

## 2. God as friend

*Do not brag about your learning,  
Nor proclaim your affluence;  
Don't lose your head over your wealth,  
Nor boast about your progeny;  
Do not proclaim you are a donor,  
Nor feel elated because you are Swami's sevak;  
Do not exult over your valour,  
Or over your accomplishments;  
When you win the approbation of a few  
The Lotus-eyed Lord will bless you.*

*His feet are everywhere;  
His eyes and Heads are everywhere;  
With His ears in all directions,  
Encompassing everything, stands the Lord.*

*DEAR Students and teachers! Embodiments of Divine Love!* The Lord pervades everything in the cosmos with His myriad feet, hands, eyes, faces and ears. But man, not recognising the fact, imagines he is the doer and indulges in all kinds of speculation, thinking that no one knows about them. The Lord sees everything. No one can conceal anything from Him. He dwells inside and outside every living thing. Hence nothing can be hidden from Him. God dwells in all beings in one and the same form. Although living beings may vary from each other, God is One and indivisible. The sun shines over the water in the lake, in a well, in a vessel, in a river or over the ocean. Although the sun is one, he is reflected in different ways. The containers are varied, but God is one' and the same in all beings. *Anthike Sath* (The Divine is the nearest). There is nothing in the world nearer to one than the Divine.

*God is very much nearer to you than your mother  
And dearer to you than your father.  
You cannot afford to forget such a God.  
Bear this good counsel in mind.*

### **How God reveals Himself**

However, men in their ignorance ask the question: "If God is omnipresent and all-pervasive, why is He not visible to us?" When the sun is shining, clouds which have been caused by the sun's heat hide the rays of the sun. When the sun is not visible because of the clouds, can you say that there is no sun? Likewise, the clouds of doubts and delusion, which arise in man owing to his conceit and ignorance, hide the Divine from him. When a strong wind blows, the clouds are

dispelled and the sun is visible. Similarly, when the winds of love and faith blow, the clouds of doubt and egoism are scattered and God reveals Himself.

Thus, though God is omnipresent, man's lack of faith and his self-conceit prevent him from seeing God. To get rid of this disbelief and egoism, certain spiritual disciplines have to be observed.

### **Three stages in a man's life**

In this context, three concepts have to be understood: *Jnanam*, *Jneyam* and *Jnanagamyam* (knowledge, that which is to be known, and the fruit of knowledge). These have been expounded under different names in *Vedantic* parlance. The primary requisite in the quest for *Jnana* is *Aasakthi* (intense yearning). The second requisite is the undertaking of spiritual exercises. Thereby one achieves the fitness for acquiring the knowledge.

In terms of the career of a student, these three stages may be described as follows: *Vidhyarthi* (student), *Adhikari* (holder of an office) and Pensioner (superannuation). As a student, one has to pursue his studies diligently and acquire knowledge. Then, as an official, he has to use that knowledge in the most effective manner. This is *Udyogalakshanam* (the mark of an efficient officer).

When one discharges one's duties properly, observes the prescribed rules, engages himself in selfless activities, does his work with discipline and devotion and, on reaching superannuation, retires on a pension, he is bound to experience peace and happiness. In the spiritual field, the acquisition of intense interest represents the stage of studentship. But interest alone is not enough. Efforts to realise the spiritual objective have to be made. He has to recognise the basic truths of the spiritual quest. And those truths have to be practised. Only then the fruit of *Jnana*, in the form of Realisation of the Divine, is secured. The pursuit of *Jnana* (supreme knowledge) calls for *Bhakti* (devotion). *Jneya* (the object to be known) corresponds to *Udyogam* (the office to be occupied). Pension corresponds to *Jnanaphala* (the fruit or fulfilment of knowledge). These three stages can be compared to *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. Bliss is the fulfilment of what began with studentship.

### **Accept God as your only true friend**

It should be realised, however, that there is no greater friend for anyone than God. He is beyond the reach of praise or censure. He does not give up man on the ground of the latter's failure to come up to His expectations. That is why God has been given the appellation, *Suhrid* (a good friend). God desires no offerings from any devotee. God is the only one friend who confers benefits on devotees without expecting any return. Nevertheless man does not readily accept such a friend. Only the man who accepts God as such a friend and is guided by His advice can understand the full meaning of Divine friendship. Faith of this nature alone constitutes true *Jnana*.

In the comprehension of the truth about the Divine, there are four different approaches. These are: *Yasthika*, *Asthika*, *Asthika-Nasthika* and *Nasthika*.

*Yasthika* is one, who, on experiencing a Divine fragrance, seeks to find out the source of the fragrance and after a diligent search, gets at the flower which is the source. In spiritual terms, this means that the seeker studies the *Vedas*, the *Puranas* and other scriptures and tries to realise the Divine as revealed by them. *Yasthikatva* means embarking on a diligent search to discover the source of the Real and to experience it.

*Asthatva* is devoting one's entire life to the search for the source of the fragrance.

*Asthatva-Nasthatva* means, making the search for the source of the fragrance and, on failing in the attempts, giving up the search out of frustration and despair.

*Nasthatva* is one who denies the existence of the fragrance, because he is afflicted by a disease which prevents him from smelling the fragrance.

