

17. My wish, My vow

THIS day is a meeting between the past and the present, as all days are; for, we, In this College, are wishing well for those who have passed out and welcoming those who have just joined the classes. All moments are moments of crisis, when crucial decisions are urgently needed. Life is a struggle between the forces of good and evil, of joy and grief, of success and failure.

The doubt may arise whether, in the face of this perpetual fight, man can ever escape from the bonds of duality. Is it after all a vain hope, or a tantalising prospect or is it the sport of God? It is really the inescapable destiny of man, and it is to prepare you for this destiny that this College has been established.

The student who spoke a few minutes ago said that the perusal of a load of books cannot be education. Yes; it has to tend the body, mind and spirit, in addition to the intelligence. It cannot be confined to the four walls of a building. The Universe is a University for those who care to watch and learn. Awareness is life; so, the farmer, the carpenter, the smith, the sculptor, the merchant, all have the need to be aware of their duties and responsibilities, their skills and standards, which education must foster and fix.

Spiritual education is part of all types of education

Education is no book-worm affair; the process must include the study and appreciation of all trades, professions and guilds. It must encourage the acceptance of the good and the rejection of the bad. Spiritual education is not a distinct and separate discipline; it is part and parcel of all types and levels of education, In fact, it is the very foundation on which a lasting edifice can be built. Secular and spiritual education are like the two halves in the seeds of pulses; the germ that sprouts is in between; It is fed by both.

The feminine is the foundation on which a peaceful and happy world is to be raised. When women are true and brave, kind and compassionate, virtuous and pious, the world can have an era of peace and joy. Youth has the capacity to grow into strong straight *Saadhakas* (spiritual aspirants), who can scale the heights of spiritual adventure; but, it has no proper guidance. On the other hand, youth has evil temptation; evil example and evil advice are spread around on all sides, most attractively.

There are two evil sirens that entice them into futility and frivolity, diverting them along the paths of ruin. One of them is called, Dame Cinema and the other is named, Dame Novel. The film contaminates and corrupts; it pollutes young and innocent minds; it teaches crime, violence and greed; it destroys the basic human-ness and degrades it into bestiality. Even ochre-robed monks are steadily dragged down to sin by Its Insidious influence.

To-day's education has no life-line

Dame Novel too corrupts equally, with salacious pictures of bestiality. They both lead the young away into the wilderness of vice. They do not know, nor do they care to know, how to shape the young into self-reliant, self-confident, self-knowing citizens. The vital need is ignored.

There was a student once who held out his palm before a palmist for scrutiny. He examined the lines with care and announced that he would advance very much In education. The student was very happy. He predicted that he would amass large sum of money; the student's Joy knew no bounds. He declared that the lines indicated fame along with fortune. This filled the cup of Joy to

the brim; it could hold no more. Then, the palmist announced that the 'life-line' was short and it ended abruptly, quite quick! The student fell in a faint.

Education too has no life-line, now; it does not ensure the skills and attitudes essential to live a life of peace and contentment. It is not 'full,' nor does it function in a comprehensive manner, taking all the needs and goals into Its orbit. It is satisfied now with cramming books, reproducing from memory, research into trivialities and awarding degrees which mean nothing special: And, its products parade their purposelessness, shouting that God Is dead and that virtue is a superstition. How can man exist without God, or God apart from man? There can be no garland without the string that runs through the flowers; there can be no men without the Inner kinship that God ensures for each. He is the *Brahmasuuthra*---the *Brahman* String, invisible, but inevitable.

Millions of rupees have been spent on this College, not with a desire to add one more to the hundreds of colleges scattered all over the country, but, to train a generation of women who know how to live the ideals treasured in Bhaaratheeya Culture and who will uphold the dignity and destiny of womanhood.

Expansion is the keynote of education

The reason which prompted the establishment of this college is the need for women who as mothers will foster the expansion of love to include fellow beings everywhere. The first step for this expansion is the home, where you must revere and please the parents who gave you this chance to live and learn. If you ill-treat them or inflict grief on their minds, how can you ever gladden others by service and understanding? Expansion is the keynote of education. You know that when a balloon is blown, it bursts and the air Inside it merges with the vast limitless expanse outside. Your love too must fill your home and your society, and finally, burst even those bonds and become world-wide. A drop of water held in the palm is soon evaporated; it is too much alone. But, drop it Into the sea; it survives as a part of the sea. It assumes the name and the taste, the majesty and might of the sea!

Cultivate Love; sow the seeds of love in all hearts. Shower Love on the desert sands, let the green shoots, the lovely flowers, the luscious fruits, the sweet harvest of nectar be earned by mankind. That is My Wish, My Mission, My Vow. When you earn a degree and go out of this College, do not ask, "What is the country giving me?" ask rather, "Now, what can I give to my country?"

"Reverence offered at the feet of parents reaches Me"

Students, when they find distress or despair anywhere, do not now set about to reduce it. They pour oil on the flames and relish the damage they cause! My aim in starting and running this College is to train here the Ideal mother, the Ideal sister and the ideal wife, the Ideal woman, in fact. The curriculum which is followed in order to prepare you for the University Examination is just a bait to draw you Into this higher curriculum of character formation and development of Universal Love. The acquisition of a few bits of information without the transformation that is necessary is, for you, a matter of pride, though there is very little Justification for the same.

The earth is but a speck in the vast Cosmos; India is a minute portion of that dot; Ananthapur is microscopic particle therein and you are one of the many lakhs of human beings living here. What reason have you to thrust your pride on the attention of others and feel superior?

Women students and teachers have to be ever vigilant that they do not attract the eyes and tongues of young men by their dress, movements, laughter or behaviour. Be a little behind the times, it does not matter; it is better than adopting fashions that outrage the traditions and conventions of this country and Its culture.

Do not bring dishonour to your parents or disappoint them by acting contrary to their dearest plans. The reverence that you offer at the feet of your parents is, let Me assure you, reverence that reaches Me. There are some special lessons and items laid down in this College to instil into you faith and spiritual discipline. Teachers and students much show special interest in them, for they are the unique features of this College, designed for your good and the good of the country. Teachers too must be examples of sincerity, simplicity and mutual co-operation and love; they too must evince interest in prayers, and other Items of spiritual importance.

Ananthapur, Sathya Sai College for Women, 25-7-1975

Attachment, affection, interest---these will create prejudice, partiality, illusion, they hide the Truth; they dull the intelligence. Raaga is roga (attachment is a disease), so far as the enquirer is concerned. One does not become a Yogi to have Raaga (affection); he must be free from favourites, fancies and fondness. Once you attach yourself to some person or habit or mannerism, it will be difficult for you to shake them off.

Sri Sathya Sai