

7. Give up selfishness: Cultivate unity

ALL the ills Bharat is suffering from are due to the lack of unity. The prevailing deplorable situation in the country after four decades of Independence and the disorder and violence prevailing everywhere are due to the ubiquitous growth of selfishness and self-centredness. It is only when you have ideal leaders, ideal parents and ideal teachers that the students will be inspired to act on right lines.

Embodiments of Divine Love! The people of Bharat have long been the upholders of Truth and Righteousness. Justice has been their basic way of life. Every *Bharatiya* is the inheritor of Truth and Righteousness. It is the bounden duty of every true *Bharatiya* to adhere to Truth and right conduct without deviation. The welfare of the world is the basic belief of *Bharatiyas*. This is their vow and their penance. True *Dharma* (Righteousness) consists in constant practice of Truth and right conduct. In this lies victory.

Forgetting this sacred truth and pursuing transient worldly pleasures, man has become a prey to all kinds of troubles. What *Bharatiyas* have to protect is not the country but Truth and Righteousness; these will themselves protect them.

Every *Bharatiya* youth should have *Sathya* and *Dharma* as his twin ideals and regulate his daily life on that basis. Today the advance of modern science and technology has swept away the old culture and moral values like a typhoon. Moral values are fundamental for human life. Alas! these values have been almost totally destroyed. Science and technology have created formidable problems for mankind in their physical existence. Man's entire life is absorbed in selfish and self-centred pursuits.

Benefits and harm brought by science

It is true that science and technology have conferred some benefits. But they have done greater harm than good. They are undermining the very root of humanness. While providing temporary and transient comforts, science and technology have turned humanity away from the spiritual quest altogether. They have served to encourage ostentation, possessiveness, self-interest, self-conceit and jealousy.

As a result, you do not find any trace of those good qualities which ought to distinguish man as a human being. At every step, man is straying from righteousness. In every word that is uttered, falsehood prevails. Love is absent from his vision. Every desire is misconceived. Every craving is inspired by greed. Sublime ideas have vanished. Spiritual concepts are treated with levity. The human consciousness is getting weakened. Likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion are having free play. In short, what we are witnessing is the eclipse of all that is human. Entire life has become artificial. The urgent task today is to nourish and cherish the human Spirit.

Youths then and now

Fifty years ago, young people strove for the freedom of the country in a patriotic spirit. They tried to follow the example of great national leaders like Sivaji, Samarth Ramdas, Bala Gangadhar Tilak, Sardar Patel and others. They walked in their footsteps. They used to adore the pictures of these leaders.

If you examine the attitude of young people today, you will find chaos and confusion in their hearts. Patriotism has disappeared. Self interest and selfish concerns rule the roost. In their

rooms, in the place of pictures of national heroes, you see only pictures of film stars. These are the deities whom they worship. On their tables you see transistor radios and video sets. Love of the nation has vanished from their thoughts. What is the reason for this? The root cause is the absence of exemplary parents and teachers. Even among the leaders, there are few that can be considered ideal examples. It is only when you have ideal leaders, ideal parents and ideal teachers that the students will be inspired to act on right lines.

Therefore, if today we seek to set the students on the right path and raise them to a higher level, the parents should consider it their primary duty to set the right example. But parents do not seem to pay much attention to this.

Peace has become a casualty

In society today, love of God, fear of sin and social morality have disappeared. It is only when these three are promoted that you can have real human advancement. Peace has become a casualty all over the world, because people have lost the fear of sin, the love of God and basic ethics in social relationships.

Wherever you turn, you see only disorder and conflict today. Nor is that all. Fear has gripped everyone. You are haunted by fear whether in your home or out in the streets. Fear grips you when you get into a bus or a train, whether you are going in a car or in an aeroplane. How is life to be rid of fear?

The whole nation is afflicted by fear in many ways. When will we be utterly free from fear? "*Thyaagenaike amrutatvam aanasuh,*" declares the *Upanishad* (Only by renunciation can immortality be achieved). It is through desirelessness or *vairagya* (detachment) that fear can be banished.

Today people do not understand the meaning of desirelessness. They think that giving up hearth and home is renunciation. This is not what *vairagya* implies. Whatever we do should be done in a spirit of goodwill and service. Everything you do should be regarded as conceived for the nation's well-being. The welfare of all must be looked upon as the motto of the nation.

From very early times, *Bharatiyas* have been offering to other countries treasures of the Spirit. From times immemorial they have lived upto the ideal: "May all the worlds be happy!" To uphold this ideal, the rulers, the scholars, the sages and others made many sacrifices. Today the spirit of sacrifice is not to be seen anywhere.

