

## 28. Why this College?

*SATHYAM* (Truth) is to be adored and adhered to. It is the highest goal to be won by *saadhana*. So too is *Shaantham* (peace and equanimity). Truth, the Principle of Truth, is immanent in every being; knowing this, the seeker or the student has to be loving and friendly with every living being. This is the message of the scriptures of all lands.

When we examine the life and behaviour of animals, labelled as 'lower,' we can learn many lessons for our own betterment. The elephant, the cow and the deer do not harm or wound or eat other animals. They live on leaves or grass or grain. They lead *Saathwik* (pure) lives. Therefore, they receive reverence and worshipful homage of man. On the other hand, the tiger, the leopard and the wolf have cruel natures; they hurt other animals; they eat up the animals they kill. As a consequence, man is ever trying to keep these *Raajasik* animals at a distance.

Man prides himself as the crown of creation. It is a rare piece of good fortune to be born as a human animal. We all agree with this statement. His is really a holy, sublime, and beneficent role; how then can cruelty, hatred and violence pollute his heart which is the centre of compassion, love justice and equanimity? How has he fallen from the *Saathwik* heights of Divinity to the depths of *Raajasik* qualities like ungratefulness, vengefulness and vandalism?

### **Students are embodiments of unpolluted love.**

Imagine the terror caused among the cattle when a tiger or leopard or wolf enters their shed! They struggle in panic and undergo fearsome panic, until they are felled and eaten. So too, *Raajasik* traits of character relish destroying the *Saathwik* virtues in man.

Students! You are embodiments of unpolluted love. The heart of man has to be saturated with pure feelings, clean impulses, and selfless urges towards service of living beings. Do not, at this stage of your lives, soak it in hate, cruelty and other evil qualities. At present, boys and girls of your age live without awareness of the suffering of others. You are, it can be said, blind and deaf. When a man in agony stands before a blind man and beats his breast, he remains unmoved, since he cannot grasp the tragedy. When some one in distress recites his story and appeals for help, the deaf man is not affected at all. When you see the sufferings of others or listen to their wailings and yet remain unsympathetic and unresponsive, you can be justifiably called blind and deaf.

Often, you yourselves cause injury or mental agony to others. You exult in the humiliation or exploitation you cause. You revel in mean tactics to insult others. Since your hearts are full of low desires they do not react when the hearts of others call out for comradeship. To set right this sorry state of affairs, you have to cleanse and polish the heart into a clear mirror. A mirror reflects all that is before it--the misery, the poverty, the helplessness. But if the mirror is overlaid thick with the dust of ego, it cannot reflect the sadness, yearning for relief. When the heart is clean and clear, it will receive correct impressions of the struggles of your parents, the problems of society and anxieties that pester the country.

### **Students are multiplying their problems**

But, consider what students are contributing today. Instead of resolving problems they are multiplying them. Far from alleviating suffering, they are worsening it. They have themselves become sources of anxiety. They are becoming blind to the sacrifice their parents make to educate them and to the hopes they arouse in them as well as in Society and in the hearts of those

who plan for the country's progress and *prosperity*. Many who have come to this College are blind to the purpose for which this College has been established, viz., to shape generations of students with holy ideals and pure hearts, filled with love.

In the name of education, you spend your time reading trivialities, writing trash and accepting experiences second hand. You do not seek to have elevating first hand experiences yourselves. The physics, chemistry or mathematics that you learnt at college have no practical validity, so far as your daily activities are concerned. In the laboratory you learn that oxygen and hydrogen constitute water. But, when you are thirsty during lunch at home, you cannot put the two together and drink the result. You have to drink water, as prepared by natural forces. For living out your years in peace and harmony, you have to develop common sense and master general knowledge. Poring over books or cramming formulae will not help.

### **Education must teach what is life's goal**

It is foolish to believe that you have to be 'educated,' since it leads to jobs. At present education is oriented to jobs, to secure a living, not to lead a life. Education must teach a person what life is, and what its goal. It must purify the heart and clarify the vision. It must prevent pollution of the hand, heart and head by habits injurious to the individual, society and the nation. It must promote virtues and raise the moral and spiritual standards of the educated.

In times gone by, universities were referred to as "homes of humility" since humility was the characteristic of an educated person. Pride is the root of aggressiveness; it is the nature of wild animals. But the mark of man is humility in the presence of elders, teachers and parents. There is an ancient axiom which says, "Education imparts humility; humility ensures credibility; credibility brings wealth; wealth induces charity; charity confers peace and joy, here and hereafter." Nowadays, all educational institutions emphasise the need for riches. "Become wealthy through the easiest and quickest methods;" that is the slogan. No effort is spent to inculcate humility and reverence, for they are won through discipline alone. Without discipline and self-control man reduces himself to the level of the beast. The stomach is not the central core of man.

### **Youth do not want jobs requiring hardwork**

Youth today longs for a type of work which involves no labour. They want jobs which they can do, sitting comfortably in an airconditioned, room signing files at the places indicated. They revel in sensual pleasures and selfish display, in starched shirts and soft assignments. They shy away from jobs that require physical exertion. Only idlers will prefer such jobs; others will relish and derive delight from hard jobs that try their physical, mental and intellectual powers. The *Gurukulas* (hermitages) of old gave such educational opportunities in plenty to the pupils.

Man does not live for food alone. To concentrate on eating and drinking is foolish. Consider how many millions are struggling on a standard of living much more pathetic than yours. Accept them and involve yourselves in their uplift. Acquaint yourselves with the scriptures of the major faiths, so that you can transmit the lessons of peace, harmony and joy they contain to others who need them more urgently.

