules, therefore it is 'force', but Sai's method is from the 'source'. One can pursue Sri Sathya Sai education along with government education. Sri Sathya Sai education imparts human values. Follow these values, and at the same time pursue government education. But do not split them into artificial divisions. Everyday we have 24 hours at our disposal. At the most we spend 6 hours - 3 hours in the morning and 3 hours in the afternoon in schools. We still have 18 hours at our disposal. Allocate 6 hours for your sleep, 6 hours for personal activities and the remaining 6 hours can be utilised for spiritual pursuits and developing human values. Sri Sathya Sai education imparts practical knowledge while the

government education teaches only bookish knowledge. But do not ignore bookish knowledge also, because the former grants us spiritual happiness and the latter, worldly happiness. Government education gives us the means of livelihood whereas Sri Sathya Sai education leads us to the ultimate goal of life. The two constitute the two sides of the same coin.

Q: As teachers how can we understand the minds of students?

The teacher must first have a thorough understanding of his own mind before trying to understand the minds of the students. If the teacher's mind is good, the students will reflect it in their behaviour. Since the teacher cannot see the student's mind, he has to understand it only by observing the student's behaviour with his parents, his friends and his fellow students. Basing on this, he will be able to lead the student on to the right path.

Sometimes, parents give too much freedom to the children and children in turn misuse this freedom to interact with their friends with laxity in behaviour. At school his freedom is curtailed. He must be taught to strike a balance between freedom and discipline. The teacher cannot interfere in the student's family affairs, for, parents give freedom to their children out of their love. Nevertheless, the teachers must keep in touch with the student's activities at home. But the sad plight of the modern age is that the parents are ninety-nine percent responsible for their children getting into bad ways, by providing them with excess of money and freedom. The parents are misguided by imagining that their children would be hurt if their freedom is curtailed. But they feel dejected if the child gets perverted and runs into bad ways. The child must be groomed well right from the beginning itself. Just as speed breakers control the speed of vehicles on the road to ensure safety, so too restrictions must be enforced upon children's freedom for their safety. The child should be given freedom in areas related to right conduct and must be punished when it errs. When the parents give freedom to their children, they should watch carefully as to how the children behave. It is then that the child will tread the right path. The first responsibility rests with the mother for the child to tread on the right path. Generally, if the daughter in the family is spoiled, mother is responsible and if the son goes astray, father is responsible

for it.

It is in order to ensure that unlimited freedom is not given to children that the institution called school has come into existence. It is here that teachers should strike a balance between freedom and restriction in student's life. The teacher must advise the student regularly that his conduct will be responsible for the name he earns for his parents and the school.

In some countries the concept of kindness and respect for elders is not stressed. The teachers of Sathya Sai Schools must advise the students in the right way. The teacher must advise the student that he is born as a human, and that he is neither a 'wild animal' to strike terror in the hearts of people nor a 'domestic animal' (docile person) to be afraid of others. He has no cause to fear nor should he cause fear in others. In this manner, the teacher must lead the students on the right path. Life is a long journey and must not be dismissed in a trivial manner. It must be spent in the most auspicious manner possible. We should aspire for a divine life and not long life. It is possible to bring about a change in students by such good advice.

You are Acharya and not merely a teacher. Acharya is one who first practises and then teaches the same to his students. So when you want to teach good principles to students, first you practise and then set an example. For example, if you smoke in the class, students will also emulate you and start smoking. If you try to correct them by saying, smoking is bad for health, the students will in turn ask you, "Sir, then why are you smoking?" The true characteristic of good education is good teaching. Good teaching brings about transformation in students. It makes students confess their mistakes before the teacher. I know this very well. Sometimes I punish My students for their mistakes and am strict toward them. Yet, I love them and give them what they need. This transforms their hearts. They come and pray to Me, "Swami please forgive us. It is our mistake that we did not conduct ourselves according to Your words. Now we have realised it. Swami, we will never repeat such mistakes again". Words that come out of true repentance melt Swami's heart and Swami forgives them, "My dear son, whatever I do is for your good." All teachers can learn to emulate this example.

Q: What is the most important quality a good teacher must have?

This is a very important question. Teachers should practise what is good and teach the same to students. Teachers should lead an exemplary life. Here is an example; when I was studying in third Form in Kamalapuram, we had a teacher by name H. Iyengar. Students were very afraid of him and would often avoid meeting him. I had great respect for my teacher. One day Iyengar got angry because he observed Me going into a lane when he was coming from the opposite direction of the road. Next day, I went to the class. I was the class monitor and had to get a bundle of sticks with which he would punish students. When he came to the class he was angry with Me for not meeting him on the road. He asked Me, "Why did You not meet and greet me?" I replied, "Sir, I did not see you. I was going to My friend's house to take My notebook from him." He shouted, "So You did not see me!" I replied, "No I did not see you." He threatened to punish Me. I told him, "Sir I am speaking the truth. If you wish to punish Me, you can do so." This answer melted his heart and he shed tears. He called Me near and said, "Raju I knew that You would never commit such a mistake. It is my mistake to get angry with You. I have a request, would you please come to my house tomorrow evening?" As instructed by H. Iyengar, I went to his house. Iyengar had great love for Me. He gave Pakodas in an aluminum plate. He said, "I made a mistake by thinking of punishing You. As an act of repentance, I want to cultivate friendship with you." Our goodness, our truthfulness and our sacred qualities will transform any person. I said, "Sir your position is much higher than Mine. Friendship is possible only between equals." He replied, "You may look at it that way. But, one's age and education are not important, what is important is one's heart. You have a good heart." He further enquired, whether I was studying well. I told him, "Yes Sir". He cautioned Me that exams were fast approaching and wanted Me to study well. I appeared for the examination. The examination was for two hours duration, but I finished answering the paper within half an hour. I handed over the answer script to the Invigilator and came out. He kept watching Me. He quipped, "Raju! You don't seem to have written anything!" I replied, "Sir! You will see it for yourself tomorrow. I have written everything correctly. I do not write or speak untruth." Next day,

from the pile of answer scripts, he picked up My answer script first. He checked My answers one by one and found that there were some answers which were not known even to him. So, he wrote very, very, very, very good on my paper. In those days, the teacher retained the answer scripts. The next day, he asked his wife to prepare some snacks and invited Me to his house. He told Me, "Raju! Have a cup of coffee." I said, "Sir! I do not drink coffee. I don't have that habit." "At least have a dosa", he requested. I replied, "But I do not have the habit of eating at odd times". Please eat at least for my satisfaction," he pleaded. To satisfy him, I partook of it. Likewise, students have many opportunities to make their teachers happy.