It is selfishness that is the cause of all the cruelty and violence today. It is more than four decades since Bharat achieved its freedom. What is it we have accomplished after attaining Independence? All that we have achieved are strife, disputes, riots and violence. Selfishness has reared its head in these forty years.

Get rid of selfishness

Embodiments of Love! Get rid of selfishness. Regard yourself as an integral member of society. Develop the faith that your welfare is bound up with the welfare of the society. Develop your social consciousness.

In human life, there are three important things: One is the individual; the second is the family; the third is the society. Today in whatever he does, man is concerned primarily about his individual interests. From there he proceeds towards concern for the family. But few care to take

any interest in what concerns society as a whole. If society is not in good shape, how can individuals be well? Individual welfare is based on social well-being.

Consider every human being as a spark of the Divine. Every man is a child of immortality. Today we are failing to cultivate that sense of unity. All the ills Bharat is suffering from are due to the lack of unity. Union is strength. Lacking unity, we are becoming weak. To promote unity, we have to give up selfishness.

People talk about spirituality. What does it mean? Is it performance of *Japa* or sitting in meditation? No. Spirituality means the quest for oneness. It means discovering the underlying unity in the apparent multiplicity. Preoccupation with one's own destiny is not spirituality. That also is a form of selfishness. Hence, in every way, the awareness that "*Viswam Vishnuswaroopam*" (Cosmos is manifestation of the Divine) should be obtained. The truth of the *Upanishadic* declaration, "*Isaavaasyamidamsarvam*" (All this is permeated by the Divine), should become a firm conviction. Everybody is like a bulb in each of which Truth shines as a manifestation of Divinity. The One has willed to become the many. Therefore, spirituality consists in recognising unity in diversity. All are children of one God. Like the waves of the ocean and the rays of the sun, Love emanates from the Divine in infinite drops. There is an inextricable relationship between God and Love. Hence, "Love is God; live in love." Your lives have to be lived on this basis.

Mental transformation is the need of the day

These days men go through changes but minds do not change. The clothes are varied, but qualities remain same. We need today mental transformation.

I have been coming to Bombay for the past nearly thirty years. You have listened to many discourses and read many books. You have gone to many high-souled persons. You have performed many kinds of service. But how far have you reformed yourselves? There is little change in you. The essence of spirituality is mental transformation.

It has been said: "The mind is the cause of bondage or liberation." Without mental transformation, what is the use of all spiritual *sadhanas*? What is the use of prayers? Prayer does not mean uttering words with the lips. Prayer must come from the heart.

Embodiments of Love/ Remember that the hands that serve are greater than the lips that pray. Dedicate yourselves to service to all. Real humanness consists in the spirit of service. Quantity does not matter; it is the quality of service that counts.

There is competition whether in performing *japa*, *dhyana* (meditation) or *bhajana*. This is not proper. Whatever is done should be performed wholeheartedly and spontaneously. The primary requisite is purification of the heart. When the heart is purified, man gets *Jnanasuddhi* (the Supreme Wisdom). Fill your heart with the Divine. Dedicate every action to the Divine in a spirit of detachment. Divine love can be secured only by dedicated service to the Divine. God responds bounteously to what you offer. Kuchela got, in return for a handful of parched rice given to Krishna, limitless prosperity. Draupadi was rewarded likewise. How can you expect God to love you if you do not love God? God's grace is like a bank. You can draw money from that bank only to the extent to which you have built up deposits through *Thyaga* (sacrifice). Earn God's grace through love and sacrifice.

Lead ideal and exemplary lives

When people claim to be Sai devotees, they should lead ideal and exemplary lives. Broaden your minds. Cultivate human values. Love, Truth, forbearance and compassion are the highest human qualities. Hatred, envy and greed are animal qualities. If you develop at least a few human qualities, you can progress towards God-realisation.

At present, when you approach God, it is only out of selfish concerns. Selfishness is rampant in every action. It is most essential to get rid of selfishness. Only then divinity will manifest itself in you. Develop sacred love in your hearts. The feeling "I and you are one" should grow. Spirituality consists in filling the heart with love, dedicating all actions to the Divine and striving for the welfare of all.

Discourse at Dharmakshetra, Bombay, on 27-4-1990.

There are two evil sirens that entice youth 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 humanness and degrades it into bestiality. Even ochre-robed monks are steadily dragged down to sin by its insidious influence. 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.

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