

5. Valour of the Spirit

I AM very happy to be in the Punjab Region, which has earned the respect and gratitude of the entire nation, by its heroism and sacrifice, for defending the country. It is a sacred land and, though my visit to this place was planned long ago, the time has at last ripened, and I am here. A fruit takes a long time to ripen and fill itself with sweet juice.

This nation has sown the seeds of tolerance and friendship among all the peoples of the world for centuries. It has led the world both in materials and spiritual progress. It has been emphasising the fundamental need of man---to understand himself, before he attempts to understand others. When you do not know your position in the Universe, your fate and your future, of what use is it to wander about in space? Let me tell you what the true nature of man is, so that you may make an all out effort to guard it and develop it. Truth is man's nature; to be untrue is to be false to one's nature. *Dharma* (right action) is the practical application in real life of the ideal of Truth. *Shaanthi* (peace) is the result of *Dharma* and *Prema* (love) is the effulgence of *Shaanthi*.

Devotion should not be confined to the four walls of the shrine-room, or the few minutes you perform *Dhyaana* (meditation). It is a fulltime *Saadhana* (spiritual discipline). Your devotion has to be expressed as worship of every one, as a living embodiment of Divinity. See God in every one, even in persons whom you regard as your enemies. Practise that broad, inclusive type of Love. How can you derive happiness by showing love and reverence to a stone idol, that does not respond or reflect the feelings? Living beings will return appreciation and gratitude and wish you well. You can see joy growing in their faces. That will confer satisfaction on' you. If you cannot educate yourself to love your fellow man, how can you follow the path of dedication to God?

Share your joys and sorrows with others

Find out the difficulties and troubles burdening others and help them, to the extent you can, to tide over them, and, to lead their lives so that they may not recur. Learn to live with other men; share your joys and sorrows with others; be forbearing, not overbearing. When you live together in amity, the village will be happy and safe; and, when the villages are well-knit and strong, the State too will be strong and impregnable. Jealousy, anger, hatred and greed will disintegrate the State and make it fall into disorder and distress.

Drive away the divisive forces that keep man away from man, and prevent hearty co-operation and mutual help. Punjab has won special fame in our country, because of the valour of its people. I desire and bless that it should become equally famous for *Adhyaathmic* (spiritual) valour. Inculcate discipline in the field of *Saadhana* also and insist on people performing their duty to themselves and to their destiny. Devotion is like the head; duty is the trunk; discipline is the feet. Let devotion be linked with duty and led by discipline; then, success is certain.

The life of man should not be a wasteful round of eating, drinking and sleeping; man has the *Aathma* (soul) as his reality and so, he must learn to become aware of that unfailing source of Bliss. By the proper use of his intelligence, man can tap that spring and be supremely blissful. Happiness can be won only by proceeding towards God, not by following the urges of the senses.

Essential requisites to earn God's Grace

This day, happiness also rose with the dawn and sunrise in this town. The depth of your devotion can be clearly gauged from your faces. You have been waiting for many long hours for the joy of

this moment; that is itself proof that matters of the spirit are more attractive to you than material things and comforts.

Of the twenty four hours that are available to you each day let Me advise you to devote a small fraction to meditation or prayers or reading the scriptures or listening to discourses on the *leelas* (divine sport) of the Lord. Think of God, and the gratitude you owe to Him for the human life He has gifted you and the various material, moral and intellectual talents He has endowed you with; do this before you commence any task or piece of work. You will certainly experience great benefit, and you will have peace, joy and success in your endeavours through Divine Grace.

Do not get disheartened, if you do not progress in meditation. Utter the Name of the Lord, dwelling on the Glory and the Grace; that is equally effective. No one particular Name is necessary; all names denote only the One. The steadiness, the faith, the love that you cultivate in the heart and express through your words, deeds and thoughts are the essential requisites for earning the Grace of God.

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Perform your bhajans (group singing), perform your puujas (external worship), but when you enter society, recognise society as a form of God, recognise what exists as Omnipresence in society and thereby acquire good qualities in serving society.

Forget the agitations in the world. Then you can have peace, joy and bliss.

If you develop an idea that God, who is Omnipresent and is in the entire creation and the universe, is confined in a picture which is three inches by four inches, you are narrowing your conception of God.

Sri Sathya Sai