

25. A programme for college teachers

EMBODIMENTS of the Divine *Aathma!* *Open* your eyes and look around with some circumspection. Ponder over the heights we had attained in ancient times and the present pitiable predicament of mankind. What an abysmal descent! Isn't our situation very much like that of a man who has tumbled down from a mountain peak to the depths below? We had, by observing and upholding *Dharma* (virtue), reached the pinnacle of perfection in every sphere, spiritual, material, scientific, economic. We followed with great veneration the principles and guidelines laid down in the *Shruthi* (sacred scriptures), and the *smrithi* (body of traditional law), which embody the commands of God Himself, and as a result, we were bound together by mutual love and affection, and our culture shone with supreme excellence.

But, today, we are in quite a terrible situation---the very opposite of the glory of the past. Wherever we look, we find men sunk in utterly low moral and material conditions. The *Dhaarmic* duties prescribed by the Lord in the *Shruthi* and *Smrithi* in order to save mankind from these very evils have been discarded. Infected by mutual animosity and distrust, we are spouting the fire of violence and cruelty and jeopardising World Peace. Violation of the laws ordained by God is the chief factor, responsible for the absence of abiding peace in the world.

It is our paramount duty to restore Divine *Dharma*

Is not the transgression of *Dharma* (which is another name for the Commands of God to man) the sole cause for the poverty, the despondency, the despair, and the lack of spiritual knowledge and effort, that are so rampant at the present time throughout the world? It is heartening for us all to note that a few people, at least now, have discovered the reason for the crisis, through a study of the sequence and the negation, and are striving to resuscitate *Dharma* which alone can confer prosperity and peace on the world. If the annihilation of something is causing injury to something else, then, the only method for the regeneration of the latter is the revival of the former. Isn't this principle universally acceptable and applicable? We are noticing that the decline of *Dharma* has caused the destruction of world peace. When we plan to bring about prosperity and peace to the world, isn't it our paramount duty to restore this Divine *Dharma*?

Teachers! It is your imperative duty to wake up and strive at least now, without further delay, for the preservation and fostering of *Dharma*. For, today, some persons are endeavouring to destroy *Bhaaratheeya Dharma* (Indian morality code), attacking it and plucking it by its very roots. If we fail to resist their attempts, *Dharma* is in danger of being completely uprooted.

Some persons enamoured of modern civilisation and bearing the respected designation of social reformers and reconstructors, are trying in manifold deceptive attractive ways to pollute Society itself, by depriving it of *Dharma*.

Bhagavaan will be your unfailing support

The *Dharma*, for upholding which we have been all along willing and ready to sacrifice wealth, honour and even lives, is the *Dharma* named *Sanaathana Dharma*. *Sanaathana* means 'eternal', existing and effective for all time. Wake up. Get Ready. The moment has arrived, when you have to demonstrate your indomitable valour and irrepressible heroism.

You are born in the ever-effulgent land of Bhaarath. You are the valiant and invincible descendents of heroic Hindhu warriors, who were worthy embodiments of courage, fortitude,

valour and moral integrity. You are scions of the holy and lofty lineage of *Rishis* like Bhaargava, Kaushika, Vashishtha, Bharadwaaja and Kashyapa who forced even the 'three worlds' to tremble in fear, at their spiritual might and majesty, won through severe penance. You will be unworthy of such great ancestry if you remain indifferent, slothful and apathetic like cowards, when the *Dharma* which is as essential as the very breath to our lives is being undermined. Resolve to engage yourself in the task of promoting the welfare of the world; be assured that *Bhagavaan* will be your unfailing support.

As days pass by, the process of reshaping and reforming affects each field. Naturally, it is being applied to the educational system also. In former times, children were initiated in the spiritual path at the proper age and their studies began thereafter, under the *Guru* (preceptor). In course of time, when Westerners became the rulers, many were lured to the study of their language, for, thereby they could secure the 'second' of the four goals of man, namely, riches. Thus they were transformed into supporters of the Western system of education.

In the past, teachers saw to it that the pupils were 'equipped with devotion to God in addition to the curricular training. So, the students were well versed in spiritual discipline and knowledge; every act of theirs was motivated by the yearning for salvation and spiritual joy.

Teachers and students lack spiritual awareness

Boys and girls were instructed by *Gurus* who had full knowledge of the Country--its history,' and traditions--and the principles of religion and culture. Now, since the teachers' are themselves woefully ignorant of what culture means, what spirituality consists of, and what the significance of religion is, the pupils are deprived of the wisdom that alone can confer peace and joy to their hearts.

The propaganda for atheism, the declaration that the *Vedhas* have no historical validity, and the teaching through history that Hinduism is destroyed--these are the activities of the teachers who suffer from the mania for Western culture and civilisation. Can we call such a system of instruction, education? Can we call those who instruct these things, *Gurus*? *Vidhya* (education) is the communication of the knowledge of the divine power, and the inner Reality of the *Aathma*. This alone justifies the claim to be educated.