Though the students were afraid of our teachers, I was not. The reason was that I never committed any mistakes. I used to talk very sweetly. Because of this, my English teacher, Mahboob Khan, was very eager to come to My class. If any other teacher continued to be in the class even after the bell, he would ask him to leave. In the class, all other students would tease Me by saying, "Raju, go to the front!" Mahboob Khan loved Me very much. He used to caress My hair, fondle Me and pinch My cheeks. He was 50 years old and had no children.

He would ask Me to visit his house frequently. He was very devoted to Me. At the age of 11, I left that school. Till that time, I used to lead the prayers at the school. Mahboob Khan was looking after the prayer arrangements and he asked Me to lead the prayers saying, "Your prayers melt our hearts. You compose a prayer song and sing it." "How can I compose a prayer song?", I asked. He said, "You can do it!" I composed a song and sang at the prayer meetings. In that song I had incorporated the idea of unity of religions even at that age.

After listening to that song, all were surprised. After sometime, I left the school, declaring, "I am Sai. No one however great can ever understand Me. Give up your attempts to retain Me with you. I belong to the whole world!" All were bewildered. They came behind Me crying, "Raju! Raju." Without answering anybody, I went straight to Anjaneyulu's garden. I sat on a rock and started preaching, Manasa Bhajare Guru Charanam Dustara Bhava

Sagara Taranam (Contemplate on the feet of the Divine Master who alone can help you to cross over the ocean of life and death)." The next day, the Telugu teacher and Mahboob Khan resigned their teaching posts. They loved Me so much that they did not want to teach in the school without Me. Many other teachers followed their example. A Muslim boy was asked to go on the stage to lead the prayers. After coming on to the stage, he broke down thinking of Me. He could not sing the prayer. Others also started crying. From that day onward, prayers were stopped.

There is a bond of pure love between teachers and students. Students can win over any teacher's heart and a teacher can win over students' hearts. If you want to be loved, you have to love others first. First and foremost, we should aspire for truth. The basis of Indian culture is, "Speak truth, practise right conduct." I was always very humble. Now also, I teach the same thing to students. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly! But sometimes, one needs to be strict. That is what I do. I can be harder than diamond when the situation demands. Otherwise, I am softer than butter. Teachers understood this nature of Mine. Teachers! If you want to take students into your confidence, you have to approach them with love. You have to point out their mistakes and lead them on the right path. Only then will they follow the right path and accept their mistakes. For the progress and prosperity of the nation, teachers should develop love for students and mould their character. Then the society will get many good citizens.

Q: How to implement educare in the case of children from slum areas?

In order to mould the character of such children through educare programme, we have to visit their houses and help the people living there by taking up social service projects like cleaning and sanitation. Then they would develop the sense of cleanliness and keep their places clean. You can also take the help of Seva Dal members in such service projects.

Even students from schools can be taken to those areas and told to involve in service activities. Thereby the students would develop a liking for service

activities.

Q: How do you motivate children in educare programme?

It is not possible to make small children understand the essence of educare. They are too young to understand it. It can be introduced at the college level.

But at school level, we can cultivate good thoughts and good habits among students. We can also inspire their young hearts by narrating the stories of great persons of their respective lands, and exhorting them to follow the ideals set by them. For example, the life of Harischandra is a great ideal in adherence to truth.

Q: How can we attract children of nondevotees to Sathya Sai schools?

This is a very important question. Our students are our spokesmen. We have to reform the students so that they will attract the attention of their parents and bring about a good change in them. The parents may not know about Sai Baba. But when they see the good behaviour of their children because of the practising of the principles of Sai Baba, they will naturally change their minds. Students can also tell their parents that all their good behaviour is because of their joining the Sathya Sai schools. This will also attract other children to the Sathya Sai schools.

Let us take for example the good practice of the students chanting Brahmarpanam before partaking of food. Even the parents will be surprised at their devotion to God. If children explain to the parents the meaning of the prayer saying, "Food is given to us by God. Therefore, we must offer it to Him before partaking of it. Then the food becomes Prasadam and will not be tainted by impurities." Thus even the parents will learn to pray. This is the way to bring the parents on the right path through their children. Whatever we do, we must do it properly. If any guests visit our house, we must speak to them courteously. We must offer them seats, make them comfortable and tell them, "Please be seated. Father will meet you in a few moments." Such

behaviour will make the guests happy and will naturally appeal to the good sense of the guests, whether they are devotees or not. This is how we have to train our students so that they will attract others and be examples to them.

Q: How do we deal with parents who do not follow Sai's teachings?

We must bring about a change in the parents through their children studying in our schools. For example, the parents of a student may be non-vegetarians. When the student goes home for vacation, he can bring about a change in his parents by narrating to them with humility the sanctity of eating vegetarian food. The student can tell his parent, "Mother, I cannot feed myself by killing another being. This is not good for me. This body, which is made up of flesh, should not be fed with flesh. Our body must be fed with nectar and not with flesh. Eating of flesh will induce in me animal feelings. We should eat only vegetarian food which God has provided for us." Thus, we can teach parents through students. And in course of time even the parents will stop eating non-vegetarian food. Many families have stopped eating non-vegetarian food after their children joined our institutions. Thus, it is easy to bring about transformation in parents through students.

Q: How to actively involve parents in educare programme?

It is very difficult to directly involve parents in the educare programme. Hence, educare must be taught to the parents through their children. Parents do not know what educare is. What will they understand if you speak about educare to them. Since you understand what educare is, you should teach them about it through your actions.

Q: What is the role of technology like computers in education?

For Me technology appears to be 'Trick-knowledge'. I don't have any computers. Swami has been saying this for the past five years. Now computers are also getting virus attacks like human beings. You should become a 'composer' and not a 'computer'. When does a computer get spoiled? It happens when something goes wrong in the head of the composer.