### **Recognise the basic purpose of life**

Caught up in one or other of these approaches, men spend their lives in a wayward manner. This is the plight of students today. Some of them recognise the fragrance (of the Spirit), some others make the efforts to search for the source, some others are content to enjoy the fragrance without seeking the source and yet others declare that they are quite satisfied with the material comforts of the world and are not interested in anything beyond them,

This last category of persons are unable to recognise the basic purpose of life. They seem to consider that the sole aim of life is to acquire wealth, eat and drink and enjoy material comforts. This surely cannot be the main purpose of life. To recognise the primacy of human birth among living beings and yet fail to realise one's inherent divinity is supremely unfortunate.

Man needs a healthy body for a healthy mind, filled with good thoughts. It must be recognised that sports and music have been designed to confer health and happiness on man. But physical fitness alone is not enough. Mental health is equally important. Together with the gross physical body everyone has a *sookshma sarira* (subtle body). One has to take good care of this subtle body also. For this, spiritual exercises will have to be performed which will help one to realise the Divine.

There are three benefits to be derived from sports and games: team spirit, mutual understanding and joy. Even if men speak different languages and differ in their habits and cultures, in the field of sports they have a common bond, a spirit of camaraderie.

### **Face with courage all ordeals in life**

True education consists in the acquisition of good qualities, cultivation of good thoughts, truthfulness, devotion, discipline, and dedication to duty. These are also the qualities that should be acquired through sports and games. These qualities serve to impart to the subtle body health and joy. Seek to acquire the friendship of God, than whom there is no greater friend in the world. You witnessed the daring manner in which motor cycle riders rode through a blazing tunnel.

Similarly you have to face with courage the ordeals in life. When our Institute students go out into the world, they should be able to face all challenges and overcome them. For this purpose, all our Institute authorities and staff have been offering encouragement to our students.

You all know the work of Prof. Saraf during the past five years. He is a great devotee. Even before coming here, he had been engaged in propagating education in human values. He came here to earn the grace of Bhagavan and not in search of a job. He was anxious to spend the evening of his life in a sacred way, imparting joy to others. Moving among students as a student, among teachers as a teacher and among devotees as a devotee, he infused enthusiasm in one and all. It was the good fortune of the students that such a person should come here as Vice-Chancellor. There are, however, some government rules which have to be complied with. In conformity with these rules, he has decided to retire from the Vice-Chancellorship from today.

### **The Trinity of Sathya Sai Institute**

The person to succeed him should be equally pure-hearted and dedicated. Our Sampath is such a person who has come here to spend the rest of his life in Swami's presence in a dedicated manner. (Prof. Saraf and Prof. Sampath were garlanded). He will assume office from today. The Principal of the Brindavan campus, Anil Kumar will speak a few words about both of them. (After Prof. Anil Kumar's speech, Swami continued His discourse). Both Prof. Sampath and Prof. Saraf have come here to render service and not to earn a salary. Both are honorary workers, giving up high offices Sampath has undertaken this assignment in order to turn out ideal students in the Institute. It is a great piece of good fortune for our students to secure such worthy and eminent Vice-Chancellors.

At the time our Institute was set up, we had as Vice-Chancellor Prof. Gokak, who was a renowned scholar, a literateur, poet, educationist and eminent in many other fields. He was our first Vice-Chancellor. After him, Saraf succeeded him and rendered service with devotion and dedication. From today Sampath who has distinguished himself in various fields and been eminent in the scientific world, is taking over as Vice-Chancellor.

These three may be regarded as the trinity for our Institute. All the three are without any self-interest or expectation of reward. Hoping that you students will follow the example of these pure-hearted and eminent men and achieve in life equally eminent positions, I am blessing you all and concluding My discourse.

### **Swami's love comes and grows**

*Dear Students!* Vice-Chancellors come and go. But Swami's love comes and grows! Any number of Vice-Chancellors may come and go, but the loving bond between them and Swami and the heart-to-heart relationship will only grow and not weaken. Vice-Chancellors may change places and chairs, but their hearts will remain unchanged!

As Saraf is filled with this attitude, we do not propose to let him go. As he decided to devote the rest of his life to Swami and to social service, we have made him a member of the Central Trust and we will continue to avail ourselves of his services for the Institute. Hence, you need have no apprehension that Saraf may go elsewhere. He will stay among us and continue to help us. These two--Saraf and Sampath are both devoted to Swami and I expect they will work together as Rama and Lakshmana to serve the Institute.

*Discourse in the Institute Auditorium on 14-1-1991.*

*The last sloka of the Gita says: "Yathra Yogeswarah Krishno  
Yathra Partho Dhanurdharah, Thathra Sreer Vijayo Bhuthir  
Dhruva Neethir Mathir Mama" (Where there is Krishna the  
Supreme Yogi and where also there is Arjuna bearing his bow,  
there victory for truth and justice is assured). This verse assures  
victory not only when Arjuna wields the bow in the presence of  
Krishna. Every one of you can be Arjuna and wield the bow and  
achieve victory. For the bow is but the symbol of courage and  
faith, of high resolve and undaunted action. How can you become  
Arjunas? Arjuna means white, pure, unsullied, without blemish. As  
soon as you become that and hold the bow (the Upanishads*

*declare that the Pranava or Om is the arrow and God is the target), Krishna is ready with His presence, for He is everywhere at every moment. There is no need to invite Him or install Him. He will answer from your very heart.*

*BABA*