Since they have no spiritual awareness, students are taking part in disorders and disturbances; they become easy targets to mob violence, unworthy of the educated; they descend to levels lower than the blind in their ignorance and draw down upon themselves the ridicule of the observers. They disfigure the educational institutions and bring disgrace upon them.

Teachers! We have to inculcate in our College lofty ideals and take up highly noble projects. I am now communicating to you My feelings and plans, because I know that you are enthusiastic, inspired by spiritual ideals, and worthy of Sai's love and affection.

1. Mere formal teaching of the prescribed lessons in the College will not raise the students to the stature we desire. By mere planting, a sapling does not become a tree. It has to be fostered by the provision of the appropriate security, care, and periodical attention.

2. To shape the simple innocent students from the villages into votaries of the English language, devoid of the virtues of humility and fidelity, politeness and faith, which are so necessary for happy living, is not a task which will promote the welfare either of the student or of the country. By the mere acquisition of an academic qualification which will assure them a job, they cannot progress either in morality or straightforwardness. Proper activities must be devised and adopted

to make them useful to their parents. They must be able to serve them skilfully and gladly and thus earn their blessings.

3. There are 200 students coming to our College from villages around. We should group them into batches of 20 or 30; one teacher should accept the responsibility for guiding each group. When they find a student backward in any subject, they should encourage him, by special teaching in that subject; they should pay attention to the conditions and circumstances of each student and keep in touch with the parents too; they should help the students to cultivate and develop the high ideals that they have in their minds and the noble plans to which they wish to dedicate themselves.

Establish a Spiritual Centre in each village

4. Proper steps must be undertaken to put an end to the evil habits, the evil thoughts and evil talk that are rampant in these small villages. It is only then that the educated 'rural student' can maintain and develop his virtues. Or else, his attainments in virtue will be evident only as long as he is studying. As soon as he returns to his village, the behaviour, the way of speaking, the habits of life that the villagers practise will become natural for him also. Therefore, through each one of the students of our College belonging to a village, we must establish a Spiritual Centre in that village; the Centre must guard against the spread of parties and factions in that village and should not observe or honour any distinction between the villagers, on the basis of caste, creed, or family status. This will bring about a great change in the methods and message of education.

5. One day in each week or fortnight, teachers should gather the students and instruct them in certain lofty ideals of life; they should go to the villages of those students, and devote themselves to some programme of welfare activity in the village. This is very advisable. If you do the spade work and make the preliminary arrangements I shall come (I am returning to Brindhaavan in February) and in the months of February and March, all of us can go to one village, one after another, and establish these Spiritual Centres. We shall transform them into ideal villages. It is only then that the value of education can be demonstrated, expanded and sanctified.

6. For each one of these objectives to be realised, it is necessary that teachers must be idealistic and enthusiastic. Then only will students follow their guidance. Our College must become the pioneer leader in translating these high ideals. This is essential, not only for the individual, but, in equal measure, for all mankind.

Students should acquire the virtue of humility

7. Consult the students, group by group, and find out who among them are interested in establishing such Spiritual Centres in their own villages; if they make proper arrangements in their villages, then I shall myself come and inaugurate the Centre and confer on the people of the village necessary enthusiasm and adequate facilities.

We shall start in this way, in a small measure; we can thus rescue the villages from the chaotic influence spread by politics, and, make them wholly loving and helpful filled with *Saathwik* (good and noble) ideals; this is the fruit of real education.

8. When the students of our College coming from villages see a village or two, developing on these lines, every one of them will come forward, asking for the inclusion of his village too. They will acquire along with *Vidhya* (education), the virtue of *Vinaya* (humility). And, with humility, they can easily earn spiritual knowledge. This is very essential, and very urgent work. Due to the absence of these two, people are today, disgracing their humanness, though they are

'educated', behaving like fools and blind men, giving up the power of discriminating between the temporary and the eternal. It is enough progress, if men live as men! Man must be vigilant that he does not descend to the level of demons, that he does not pollute society and inflict 'earthquakes' on the country. If we do not take on hand these activities, we cannot remove the fear and anxiety that seem inevitable in the future for our students.

9. You must all meet together and take necessary interest in this matter. You need not compel any one who is not interested. It is enough if we have some five or six who join with love and faith. If they have the desire, and if all share in this task, the greater the joy. There should be no trace of compulsion in organising this. I am placing a car at your disposal for carrying out this programme. On this holy *Shankraanthi Day*, I have given expression to the thoughts that I was having for a long time, taking into consideration your enthusiasm for work. I wish you will take the steps necessary for implementing this programme.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 14-1-1974

What does surrender of the Self signify or imply? To experience God as Om nip resent, to be aware of nothing other than God-- this is true surrender.

To see God in everything, everywhere, at all times, is true Sharanaagathi. He gives, He enjoys, He experiences.

If you offer, and God accepts, you become superior; how can God be all-powerful? You should not reduce the glory of God through such high-sounding statements.

Sri Sathya Sai