You may use this technology to develop science. Firstly, set right the computer that God has given you. That is your head itself. Today, one uses computer for every small calculation. It looks ridiculous. God has given us a better calculator, our brain. Make use of its services. Of course, there are certain benefits accruing from computers. I do not deny it. You should use it depending on the need. You are all fascinated by the computer because of its novelty. But what has computer done to our society? It has developed easy-going nature in us and caused unemployment. Unemployment leads to rise in crimes. We should discard such machinery that render many people jobless. Instead of that, you should encourage domestic industries, which will provide jobs to people in the home itself.

Q: How to go about starting the first Sri Sathya Sai School in a country?

It is not possible for all to start schools, as all may not have the resources to do so. But they can start imparting educare through the Bal Vikas programme. Gradually, it can be upgraded into a school. Here I have an important point to make. The good work done by women in this field is highly appreciable. Men lag far behind in this aspect. Women are somehow finding time for Bal Vikas in spite of their daily chores. In this Kali Age, it is a good blessing for both women and children. Men too should come forward to participate in such work. Only then can the nation progress. Big schools and buildings can land us in worries when we lack resources. Let it be in a small scale.

Q: What is Sai Baba's vision of the future of Sri Sathya Sai Schools around the world?

There is no need to worry about what awaits us in future. Do whatever you are supposed to, in the best way you can. This will lead you to a brighter future. Future is not sure, it is not in our hands. Present is important. Present is not ordinary present; it is omnipresent. Take care of the present, the future will take care of itself. Did you ever think in the past that you could grow to the present state of attending the conference? When you do good work that

itself will bestow upon you a good future.

Q: Can the children be recruited to higher classes in Sri Sathya Sai Schools directly or should they be admitted to only kindergarten classes?

There is no hard and fast rule that children should be admitted only to the lowest class. Depending on the situation you can even admit them to a higher class. There is nothing wrong about it.

Q: Should Gayatri Mantra be chanted in Western Sathya Sai Schools?

You can do as per the dictates of your heart. If you feel its chanting bestows upon you benefits, you can do it. Gayatri is not a woman nor does this Mantra belong to any particular religion or country. It is only the name and the form of a deity. It represents the three aspects of materialisation, vibration and radiation.

These three are present in everyone irrespective of one's country and religion. In this Mantra, one prays for inspiration and stimulation of one's intelligence. I do not force anyone either to chant it or not to chant it. Mine is not 'force' but only 'source'. You can do whatever gives you joy.

I have answered your questions in brief. Purify your hearts and follow the Divine command. You can pray to God - Allah, Jesus, Krishna or Zoroastra. It does not make any difference. Develop virtues and get rid of vices. Sathya Sai is absolutely selfless; whatever I say, follow it implicitly. It will be good for you. Attain happiness and share it with others.

22. Humility And Character Are The Hallmarks Of True Education

Date: 22 November 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Convocation - 20

He alone is truly educated who is engaged in the service of all beings, who is the master of all forms of knowledge and who is the paragon of all virtues.

(Sanskrit Sloka)

Embodiments of Love!

EDUCATION which is not used for the welfare of society is no education at all. You can be called truly educated only when your education benefits people at large and you become recipient of their love. It is not enough if you merely acquire bookish knowledge. You should attain supreme wisdom and cultivate virtues. True education is that which bestows on man the wealth of morality, spirituality and character. The purpose of education is not merely to sustain the body; it should broaden man's mind and make him an ideal and virtuous person.

Character - Need Of The Hour

If one enquires deeply, one will find a lot of confusion in the modern system of education. Under these circumstances, students have to understand the purpose of education, put their knowledge into practice and experience bliss therefrom. Man today has made great progress in the field of science but that should not make him egoistic. Science is related to worldly education. What man needs is good character. Worldly education cannot foster virtues in man. One who sets an ideal to society by his virtues and conduct alone is truly educated. Modern students are trying to master various forms of knowledge but they are unable to understand the nature of their body and the mind. The

same was said by Winston Churchill once: "Man has conquered all, but he has not conquered himself." Modern man knows everything except himself. To know one's own self is positive and to know about the world is negative. It is not the quality of a true student to acquire degrees merely to seek a job. A true student is one who shares his knowledge with his fellow beings and leads an exemplary life.

"One may master all forms of knowledge, One may vanquish one's adversaries in debate,
One may fight with valour and courage in the battlefield,
One may be an emperor reigning over vast kingdoms,
One may offer cows and gold as an act of charity,
One may count the countless stars in the sky, One may tell the names of different living creatures on the earth,
But it is impossible to control the body, mind and senses.
Turn the vision inward and achieve the supreme state of equanimity of the mind."
(Telugu Poem)

Man has traveled lakhs of miles into space and reached the moon but he is yet to travel even half an inch inward. An educated person should investigate into his true nature. Ravana was in no way inferior to Rama in terms of knowledge but sage Valmiki, the composer of Ramayana, described Ravana as a fool and extolled Rama as one of wisdom. The reason was that Rama put His knowledge into practice and led an exemplary life. On the other hand, Ravana did not practise the knowledge he acquired, became a slave to his senses and thus ruined himself, his kingdom, and his entire clan. Education is meant not to satisfy the senses but to make one transcend the senses and set an ideal to society. This is most essential for modern students. Our country can attain its pristine glory only when we have such ideal students.

But alas! Students today do not think on these sacred lines.

All the ancient and eternal teachings are being misinterpreted. Sacred qualities are fast disappearing among people. Righteousness and compassion are no longer practised. The sacred teachings of the Vedas are forgotten and wickedness is on the rise.

(Telugu Poem)

This is the appalling state of affairs today. All the remedial measures that are being undertaken are only making matters worse. True education is that which destroys narrow-mindedness, develops equality and ultimately leads to world peace. Students should acquire such education and serve the country. People say that they are serving the country, but most of them are craving for their own selfish gains. Man today is immersed in selfishness and is wasting his life in futile pursuits. He wants to possess everything in this world. His craving for more and more things is to satisfy his unlimited desires and not to fulfil his real needs. In this manner, man is getting immersed in sensual pleasures. He has become a slave of his senses. He can be called truly educated only when he controls his senses. Modern students behave and act as they please. What are the qualities that are expected of a student?

