

## 18. To Divinity through service

THIS Cosmos is sustained by one fragment of the Divine (*Ekaamshena sthitham Jagath*), proclaim the scriptures. The universe is permeated by the Divine. The Sun's rays cannot emanate, if there is no Sun; the Universe cannot, exist without God. We say there is a 'pot,' there is a 'picture', there is a 'tank' and so on. The basic word in these statements, "IS," proclaims the existence of God.

The five basic elements which constitute the primary factors in Creation are present throughout the Universe. If the five elements, which are products of creation, have this limitless power of presence throughout the Universe, how can we doubt that the Creator permeates everything in the Universe ?

The first of the five basic elements is *Prithvi* (the earth substance). It is the base on which everything--mountains, forests, dyers, oceans, cities and villages rest. Though the earth is rotating fast, it holds in position all that rests on it. But, what is the base on which the earth so revolves? It is the Divine Principle, the immanent Divine Will which regulates its function. The second element is *Aap* (water), which too is present everywhere in space, whether patent or latent.

### All religions accept the Omnipresence of God

The third, *Agni* (fire) is also omnipresent. Indeed, all living beings do function because of the existence of this latent *Jathharaagni* ('digestive' fire). Fire is present even in inanimate objects like rocks. How else could fire be produced by striking stone against stone?

The fourth element is air. Although air is not patent to the eye, its presence can be noticed in breeze or storm. In living beings, it exists as the inner vital force. The fifth element is *Aakaasha* (space). This ether is present everywhere. The *Upanishaths* (highest experiential philosophy of the *Vedhas*) have therefore declared it as the most pervasive element.

When we understand the nature of these five basic elements that constitute the created universe, it needs no argument to realise the truth asserted by Prahlada, quoted in the Bhaagavatha: "Do not doubt whether God is here and not there. You will find Him wherever you seek Him."

Persons, unaware of the Omnipresence of God, develop antagonisms among themselves based upon religion, caste and race. All religions have accepted the timelessness and the Omnipresence of God. So, it is strange that even those who accept this truth display such narrowness of mind. For, hatred between people professing different religions leads ultimately to the destruction of faith in religion itself. Those who are bent upon destroying religion must be utterly thoughtless. What has to be destroyed is religious bigotry, not religion itself.

### Respect the beliefs and practices of all others

To despise other people's religion out of love for one's own religion, is like demonstrating one's love for one's mother by denigrating the mothers of others. One should realise that other people have the same regard and devotion for their faiths, as one has for one's own religion. Young men of today should, while cultivating attachment to their own religion, respect the beliefs and practices of all others.

To give one example of-intolerance: The *Vedhas* declare that the Divine permeates everything in the Universe: "Eesha-aavaasyam *Idham Sarvam*." ("God resides in all this.") With faith in this

declaration, the people of Bhaarath revere trees, ant-hills, mountains, rivers and even serpents. This holy attitude towards all things in creation is interpreted by some people professing other faiths, which teach the Omnipresence of God, as blind superstition! The obvious absurdity of this dual attitude has not struck them.

The urge in the mind that animates the senses is stronger than the sense organs themselves. The eyes , for instance, are merely instruments for seeing, but seeing itself is a power that is superior to them. Similarly, hearing power is higher than the mere ear. The mind is superior to the sense organs and superior to the mind is "Buddhi" (intellect), the power of discrimination. Above the *Buddhi* is the animating Life Principle the Jeers. Above the *Jeevaathma* (the individual soul) is the *Paramaathma* (Supreme Soul). Between the individual and the Divine, there is an attractive deluding veil, Maaya (illusory power). When this veil falls, the individualised Self and the Universal Omni-self become one.

When the mind turns away from the senses to the *Buddhi* for enlightenment, *Aanandha* (Divine Bliss) starts to flow and the glory of "*Aathma*" (Divine Soul) is revealed. *Buddhi* promotes the search inward. While the sense organs---the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the tensile skin-- all open out towards external objects, true *saadhana* (spiritual discipline) consists in turning the vision inwards, in fact, to swim against the on rushing current. It is seldom realised how near is the goal of self- realisation when once the sense organs are turned inwards.

#### **Every act of service is service to the Divine**

Students should realise the importance of service, to realise the Divine. It makes one's life significant and purposeful. The first requisite for service is the elimination of the ego. Divine grace and the power it. can confer can be acquired by rendering social service in a selfless spirit. Students! Except the Grace of God, nothing else will stand by you, for long. Develop faith in this never-failing source of strength and support. The famous wrestler King Kong, who could stop a fast moving car,. died in a car accident! That reveals the limitations of muscle power. How many kings have left the earth, leaving no trace of their wealth or power. Do not postpone the cultivation of devotion to God. Start serving God through service to fellow-beings. Every act of service, however small, is service to the Divine. Demonstrate by reverential behaviour, selfless service, truthfulness and integrity that you are pursuing the ideals for which the Sathya Sai Educational institutions stand.

*Discourse while inaugurating the social service programme*

*of students of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning*

*at Purnachandra Auditorium, Prashaanthi Nilayam,*

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*The most precious possession is mental equanimity; and it is the one thing you cannot give, even if you have it. Each has to acquire it the hard way.*

*But you can enlighten people on the disciplines through which mental equanimity can be gained, and Shaanathi **can be won.***

*It cannot be earned through a higher standard of life, bush shirts, transistors, sofas, air-conditioners, etc.*

*It cannot be got through riches, through the acquisition of power and authority, through developing physical strength and endurance.*

*When you plan of service, remember this estimate of comparative values.*

*Sri Sathya Sai*