Students today have neglected the purpose of education. They feel that the passing of examinations is the be all and end all of the four or five years of College life. How to gain marks by foul means, if fair is beyond reach--that is the primary concern---copying from books or slips

or entering the examination hall with mnemonic writings on the palms---these malpractices have become rampant. Even at this tender age, they follow crooked ways and pride themselves on their degradation.

You must recognise the distinctiveness of this college which distinguishes it from many others. We had no desire to add one more to the list of colleges that are degrading youth. Here, the curricula laid down by the University are taught and you are trained to appear for and pass the examinations conducted by the University, entitling you to the degrees they confer. But, that is not considered the primary purpose of the college.

### **Sai college equips youth to be future leaders**

The real aim of the college is to equip you for the role of future leaders of India, as embodiments of Truth, Justice, Peace and Love; you ought to blossom as true representatives of Indian culture, spreading tolerance, charity and brotherhood throughout the World. Since you are encouraged and enabled to acquire the degrees, your parents send you here; but, we try to instil into you qualities that most other colleges ignore, namely, reverence for elders and parents, humility; we discourage the desire to display and hurt others, to humiliate others and to cater to low sensual pleasures.

You must have read in the Bhaagavatha that Yashodha was approached by the *gopees* (cowherd girls) with complaints involving Krishna; she planned to punish him; she offered Him butter with one hand, to persuade Him to go near her but she had also a rod held in the other hand hiding behind her back. Krishna goes near attracted by the butter but gets corrected by the threat of the rod. You have come attracted by the chance to earn a degree but you are exposed to disciplined life in the hostel. You are taught the scriptures of all faiths; you are persuaded to follow certain uplifting spiritual ideals.

When the patient is reluctant to take the medicine, the physician cannot leave him alone. The patient might even avoid the physician but since he is the well-wisher, the doctor has to be welcomed and the medicine taken. It is not merely for the good of the person who is ill; if he is cured, his parents and kith and kin will benefit; society will benefit; the nation will secure a disciplined, dutiful, devoted, dedicated subject. When other colleges deem their existence fulfilled when the curriculum is taught, this college considers the development of self-reliance, self-confidence, self-sacrifice and self-knowledge as the basic curriculum.

### **Medium language of Sai college is discipline**

There is much controversy 'going on about first language, second language and the third language and the medium language. In this college the medium is discipline. The first, second and third languages are love, service and *saadhana* (spiritual discipline). There is also much talk of progress---helping progress, measuring progress, achieving progress, etc. Do we really progress in securing peace of mind, in harmoniously living together, and in removing ignorance of higher values? No. We are only progressively declining from the human to the bestial level.

We value many-storeyed building as a sign of progress. Persons who spend their time in air-conditioned rooms breathe their own breath over and over and are polluted thereby. Their feet never touch the ground. Sunlight seldom warms their skin. Boots for the feet, pants for the legs, coat for the chest and back, hat for the head and a tight tie round the neck! This is the pitiable plight.

The British rulers needed clerks and managers who can be trained to be docile and devoted. They devised a system of education which could produce people to do such jobs for them. Even today that job-oriented system holds sway, and therefore, we have in India 'educated' persons in thousands desperately in need of "jobs."

### **Students should stand on their own feet**

Students of our college must not seek cushy job; they must not parade their degrees which are really "begging bowls" before office after office and pray for jobs. They should stand on their own feet, exert independently, produce through their own effort enough and to spare for themselves and their parents and be useful to the poor, the illiterate, the diseased and the distressed. Only those who practise this ideal sincerely and to the best of their abilities can claim to honour the maxims: "Duty is God" or "Work is Worship." On the other hand, if, like highway men, you live on the earning of others or on salaries for which you do not offer adequate work in return, your education is a waste and your life itself is a sorry burden.

As soon as you finish your course here and pass the final examination, I would exhort you to go back home and offer grateful homage to your parents. Resolve to fulfil their hopes about you; give them joy. Revere them and pay due honour. Then, learn about the problems that trouble the village or the society and plan out the lines of your service. Engage yourselves in realising those plans. "The people around you must be glad enough to say 'Ah! How good, how useful, how intelligent, this young man has become after being in the Sathya Sai College.' How exemplary is his speech, manners and conduct!" That is the return I expect from you all that we do for you in this college; nothing else.

Do not wander about like ownerless street dogs, enjoying endless wrangles and quarrels. If you fall into that company, you commit the sin of sacrilege. I am confident you will all avoid that fatal path. You must equip yourself to be the guides, teachers and leaders of India and even of the world.

### **Do not waste time in idle talk and scandal**

During your years in this college, I desire two or three modes of behaviour which will help you to mould yourselves into these. Do not waste time in idle talk and empty scandal. Continuous conversation saps one's energy. Talk only on problems concerning subjects of study or projects of service. Youth starts conversation on subjects and end up with talk on 'objects,' they start talking sense and end up with 'senses.' I like silence and I would advise you to talk only when you must and only to the person with whom you have to talk.

Communicate with the minimum words and make them as sweet and pleasant as you can. Second, when you move from the hostel to the college or from one place to another, go in line. Don't form groups; be always open to constructive friendship. Let yours not be an exclusive association. Only cats roam from house to house; only dogs run through highroads and bylanes. Do not reduce yourselves to those levels. Be human, try to raise yourselves up to Divinity. That is my message to you. I bless you that you succeed in this noble endeavour.

*Sathya Sai College, Brindhaavan, 19- 7-1979*