Students should pursue such education which confers on them the sacred qualities like good character, adherence to truth, devotion, discipline and duty.

(Telugu Poem)

This is what we have to learn today.

Practical Knowledge Leads To The Understanding Of The Atma

Embodiments of Love!

You are all very virtuous and intelligent. You are endowed with a sacred heart. Fill your heart with love and compassion. That which is filled with Daya (compassion) is Hridaya (heart). However, today love and compassion find no place in human heart. Consequently, wicked qualities are finding their way into it. Whatever you experience outside is nothing but the reflection, reaction and resound of what is in your heart. Today negative qualities are prevalent in the world. What is the reason? The reason is that man's heart today is full of negative feelings. All that is witnessed in the world is the reflection of man's heart. Man should purify his heart to receive divine grace.

A deep enquiry into the principles of science and spirituality will reveal that atom is the basis of everything in this world. This flower, this cloth are nothing but different combinations of atoms. Even the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, are all constituted by atoms. In fact, all objects are constituted by atoms. But there is something more subtle and fundamental than even atom. Everything has originated from fundamental principle. Instead of trying to know the fundamental principle, man is getting carried away by trivialities.

Subtler than the atom, vaster than the cosmos,
Divinity is present all over as the eternal witness.
(Telugu Poem)

Try to experience the principle of the Atma which transcends everything. In order to experience the Atma, you should pursue spiritual education along with secular education. Worldly education imparts only bookish knowledge. What we require is not superficial knowledge but practical knowledge. Can you know the taste of sweets like Laddu, Jilebi, etc., by merely reading their names in books? Only when you put them on your tongue will you experience their sweetness. Likewise, you can experience bliss only by practising what

you have learnt. That is practical knowledge. Modern system of education is based only on bookish knowledge. There are many so-called educated people in our country. What is the help they are rendering to the country? Are they involving themselves in any activity that would benefit society and make people happy? No. They are leading such miserable lives that neither they are happy nor do they make others happy. Of what use is their education?

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)

You should pursue such education which will benefit you and also society at large. There are numerous unfortunate people who are suffering. Enquire, whether you are making any effort to alleviate the suffering of at least one of them. Your education is meaningless if it does not confer happiness to you and your fellow beings.

Today students are acquiring various degrees like M.Sc., M.B.A., Ph.D., etc., But are they using their education for the welfare of society? They merely fill their heads with bookish knowledge, go to the examination hall and empty their heads. No one is making any effort to know the purpose of education and its inner significance. No doubt, the students are intelligent and noble-hearted. But they are taking to wrong ways for lack of proper guidance. It is the duty of the parents as well as the teachers to show them the correct path. Some parents may not be educated so as to guide the students on the right path. What about the teachers in school? They concentrate on imparting bookish knowledge and do not make any effort to foster purity among the students. We should therefore understand the essence of education, put it into practice and experience bliss.

Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar showed how education should be utilised for the service of others. Born in a village near Kolkata in a poor family, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar acquired knowledge by dint of his hard work. True to his name, he was an ocean of knowledge. In his school days, he studied under street lights at night as there was no electricity in his home. His mother used to shed tears seeing her son's ordeals. He would console her, saying, "Mother, if I work today, I will be happy later". Na Sukhat Labhyate Sukham (one cannot derive happiness out of happiness). It is only out of difficulties that one can derive happiness. He worked hard and completed his education. As he was reputed for his oratorical skill, people would gather in large numbers to listen to his speeches. All that he spoke had a great impact on the people because he had a pure and compassionate heart.

Once he was invited to make a speech in a college. An I.C.S. officer was also traveling. Both of them got down at the same station. The officer started looking for a coolie to carry his suitcase. Seeing this, Vidyasagar volunteered to carry it. The officer handed over his suitcase to him. Vidyasagar was happy that he got an opportunity to serve. He asked him, "Sir, where should we go?" The officer replied, "Take me to where Vidyasagar is going to address a meeting today. I came all the way to listen to him." Vidyasagar smiled and took him to the meeting place. The officer offered him some money but Vidyasagar politely refused, "Sir, I carried your suitcase only to help you, not for money." The meeting was about to commence. Everybody was eagerly awaiting Vidyasagar's arrival. As soon as Vidyasagar arrived, he was garlanded and was given a grand welcome. The I.C.S. officer instantly recognised Vidyasagar as the one who had carried his suitcase. He repented and thought to himself, "Though he is highly educated, how simple and humble he is!" One who has ego will not be respected even by his own wife and children. Vidyasagar had no trace of ego in him. He held the audience spellbound with his speech. Time and again they clapped and expressed their appreciation. He did not exhibit his scholarship. He spoke from the depths of his heart and made a lasting impression on the people. His speech was based on his experiences in life and not on bookish knowledge.

Students Should Revive The Ancient Glory Of Bharat

Even today there are many such noble personalities. Bharat is a very sacred land but, unfortunately, the Bharatiyas themselves are not able to understand and appreciate the greatness of Bharat.

23. Self-confidence And Equanimity Lead To Divine Bliss

Date: 23 November 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Birthday - 76

The entire universe is under the control of God.
God can be easily won over by Truth.
Truth is the might of the noble and therefore in this world,
the noble ones verily embody the supreme God.
(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Divine Love!

EVERY man aspires for happiness and wants to avoid sorrow. But in this world, truth and untruth, righteousness and unrighteousness, justice and injustice pass and change with time. Man should have faith in the ultimate principle out of which both good and evil arise. Everyday man experiences happiness and sorrow, welcomes affections and aversions and invites worries and misery. How can man be at peace under these conditions? The true man is one who believes in equanimity in both pain and pleasure. In the same way as one welcomes happiness, he should be able to welcome sorrows also. You should trust the Divine and experience His love in your hearts. If you want to be respected by everyone, you should respect everyone. Whether one is rich or poor, noble or ignoble, everyone has self-respect. One should put in effort to safeguard one's self-respect. One who has true Self-respect respects everyone.

(Sanskrit Verse)

There is nothing new that I can tell you today.

Everyone should attain bliss. Everyone should conquer sorrow and develop

true love, and experience divinity. This is My principal message to you today.

