

## 17. Qualities And Money

**F**IND that you have simply mentioned that Sathya Sai Baba will be present at the conference. You have not assigned Me any speech, so I can as well be silent. But as far as I am concerned, there is no need for formality or announcement. I am yours; you are mine. I do not await even an invitation; our relationship is not external; it goes deeper into the realms of the spirit. I am with you and in you, so I need no welcome or previous request.

The Divine Life Society endeavours to remind man of the Divine, which is his basic reality. Divinity is inherent, immanent in every individual soul, and the process of reminding man of that fact began with the very dawn of human history. What has to be done to lead the Divine Life is just the removal of the fog that hides the Truth and makes one imagine one is something else — something inferior, evanescent, material, momentary. All are holy, pure, part of eternity. But these things shine in each in proportion to their spiritual practices, just as bulbs spread illumination according to the wattage. There is no body that is not sustained by the Absolute; there is no name that does not indicate the Universal. All objects are suffused by that Principle; all names are attributes of its Glory.

### Turn to the path of inner content and joy

Everyone must join this association, which harps on this fundamental fact and feeds the craving for immortality deep-seated in humanity. We were told by the secretary who read the report that the membership of the organisation is open to all who pay “four annas” (former Indian coin equal to a quarter of a rupee) a month. I would suggest that membership should be thrown open to all who can contribute not four annas but four qualities (*gunas*) instead! Those who have truth, righteousness, peace, and love (*sathya*, *dharmā*, *santhi*, and *prema*) are eminently fitted for membership. Insist on qualities (*gunas*), and do not look for money (annas).

One always seeks happiness by trying to satisfy one’s desires. If a desire is fulfilled, one feels joy, and when it is not, one feels grief. But the trouble is, desire is a bonfire that burns with greater fury, asking for more fuel. One desire leads to ten, and one exhausts oneself in trying to exhaust the demands of desire. One has to be turned back from this path of never-ending desire to the path of inner content and joy. That is the task of the Divine Life Society.

One grieves because one has developed attachment toward the unreal. One cultivates an unreasonable affection for wealth, but one is prepared to sacrifice the riches in order to save the lives of one’s children, for attachment to children is stronger than to the wealth that has been earned! One stoops so low as to neglect the children when the choice is between survival and the children’s welfare! But the bliss that one gets when one dwells on the *Atma*, the source and spring of all joy, is unbounded and imperishable. That is the real joy.

The orange rind is not very tasty, but it protects the fruit and preserves it. To get the sweetness of the orange, you must peel and throw off the rind. Such is the fruit of the tree of life; it is protected by a bitter rind, of course, but the wise man does not try to eat the rind; he gives it the consideration due to it and proceeds to throw it off; he then tastes the sweetness.

### Every Indian has to live the life taught by sages

In order that this wisdom may dawn on persons most in need of it, the elders must set an example of discrimi-

nation and detachment. If they run after sensory pleasures with feverish excitement, how can the younger generation be blamed for their selfishness and greed? The elders must practise what they preach and show how divine life can confer joy, mental poise, contentment, and real happiness. They must spend at least some time every day in the recital of the Lord's Name or in meditation on the Lord; then the children will also imbibe that atmosphere and acquire the sure means of gaining peace (*santhi*) for themselves.

You say that there is nothing as sweet as the name of the Lord, but you do not repeat it at all. You have spoilt the road by neglect and wanton destruction, but you advise the children to walk along it. They will discover the hoax; they will ask you to travel on the road yourself and give them the lead. So the responsibility of the members of the Divine Life Society here is very great.

As a matter of fact, the responsibility of any person who holds forth an ideal is great, for he has to attempt to reach it himself while advising others to adopt it. That is why the responsibility of an Indian is so great, for in this land have been born saints and sages who have taught the world the highest truths of spiritual uplift; and anyone claiming to be an Indian has to live the life taught by them in order to deserve that ancestry and the admiration of aspirants all over the world.

### **Physical hunger must first be appeased**

Divine Life is based on the quality of calm serenity (*sathwa guna*), which must be cultivated. This quality can be built only upon natural (*sathwic*) food, food that promotes health, strength, lightness of spirit, and earnestness of endeavour. There is no use distributing the juice of spirituality to underfed and weak people; give rice juice first; make them strong enough to entertain strong beliefs and contain strong ideals. Physical hunger must first be appeased by simple pure (*sathwic*) food.

Then, try to repeat the name of the Lord, the name that appeals to you most. Do not treat the Name lightly; respect it even if you hear it from the lips of a beggar who uses it to procure aims. Though the person who utters it is bad or though his motive in uttering it is bad, do not ill-treat the Name; for its purity can never be harmed. Thank them for reminding you of the Lord and go your way. Above all, do not laugh at and discourage those who call on the Lord. What right have you to substitute misery where there was joy and doubt where there was faith?

Love (*prema*): practise that; develop that; spread that — and all the hatreds and jealousies of today will disappear. That is the duty of the Divine Life Society, here as well as elsewhere.

Arkonam, 1958-12-14

**N**o one can liberate you, for no one has bound you. You hold on to the nettle of worldly pleasure, and you weep for pain.

The kite is pursued by crows as long as it carries the fish in its beak; it twists and turns in the sky trying to dodge the crows, who seek to snatch the fish. Tired at last, it drops the fish. That moment it is free. So give up attachment to the senses, and grief and worry can harass you no more.

The kite sits on a tree, preening its wings, enjoying its happiness. You too can be so happy, provided you drop the fish you have in your beak.

**Sathya Sai Baba**