

### 31. Be exemplars of Sai ideals

YOU, children of the Eternal! You are not lumps of flesh. You are embodiments of the Eternal. You are repositories of Bliss. Your hearts are shrines of the Divine. The whole of Nature is your playground; all the things in it are your play-things. Regard yourselves as masters of the Universe and not its bond-slaves. As long as you are bound to your desires, you cannot escape being subject to the material world. With all his prowess, Raavana could not save himself from disaster because he was a slave to his passions. Once you surrender to the Divine, nature becomes your servant.

The boys and girls of today should realise this basic truth. They represent the future of humanity. They are the guardians of the nation's culture. The greatness and prosperity of the country depend on them. The nation's future will be determined by how the lives of the young children are shaped. Today the world is plunged in chaos, violence and wickedness. It is for the young people to see that these demonic forces are routed. For accomplishing any objective two things are needed: *Krishi* (individual effort) and *Kripa* (Divine Grace). The two are like the negative and positive poles of a magnet. If there is only Divine Grace, but no proper effort on the part of the individual, the object cannot be achieved. Divine Grace is always there. We need not go far to seek it. The efforts made to secure it are called *saadhana* (spiritual effort).

#### Children should learn to admit their mistakes

Every person should possess four important qualities: *Shaanthi* (peace), *Sathya* (Truth), *Nirahankaara* (absence of egoism) and absence of *Asuuya* (envy). These four are essential. Suffusing all the four is *Prema* (love). These qualities are not got through studies or from a teacher or as a gift from someone. They can be acquired only by one's own effort. These noble qualities have to be developed from childhood itself. Only then will they stand in good stead in later years.

The first quality is *Sathyam*. "*Sathyameva Jayathe*", says the *Upanishath*. (Truth alone triumphs). What is this Truth? It is adherence to what is true in thought, word and deed. Often many untoward situations arise which render such adherence difficult. Children, for instance, out of fear of punishment or scolding by parents or teachers indulge in prevarication or falsehood and avoid admitting the truth. This tendency results in due course in vitiating their entire life by making them lead double lives. Having regard, therefore, to their future, they should learn from their boyhood to admit their mistakes and speak the truth. There is nothing wrong if they are punished by their parents or teachers for their misdeeds. Through such corrective measures, they will learn to behave properly in their later years. If from the beginning you learn to speak the truth, you will find it easy.

But once you take to lying, to return to the ways of truth is very difficult. Hence, when you are still young and your minds and hearts are pure and untainted, you must cultivate the habit of sticking to truth. By speaking the truth always, your minds will be filled with good thoughts.

You should not give up truth, whatever difficulties you may encounter, whatever troubles or trials may come your way. This is the lesson to be learnt from the inspiring story of Harishchandra, who won undying fame because of his preparedness to sacrifice everything for upholding truth. Material prosperity or positions of authority may come and go. But the reputation for truth and integrity will last for ever. If you install truth and righteousness in your hearts, your lives will become eminently meaningful and worthy.

### **Cultivate freedom from envy**

Next to truth, you must cultivate forbearance. Forbearance endows you with the strength to face "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." A man without forbearance easily succumbs to reverses and difficulties.

Together with truth and forbearance, you have to cultivate freedom from *asuuya*. Envy is like the pest that attacks the root of a tree. It can destroy one's entire life. We may be enjoying many things in life--Knowledge, wealth, position, power and the like. But if the virus of envy enters our minds, it can pollute every thing. We should not give place to envy even in the smallest matter. If a fellow-student scores more marks than you, you should not feel envious. If others do better than yourself, you should feel happy rather than allow yourself to be consumed by envy. If some one is better dressed than yourself or is more wealthy, you should feel that he is enjoying what he has and you should be content and happy with what you have. To be free from envy is a divine quality. It makes you feel happy over others' happiness or success.

### **Learn to make sacrifices for those in need**

And, then, there is Discipline. Without discipline, your life will be beset with pitfalls. Children of Sathya Sai Educational Institutions must set an example in discipline. In big gatherings, they should observe silence and order and restrain their enthusiasm. If children who have gone through the Bal Vikas course indulge in chatter and frequent clapping of hands, they bring discredit to the movement. Whatever the situation, you should observe strict discipline and obey the orders of your teachers or elders. You should also learn to make sacrifices for the sake of others in need. Sacrifice means going to the help of others to the extent of your capacity. If you are not in a position to help others, you must at least refrain from doing any harm. Even that is a form of sacrifice (giving up the tendency to do harm to others.)

Those in power today are engaged in many activities which inflict burdens on the people and create hardships for them. But they are doing precious little to provide facilities for the improvement of children. Even the so-called developed countries are wasting crores of rupees on all kinds of projects, but they do not pay enough attention to the health and welfare of the younger generation. They try to exploit the young in one way or another for their own selfish purposes, but have no concern for the long-term future of these children. What the big powers spend on armaments for six days will be enough to keep in comfort lakhs of children in a whole year.

### **Remember that children have tender hearts**

It is highly important to take care of the health of children. Good health is the basis of everything else in life. The condition of the children in the backward countries is pitiable. Most of them lack nourishing food, proper clothes and roofs over their heads. They are undernourished and weak and suffer from many ailments. Every day 40,000 children are dying on account of malnutrition in the third world countries. I wish the affluent people did something to help these hapless children. They should not be satisfied with their own prosperity and welfare. They have a duty towards those less fortunately placed than themselves. They should go to the help of the poor and the weak not in a spirit of condescension or of extending patronage. They must offer help out of genuine sympathy and fellow-feeling. They must regard such sympathy as one of the primary aims of meaningful living.

Dear teachers! When you teach the children, you must remember that you are engaged in a noble task for the sake of the children entrusted to your care. You must feel that you are educating yourselves when you are educating the children. For instance, when you impart some knowledge to the children, your own understanding of the subject improves. Even when you study books for teaching the children, you also derive joy from the study. Hence you must always have the feeling that whatever you do for others is in reality a service done to the Divine that resides in every one. When teachers do their duty in this spirit, they will be imbuing the children with the spirit of Universal love. Remember that the children have tender hearts and innocent minds. Only if you fill their hearts with love will the world have genuine peace.

**Prashaanthi Nilayam is children's native home**

You have brought these children from distant places, away from their parents, out of your devotion to Bhagavaan. This testifies to your devotion. The children have put up with many difficulties and discomforts out of their devotion to Bhagavaan. They have all come to Prashaanthi Nilayam, out of their love for Bhagavaan. Prashaanthi Nilayam is their native home. Here they can experience a bliss they can find nowhere else. Bhagavaan is more than a mother for all of them. I want you all to go back with joy and with the feeling that you have spent a blissful period in your mother's home. All the expenses of your stay will be borne by the Sai Trust. You may use the money you have brought for the Bal Vikas activities.

I bless everyone who has contributed to the success of this great conference the Sai Organisers, the Seva Dhal volunteers, the teachers and students, with long life and all health and happiness.

*Discourse for Bal Vikaas and Pre-Seva Dal Students, and  
teachers at Puurnachandra Auditorium, Prashaanthi  
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