Recognise The Principle Of Ardhanareeswara

Man is not only invaluable, he is a noble being too. His heart is very valuable; his mind is sweet and his life-principle is eternal. Everyone should recognise this truth and develop sweetness in heart. The most important fortune that you have to aspire for today, is love.

You do not know the greatness of human life. God Himself comes down in human form. In every man there is divinity. The name, 'Bhavani Sankara' signifies this truth. 'Bhavani Sankara' stands for the embodiment of Siva and Sakthi. 'Bhavani' symbolises Sraddha (sincerity of purpose) and 'Sankara' symbolises Viswasa (faith). When Goddess Bhavani symbolising Sraddha is present, there dances Siva who stands for faith. Life becomes useless without sincerity of purpose and faith. But today man lacks faith though both 'Bhavani' and 'Sankara' reside in him. The entire creation is the principle of Ardhanareeswara the embodiment of both masculine and feminine principles. Every person should try to recognise the divinity within himself. There is no spirituality higher than this. Adoring this 'Bhavani Sankara' principle is the primary duty of every man.

If a man today is under the sway of sorrow and misery, his mind is responsible for it. Happiness and sorrow, affections and aversions, and the sensual pleasures that man experiences today arise out of his mind. Since the mind is filled with the sense of duality you suffer all these. When the mind is trained to see the oneness of all creation, there will not be perversions of any kind. In this dual world, the gain from sorrow is more than that out of happiness. The saints and the sages of ancient times, who have become immortal in history, aspired for hardships rather than happiness. The joy that arises out of hardships is more lasting than that gained from happiness. We should not be averse to sorrow. We should not look for happiness alone. Eternal bliss is our true friend and not ephemeral happiness.

In the great epic Mahabharata, when Kunthi fell at the feet of Krishna, He

asked her, "Mother, what do you want?" She answered, "Krishna, always bestow upon me only adversities. I loved and adored you more intensely only during my hardships. In fact, when I was the queen of King Pandu I never thought of You. Only from the time my sons went into a life of exile in the forest and suffered various privations, my love and faith grew in strength. Kindly grant me only difficulties."

We have to develop equanimity in both joy and sorrow. It is the true sign of wisdom.

Embodiments of Love!

There are many persons in the world who have made history. All of them always welcomed trials and tribulations whereas others aspired only for happiness. Since sorrows are more beneficial to man than happiness, God has created both.

What does the word 'Bhagawan' mean? 'Bha' represents effulgence. 'Ga' signifies the one who radiates effulgence and 'Va' symbolises the power to propagate effulgence. Therefore, 'Bhagawan' is one who spreads the shine of effulgence everywhere. He has no form of any kind. He is subtler than space and the atom. How can you attribute any form to such a One? He fills the entire universe, but is not attached to anything. 'Brahma' God is in you and you are in 'Brahma.' Since we see duality in such non-dualistic principle, we suffer many sorrows. Though He has no particular form, all forms are His.

God Is Not Separate From You

The whole of creation emerges from truth and merges back into it. There is no place devoid of truth. That is the glory of unsullied truth. Likewise God is all-pervasive. That is why Bhagawad gita declares, All hands and feet are His, all heads and eyes are His, all ears are His and He permeates and transcends everything. Man has to find and adore God within. But man does not

recognise this truth; he thinks that God is separate from him and wastes his time and life in futile activities. Indian culture embodies the principle that does not change with time, even when aeons pass, and it is beginningless and endless. This principle neither waxes nor wanes with time; is neither created nor destroyed, and is imperishable. He is the eternal one with no birth and death. He has neither beginning nor end. Neither can He be slain, nor is He diminishable. He is the eternal Atma who resides in everyone. How should we worship such God? We should worship Him as our own Self. We should set aside the feeling that God is different from us. There is no temple dearer to God than the human heart. He loves this abode of heart. This is His true residence. We should not look for Him outside us.

When I was coming here this morning, everyone wished me "Happy Birthday!" I am always happy.

You have to wish a Happy Birthday to one who does not have happiness. I do not need it. If you want to attain happiness, you should understand that happiness is union with God. Every human being imagines that happiness is somewhere outside him and strives to attain it through various activities. How did the ancient sages adore God? They worshipped Him with the flower of sacrifice and offered their love to Him. They welcomed God as the embodiment of truth. They believed in love, kindness and oneness. They offered Him the throne of their hearts. Only through such sublime adoration, they attained Divinity. Therefore, even today's man is ought to install God in the altar of his heart and adore Him there.

Face Ups And Downs With Equanimity

You should face everything in life with a smile of happiness. In this dualistic world, it is natural that gain and pain alternate. You cannot avoid it. Do not despair when adversities confront you nor exult when success blesses you. Any adversity is a stepping-stone to eternal bliss. Only when the Pandavas suffered many hardships during the thirteen years of their exile, they could secure the grace of Krishna and the Lord was always with them everywhere. The Pandavas had correct priorities in their lives. God was first to them, then

came the world, and 'I' came last. But the Kauravas had their priorities the other way. They placed 'I' first, world next and God last. That is why they lost the battle of life. Bliss eluded them. One who has won the proximity to God is always blissful.

Embodiments of love!

The rind of bitterness of sorrow covers the sweet juice of joy in the orange fruit of life. When you peel out the rind, you get the sweet juice.

God is the very essence of joy - Raso Vai Saha.

When Lincoln was young, he led a poor life. He could not afford even proper clothes. His affluent friends in school teased and ridiculed him over his poverty. One day, unable to bear the ridicule, he poured out his heart to his mother and explained to her how he was being insulted and humiliated. His mother consoled him saying, "My dear son, all this will do you good. This should not deter you from developing Self-respect. Self respect is your treasure and God!" These words of encouragement inspired Lincoln and gave him strength to face the ups and downs of life with equanimity. After he passed out of the university, his admirers and well-wishers who had recognised the strength of his character enthused him to contest the elections. Lincoln, being a man of great humility, hesitated initially. But he remembered the words of encouragement tendered to him by his mother when he was young. Finally, he contested the elections, emerged victorious and became the President of America. Self-confidence and self-respect in him, developed by his mother, were responsible for his rise to the highest position of authority in the country. A person without self-confidence, even if thrust into exalted position, is bound to slip down.

Students!

