

## **20. Whom to serve?**

TIME flows fast, the physical frame of man deteriorates every second until it disintegrates in death; the mind that operates in that frame flutters from one desire to another without rest; but, man does not know, nor does he care to know! He revels in untruth, injustice and unrest. Today, wherever we turn our attention, we find only fear, faction and fury. On one side, we find scientists circling in the sky like eagles, and moving under the sea like fish! On the other, we see the pitiful sight of man struggling upon the hard ground under his feet, not knowing how to live in Love thereon! He lives in dire distress, in hate and anxiety, daggers drawn, brother against brother, just for a morsel of food! Unaware of his duty, he pursues ruinous ideals.

Institutions devoted to the service of mankind like the Lions Club and the Rotary Club are thriving in various countries. I have myself visited some of these in Kampala, Jamnagar, Bombay and other places and noted the enthusiasm of the members. When you grasp the significance of the word, Service, you will find that it is not so much the service of others, but, service for yourself! Once you feel the distinction that the other person is foreign, then, service becomes patronage; it loses its savour. It fosters the evil of egotism. The person served also feels hurt, is aware that he is inferior. Such service is quite against the *Saadhana* called *Seva*.

### **Sincerity has disappeared from human affairs**

This feeling of superiority and inferiority based on possessions and material consideration has resulted in the unrest that has engulfed this land today. Man is today afraid of himself, he feels that the house in which he lives has no deep foundation and so, it may fall on him any moment. The spiritual is the only strong foundation for the house in which man has to spend his life. When man bases his life on the faith that all are endowed with the same Divine Spark, there will not be fear and hatred any more, in human relations. "Brothers and Sisters!" has become just a conventional form of address when a man gets up to speak; it does not come from the heart. Sincerity has disappeared from human affairs.

Mention was made of the poverty and the deficit in food that prevails in this country. There is enough food for all, provided food is conserved by wise consumption by individuals, and by society. More can be produced when people are strengthened by faith in their own resources and capacity. Self-condemnation is the proper tonic for national reconstruction. If only man becomes aware of his potentiality, there is nothing impossible for him. Grace, once gained, can ensure plenty and prosperity. But, it is difficult to arouse a person who is only pretending to sleep; if he is really asleep a touch is enough to awaken him. India is not immersed in sleep; it pretends to sleep!

### **Religion will always bind and not divide**

The prime cause for the increasing hatred between man and man, village and village, region and region, is, the avarice that has infected the individual. It has destroyed contentment, created factions, brought about splits and multiplied misery all round. Removing the head is not the remedy for headache. Removing religion from the curriculum of life is not the remedy for rivalry between religious communities. Discover the causes for the rivalry and remove them; that is enough.' Religion will always bind, it will not divide. It unifies, does not disintegrate. The scientist investigates all that is perceptible by the senses. But, the saint travels beyond the realm of the senses, the intellect and even the imagination, into the regions touched by rarefied

intuition. The Rotarians must try to understand both realms and appreciate the value of both disciplines.

I would advise you to carry out service programmes in the rural areas in preference to urban. For, they are more in need of sympathy and more capable of appreciating it. Again, I would request you to emphasise self-control and education as more beneficial methods of family planning than the artificial methods now being propagated, for, these methods augur great harm to the moral and physical health of the people. *Yoga* is defined as *chiththa virthhi nirodha* (the control of the wavering mind). Propagate the *yoga* philosophy. That will have more lasting and more far-reaching results on the family than these contrivances.

Faith in God has to be implanted in the minds of the children for it is an anchor for the ship of life, when it is tossed about the stormy seas ahead. The epics of India have great examples of faith and fortitude which can attract children and youth. I am glad *Baalavihaars* are also part of the programme of work you have envisaged. Treat it as a valuable limb of your activities. The country will get vast benefit for the small outlay that *Baalavihaars* require. It is good national service, as well as service for the children.

*Rotary Club, Ananthapur, 16-8-1970*

*There are two things  
that draw man's mind:  
hitha and priya---  
the beneficial and the pleasant.  
Prefer the beneficial to the pleasant,  
for the pleasant might lead you  
down the sliding path  
into the bottomless pit.  
The true doctor is interested  
in curing you of all illness  
and so, he advises hitha  
to restore your health.  
The Guru is a such a doctor.  
Obey him, even when  
his prescription is unpalatable,  
for, you can be cured only by him.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*