

10. Thirty-five and sixty-five

THE future of India lies in your hands. You are fully aware of the characteristics of this *Kali Yuga* (age of conflict) we are passing through. You find around you injustice, irregularities, immorality and untruth with all their devilish attributes and atrocities. But we have to march ahead in spite of all these with a quiet, tolerant and benign attitude towards life. Almost all the fields and walks of life are polluted with these poisonous feelings, but the field of education being the most prominent organ, needs our special attention. We should first enquire and try to find out why the parent or pupils or their teachers are taking active part in these anti-academic activities. The main reason for this disorder is that the human mind is haunted and dominated by two devilish blemishes, viz., selfishness and ambition. These forces are standing in the way of human beings in realising the human values which go to make up humanity. It is not becoming of a man to exchange his valuable life---as precious as gem---for worldly desires and ambitions which are as worthless as a coalstone. Man becomes Immortal neither by deeds, nor by progeny nor by wealth. What makes him eternal is the spirit of sacrifice. So we should try to make our lives meaningful by sacrificing personal comfort for the sake of our fellow beings.

The student today is a seeker of worldly pleasures

Today when we find our educational trends going astray and causing anxiety to parents and society, we need to reiterate our old values, according to which an education based on our cultural heritage can alone lead one' to real *education---Aathma Vidhya---the* state of self-realisation. Every Indian will have to recognise the culture based on *Vedhic* philosophy. You will know how restless and agitated the youth of India is today trying to rob every thing with all pride and no achievement and thus getting involved in meaningless pursuits.

The student of today is not able to realise what he should primarily be concerned with. It is only in name that he is a *Vidhyarthi--a* seeker of knowledge. In practice, he is only a *vishyarthi---a* seeker of worldly pleasures.

It is the duty of every human being to understand and respect his parents. Similarly, in a nation it is the duty of every national to assimilate and appreciate the historical and cultural background of his nation and consider these two factors as his father and mother. In fact, one who is ignorant of the historical and cultural heritage of his country is like a stupid person who has no knowledge of his parents. We have therefore to make manifold progress in the Field of education today to keep pace with the general advancement that is taking place. But we are ignorant of our great classics and scriptures like Raamaayana, Mahaabhaaratha and Bhagavath Geetha.

The end of education is character

Once a District Educational Officer was inspecting a school. He asked the teacher to find out from one of his pupils as to who wrote Raamaayana. The pupil innocently replied, "Sir, ! never wrote it; perhaps you might have written it." Then the teacher found himself in a miserable plight and turned to the Inspecting Officer to assure that he has not done so and tried to enquire if the officer had by any chance written the work. The District Educational Officer referred the matter, to be safe, to the Vice-Chancellor, who finally observed that some Brahmin must have done it and advised the officer concerned to close the issue. This means that the state of affairs in our educational field today is so pitiable that our students, teachers, inspecting officers and Vice-Chancellors are all sailing in the same boat. Nobody knows about the author of a work-like Raamaayana. In these circumstances we are not justified in calling ourselves educated. We are

wasting our precious time on imitation. The end of education is character and the end of knowledge is love.

Education does not mean mere knowledge of books and acquaintance with them. If we concentrate on book knowledge at the cost of practical application, we will be spoiling the name of education itself. In olden times, only those who secured hundred per cent marks were allowed to pass a test, but now, thirty-five out of hundred will enable a person to get through an examination. That means, a student is allowed to commit 65 mistakes out of hundred. If a student is allowed to make 65 per cent mistakes when he has full time and energy at his disposal there is no reason why a grown up not be given the margin of committing 100 per cent mistakes. It is therefore the duty of each and every student to attain hundred per cent perfection in his knowledge. If he cannot do this as a student in spite of his advantages of age and energy, he will not be able to do Justice to his work when he takes up a job and assumes false notions of prestige and dignity.

Charity makes man happy in both the worlds

Moreover, education should lead one to humility, which in turn equips him with all the eligibility. Eligibility provides him with necessary material wealth, which again enables him to do some charitable deeds. Charity makes him happy both in this world and the other one higher than this.

Today we think of our rights and responsibilities. On one side we have the Individual freedom and fundamental rights, and on the other we have our responsibilities and duties to be performed. We are no doubt anxious about our individual freedom in the same proportion. We should do full Justice to our social obligations and establish the reputation of our country and Its culture. The colleges today are not paying adequate attention to this cultural aspect. It therefore became necessary for us to establish Sathya Sai Colleges with special objectives pointing to this end even though there are thousands and millions of colleges all over the world. A Sathya Sai College is not Intended to prepare graduates who carry their degrees like begging bowls going from door to door begging for a job. These colleges are being established to promote a sense of self-reliance and a spirit of service to society and humanity at large. Man cannot live In isolation like a drop of oil on water surface. He is a product of society. He has to live In it, grow with it and work for it. Human birth is supposed to be a rare one, not easily granted to the animal world.

Everyone should have the feeling of 'one nation'

We who are crossing the ocean of *Samsaara* (the chain of birth and death) need to cultivate the art of swimming through *Bhagavath chinthana* (contemplation on God). However, learned we may be, if we do not have this training and cultivation, we are bound to sink. Life is a boat which enables us to cross the ocean of *Samsaara* with the aid of meditation on God.

A country needs an ideal as a human body requires recouplement. Body is an assembly of various organs. No single organ can constitute a body. When the various organs get separated, the human body gets weakened and even loses its existence. Similarly, if a nation is split up into different parts, It gets disintegrated. There may be different states in a nation but there should be feeling of 'one nation' throughout the country. We should develop a habit of visualising unity in diversity and not diversity in the unity that is divine. God is everywhere and in everyone. The whole universe is inhabited by Him. One should find God in every object. These are the Ideals we find In our scriptures.

There are bulbs of different colours and their voltage also differs. But whatever the colour and whatever the voltage, current that flows is the same. This kind of thinking is highly essential today. In our culture, we respect our father and mother as God. It is only when we respect our parents, that we can expect our children, in turn, to respect us. There is reaction, resound and reflection, for everything in the world.

We assign a special place to women in India

The young girls who study in this College today will become mothers tomorrow. It is therefore necessary that they should equip themselves with all the culture, learning and wisdom that they need in their future lives. In India, we assign a special place to women. It is therefore all the more important that the girls who are studying here should train themselves in such a way that they can live up to the Ideals and aspirations of an Indian woman.

We consider women as *Grihalakshmi*, *Dharmapathni*, and so on. A woman has to maintain her house. She is not only the house wife, but on her depends the glory or otherwise of the whole country. That is why we say this is our motherland. It is in this spirit that we refer to our country as *Bhaarathamaatha* (Motherland). We also find that women are given the first position when they are associated with their counterparts as Seetha-Raama, Lakshmi-Naaraayana, Raadhaa-Krishna and Paarvathi-Parameshwara. It is only to establish this prominence given to women in our country and to train our young girls on these lines that we took up the task of opening such colleges.

I expect the young girls studying in this college to cultivate such good qualities which will bring name and fame to the native homes and also to those where they proceed after marriage. The bad habits and vulgar behaviour that we find in most of the young girls today should not find a place in the girls of this College. The girls of a Sathya Sai College should maintain the ideals of the institutions and keep the prestige of their homes, their society and their culture. It is only then that the purpose of establishing this college can be served.

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Rig Vedha teaches the lesson of serenity. Peace is like rose water scent; when it is sprinkled on you, smell it but don't drink it--that is to say, accept it and thrive on it.

Blame is like a medicine. Examine yourselves whether you have the illness and if you have, accept the blame and benefit by it.

Sri Sathya Sai