You should consider self-confidence as the most important asset in life. Without self-confidence you can never attain bliss. Therefore, try to develop self-confidence in order to lead a good life. You are God yourself, God is the eternal resident of your heart. Therefore, there is nothing greater than your own heart. You should love everyone and hate none. They may hate you but you should not hate others. **That is what I demonstrate in my life. My life is My message. Some people may hate and criticise Me, but I will not hate or criticise anyone. When you practise this principle, you can also attain the Divine that Sai Baba is. If Sai has attained such fame and reputation, what is responsible for it? It is His Love Principle alone. This Love is My real property and treasure. You should also set ideals in the society by developing self-confidence and by sharing your love with others.**

Be always happy and strive for national welfare and aspire for the well being of all nations.

May everyone be happy and peaceful
Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu.

Only then will you attain bliss. Develop broad-mindedness and put aside narrow-mindedness.

Even if others trouble you and pose problems for you, bear it with patience believing that it will do you only good. The body, which is made up of five elements, has to fall and perish one day or the other. The indweller of the body is eternal, is birthless and deathless and is not bound by any chains of bondage. In fact, this indweller is God Himself! When a beggar begs for food, he utters, Bhavati Bhiksham Dehi! He is really begging from the 'Dehi' - the indweller and not you. Recognise the truth that he is praying to God in you for

alms. It is your ignorance if you think that he is begging from you. It amounts to arrogance. Divinity resides in everyone irrespective of whether one is a prince or a pauper. You have to adore this divine principle in everyone and love them, but love should be selfless. Love bereft of attachment to body flows equally towards everyone. Body consciousness leads to narrow-mindedness. Your relationship with God is from heart to heart and love to love! Love And Be Loved. I never invited anyone here for this function; in fact, no invitation was printed. If so many people have gathered here, the reason is their love for Me. It is a matter of great bliss to be loved by so many. There are many who cannot even win the love of parents. To win over the hearts of so many is itself a sign of Divinity. I love everyone and everyone loves Me. Those who love Me are not only the ones present here but there are crores of people spread all over the world. Young and old love Me alike. This morning devotees gathered in large numbers even at 3 O' clock seeking entry into Sai Kulwant Hall. Their enthusiasm was boundless. There may be people who queue up to enter a theatre or to get into a bus. But here, their love and attraction for Swami is so much that they do not bother about any hardships and inconveniences, to have the darshan of Swami. This type of love cannot be earned even by many years of penance. You have the fortune today of enjoying bliss in the Divine presence. You must have done many lives of penance, performed many sacrifices and undertaken varied spiritual austerities in order to secure this divine bliss. It is My love which attracts so much of love from others. Therefore, do not hurt anyone by your harsh words and do not enter into any evil paths. Recognise the truth that God pervades everything from microcosm to macrocosm. This truth dwells in you but you are not aware of it. That is your mistake. You are the embodiment of 'Bhavani Sankara'- Sraddha and Viswasa (sincerity of purpose and faith). With self-confidence, you can achieve anything in the world.

You need not undertake any difficult spiritual practices to attain Divinity. You need not fast or do any chanting or meditation. Love Him from the depths of your heart. Devotees want to offer many types of service to God. These are the characteristics of faith.

When you have such faith, you should not sully your sacred body by partaking

of wrong food. Gradually, you should intensify your love for God, fear of sin and morality in society. Morality rules the society only when people have love for God since fear of sin follows it. Today people without such fear of sin commit heinous acts. This contradicts the very human nature. There are twelve types of worries that haunt man starting from birth to death. Then how can he lead a life without worries? All these worries are related to the body and arise from the mind. If you master the mind, there is no scope for any worry.

Thyagaraja said, "For a man who has conquered his mind, is there any need for Mantra and Tantra -any strategies for attaining salvation?" As said many times by Swami, Oh, people of the world, develop love for Sai, which will destroy all your worries. Such love can help others also to win over their sorrows. Do not be bogged down by worries. With prayer to God, you can achieve anything. It is not only true of Indians but there are many men and women of other countries who have achieved this. There are many who have attained fulfilment in life by practising the dicta of their mothers. Therefore, love your mother first and foremost. Then you will automatically love your father and also your teacher. Before you love your mother, you have to love your self. One who does not believe in oneself cannot believe one's mother also.

Faith in yourself and faith in God is the secret of greatness.

Embodiments of Love!

There are many birthday programmes in the evening also. You have been sitting here for a long time. You need rest and also food. Therefore, let us bring an end to this morning's programme. Keep ruminating over what you have heard from Swami. Follow Swami's commands and you can attain everything and be victorious in all your endeavours. Take an oath today that you will develop self-confidence.

24. God Never Forsakes His Devotees

Date: 25 December 2001 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Christmas

It is only when people banish hatred and violence, develop love and realise that all are one can the earth be transformed into heaven.

(Telugu Poem)

Sathyam Bruyath, Priyam Bruyath, Na Bruyath Sathyamapriyam.

SPEAK the truth, speak pleasantly and do not speak unpalatable truth.

Embodiments of Love!

These three correspond to moral, righteous, and spiritual values, respectively. Man is the combination of these three values. Without waves, there can be no ocean. Without rays, there can be no sun. Likewise, one without love cannot be called a human being. Just as waves are for ocean, rays are for sun, so also love is for man. Hence, man should fill his life with love. He should neither hate anyone nor indulge in violence. He should fill his heart with compassion. One with Daya (compassion) is Hridaya (heart). Ego and unlimited desires are responsible for wicked qualities in man. One with ego cannot have compassion in his heart.

One should not lead a life of selfishness and self-interest. One should keep in mind the prevailing situation in the country and act accordingly. Man cannot lead a totally independent life. He has to depend on society. prakriti (nature) is a combination of vyashti (individual), samashti (society), srushti (creation)

and Parameshti (God). Vyashti should serve samashti and try to visualise Parameshti in srushti. Jesus said that the life of an individual was useless if he did not realise his duties toward society. Where there is unity there is purity, where there is purity there is divinity, where there is divinity there is bliss. People should recognise the intimate and inseparable relationship that exists between unity, purity and divinity.

When Jesus was born, three Arabian kings visited him to pay their respects. One of them felt that the child would be a lover of God. The second one said that he would be the beloved of God and the third one felt that he was verily God. Opinions vary from person to person as each is different from the other. Our ancients visualised unity in diversity, whereas the modern man, due to the impact of Kali Age, fragments unity into diversity.

The Changeless Atma Envelops The Universe

According to Vedanta, man is a combination of bhutakasa, chitthakasa and chidakasa. Bhutakasa corresponds to the body and all that is seen by the naked eye. All that is seen is bound to disappear, which means bhutakasa is transient and ephemeral. The sun, the stars and the milky way which are crores of miles away from earth, also come under bhutakasa. It constitutes all Bhutas (elements) and living beings. Such a vast bhutakasa is engulfed by chitthakasa. You can very well imagine the vastness of chitthakasa. Bhutakasa, consisting of sun, stars, rivers, oceans, etc., forms a tiny part of chitthakasa. You may wonder how it is possible. Whatever you see, for example, the sun, the stars, the oceans, the mountains, etc., get imprinted in your chittha. Likewise, the apparent world is contained in you as a small entity. Bhutakasa and chitthakasa relate to the body and mind, respectively. There is a fundamental basis for these two, which is referred to as chidakasa by the Vedanta. This corresponds to the Atma. Human being is a combination of these three bhutakasa (body), chitthakasa (mind) and Chidakasa (Atma). The first refers to the one you think you are, the second, the one others think you are and the third, the one you really are.

Man's nature is infinite and immortal. Such a human life is looked down upon

as low and mean. People deny the existence of the Atma as it cannot be perceived. Chidakasa symbolizes the Atma. It has no form. It is changeless and transcends time and space. The Vedanta describes this as Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam (attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). Bhutakasa corresponds to jagrat (waking state), chitthakasa to swapna (dream state) and chidakasa to sushupti (deep sleep). In chidakasa, one experiences only bliss. This can be understood by the fact that you experience peace when you have a good sleep at night.

When you say, it is my body and my mind, it means that you are different from them. In fact, you are the master (Atma). Master the mind and be a mastermind. How can man, being the master of everything, consider himself low and weak? Chidakasa is the true form of man. Bhutakasa, chitthakasa and chidakasa correspond to pratyaksham (direct), paroksham (indirect) and pavitram (sacred). Chidakasa transcends name and form. It is described as Sabda Brahmayi, Charachamay, Jyothirmayi, Vangmayi, Nityanandamayi, Paratparamayi, Mayamayi and Sreemayi (God is the embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, supreme majesty, delusion and wealth).

Only The Body Dies, Not The Atma

The Atma transcends the limitations of form. Buddha and Jesus made concerted efforts to have the vision of the Atma. Buddha realised that names, forms and physical relationships are transient. He said one should not get deluded by them. Yad Drishyam Thannasyam (all that is seen is bound to perish). He studied various sacred texts and had an audience with many scholars but he was not satisfied. Ultimately, he came to the conclusion that one could attain Nirvana only through proper use of the five senses. No spiritual practice can yield the desired result if the senses are misused. Have sacred vision. Speak good words. Hear only what is good. Entertain noble thoughts. There is no greater spiritual practice than this. This was the teaching of Buddha. The same was taught by Jesus.

The fishermen wanted Jesus to fulfill their worldly desires. Peter wanted more fish. But ultimately, he realised the futility of worldly desires. He wanted to go beyond the level of body and the mind as per Jesus' teachings. Jesus told them to give up hatred and to love all and serve all. He exhorted them to develop faith in the principle of unity. Many disciples of Jesus interpreted his teachings in their own way.

When he was being crucified, he heard an ethereal voice, "All are one my dear son, be alike to everyone". When Mother Mary was shedding tears, Jesus told her, "death is the dress of life." Death is like changing of dress. Do you find anybody wearing the same dress every day? Just as you change your dress every day, you change the body from birth to birth. The body has death, not the life principle. The Spirit is immortal and non-dual. To realise the non-dualistic nature of the Spirit was true wisdom, said Jesus. Advaita Darshanam Jnanam (Perception of the One without a second is true wisdom).

Ekam Eva Adviteeyam Brahma (God is one without a second). Man attributes names and forms to God because of his worldly feelings and external tendencies (pravritti). Truly speaking, there is only one God. We sing in our Bhajans, Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Nam (one God has many names). Give up body attachment. Only then can you develop attachment toward the Atma. As you are endowed with a physical body, you have to discharge your duties diligently. However, do not be deluded with the feeling that this is permanent. All the physical relationships are like passing clouds and are subject to change. Truth alone is that which does not undergo change. That is chidakasa, the principle of Atma.

Forms May Vary, But The Spirit Is One

A mother has four sons. The first son asks her for red colour juice, the second for green colour juice, the third for black colour juice and the fourth for white colour juice. Then what does the mother do? Being an intelligent mother, she pours the same juice in red, green, black and white colour glasses to satisfy her sons. Our bodies are like those glasses. We should not go by differences in bodies. We should realise the oneness of the spirit within. The cups and

colours may be different but the juice (Atma) is the same in all. Body is bound to perish one day or the other. You will have to face misery if you are attached to the body. In order to attain immortality and experience bliss, you have to transcend name and form. So long as you have a body, you have to take care of it. But you should not be unduly attached to it or worried about it. Ignorance is the root cause of worry. Whatever has to happen will happen. So, never give scope to worry. Develop faith in the principle of Atma. This was the main teaching of Jesus.

Mathew was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. He was an income tax collector by profession and used to meet the fishermen to collect taxes. Jesus used to impart sacred teachings to the fishermen every day. Mathew noted down all His teachings and wrote the Holy Bible. Later on, many others wrote the Bible based on their own feelings. Nowhere has Jesus ever stated that he was God or the Master. He always addressed God as his Father. He has shown the path to experience unity. He never gave scope for multiplicity. He always said that all were divine.

Hundreds of years ago, in North India, there lived a person who used to constantly repeat, "I am God". People used to wonder at this declaration and considered him to be a mad person. But, some scholars developed hatred toward him. They felt that even after studying various texts and acquiring knowledge, they did not dare make such a claim. They approached the king and lodged a complaint against him. Who is a true scholar? Pandita Samadarshanaha (one with equalmindedness alone is a true scholar). But those scholars lacked equal-mindedness and threatened the king that they would leave the country if that person was not punished. The king asked the scholars as to what could be done. At the behest of the Pandits, the king ordered that his legs be cut off. Even when his legs were being amputated, he did not feel the pain. He was saying, "I am God, I am God." Even the blood oozing from his tortured limb was proclaiming, "I am God. I am God". Then the king felt repentant for having paid heed to the words of foolish scholars.

Love And Unity Were The Essence Of Jesus' Teachings

From the beginning, Jesus never said that he was God. He only said that God was his father. He taught people that there was only one God and all were his children. His critics complained to the head priest against Jesus. The Priest knew that Jesus was speaking the truth. But they did not support Jesus in order to safeguard their own position. It was decided that Jesus should be crucified. The Governor issued the orders, but later he repented. When Jesus rose from the cross, he went on propagating the glory of Jesus.

The Romans addressed Jesus as 'persona' meaning one of sacredness. The English word person has been derived from this. It means that there is divinity in everyone. That is why I address you as embodiments of divinity. I and you are one. There is divine spirit in everybody. The very self is called "persona". There is no life principle without divinity. Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Thisthati (with hands, feet, eyes heads, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). Divinity pervades all forms. The Bible and the Quoran contain many sacred teachings. But foolish people who do not understand their teachings are taking to wrong ways.

He who is known as Allah by Muslims, As Jehovah by Christian aspirants,
As the Lotus-eyed Lord by the worshippers of Vishnu,
As Sambhu, by those who revere Siva, Howsoever He is worshipped, He
gladly
responds,
Grants the grace of fame and fortune. And showers happiness and joy. He is
the
One,
The Supreme Self. Know Him as Paramatma.

You are attributing various names and forms to God for your own satisfaction, but God is essentially one. Be He Rama, Krishna, Allah or Jesus, all their

teachings are meant for the emancipation of man. No religion preaches violence or to harm anybody. Some evil-minded people are misinterpreting the sacred teachings and are indulging in wicked deeds. All the noble souls have taught sacred things. They said, "Love all". They did not preach hatred. God never tells anybody to kill others. No one has any right to kill the other because the same Atma is present in all. In the name of God, people are committing heinous crimes. It is not good for anybody. Love all, Serve all. You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly. There is no God greater than love. Love is God, God is love. Live in love. Destroy wicked qualities. The meanminded people try to attribute their meanness to God. It is a sign of ignorance. Do not pay heed to such people. Have faith in your own Self. Otherwise, you cannot have love for God. Due to defects in modern education system, love is diminishing in man day by day. Hatred is on the rise. Man is forgetting yathartha (truth) and thereby subjecting himself to anartha (danger). He has forgotten manavatva (humanness) by developing pashutva (animal tendency). True spirituality lies in destroying pashutva and transforming manavatva into Daivatva (Divinity). It is not possible to attain Divinity without getting rid of animality. Today man is behaving like an animal because of his selfish love. Such a person can never enjoy happiness. He will always be immersed in misery. The more you love others, the greater will be the joy you experience. The more you develop hatred, the more miserable your life will be.

Embodiments of Love!

Jesus Maintained Equality Always

Understand that God is the embodiment of Love and so also is man. Daivam Manusha Rupena (God takes the form of man). So, you are God. There is divinity even in animals. One hears cows and buffaloes mooing, Amba (Divine Mother). It only proves the existence of Divinity in them.

When Jesus was a small boy, his parents took him to Jerusalem. After some time, mother Mary, not finding her son Jesus by her side, thought that he had lost his way in the crowd and searched for him frantically. Ultimately, she

found him listening with rapt attention to the sermon of a priest in a synagogue. She hugged him and shed tears of joy. Then Jesus said, "Mother, why should you be worried when I am in the company of God, my Father." In those days, people used to sacrifice pigeons in the temple of Jerusalem thinking that God would be pleased. Jesus sought to put an end to these cruel practices. Like Buddha, he preached non-violence. He went to the place where pigeons were sold and let them all free. The affected persons turned against him. But Jesus carried on regardless of their hostility. He did not attach any importance to praise or blame as they pertained to the body, not the Self.

The same is stated in the Mahabharatha. When Krishna was given the Agratambulam (Prime honour) by the Pandavas, the wicked Sisupala started showering abuses on Krishna. He said to Krishna:

Do you think that you deserve this honour because you stole the Saris of the Gopikas when they were having a bath? Do not indulge in self aggrandisement, shut up!
(Telugu Poem)

Hearing Sisupala abusing Krishna in this manner, Dharmaraja shed tears. Krishna hurled the very plate in which the offering was made to Him at Sisupala which turned into a discus and beheaded him. At that moment the blood of Sisupala splashed at the feet of Krishna. Seeing this, Dharmaraja became perplexed. He said, "Krishna, Sisupala abused You to no end. How is it that his blood fell at Your feet?" Smilingly Krishna replied, "Dharmaraja, praise or blame relates to the body and not to the Atma. Moreover, Sisupala was thinking of Me and repeating My name all along. He might have done it with hatred but I am not concerned about it." In the Kali Age, chanting of the Lord's Name is the only way to liberation.

(Sanskrit Verse)

Any mighty task can be achieved by chanting the Divine Name. For spiritual practices like meditation and penance, a specific time and place are required. But for chanting the Divine Name, no such restriction need to be followed. Wherever you are, whatever you may be doing, you can chant the Divine Name. Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam (everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on Hari (God)).

One of the previous speakers, a member of the Messengers of Sathya Sai, prayed that Swami should never forget them. To think that God would forget anybody is only your imagination, the reflection, reaction and resound of your inner feelings. God never forgets anybody. It is only the devotees who remember or forget God. God loves all equally. So, develop love. Eschew all evil tendencies.

The modern education system is giving rise to bad qualities in students. One with bad qualities cannot be called a student at all. As Srinivasan said, Sai students are not like that. Some people pose to be Sai students and indulge in wicked activities. But our students are highly sacred and virtuous. None can point an accusing finger at them. Today many people are misusing the name of Sai for their own selfish gains. I am happy even with such people because any way they are chanting the Divine Name. Only repetition of God's name will liberate you. Do not give scope to any evil qualities. Never give a chance for accusation. Lead your lives suffused with love. Consider love as God. There is nothing greater than love.