

Keep Your Focus On God Constantly

Kodaikanal
18 April 1993

Editor's note. This discourse does not appear in the *Sathya Sai Speaks* series. It appeared in *Sanathana Sarathi*, October 2016.

All names and forms are manifestations of the Supreme Being, who is the embodiment of peace and auspiciousness.

He is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss Absolute, and non-dual.

He is Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Goodness, Beauty).

(Sanskrit verse)

The mind is responsible for everything.

Merely going to the forest is no guarantee for you to attain liberation.

If you transcend the mind, the result is the same whether you are at home, in a forest, or in a temple.

(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

What stands between Self and non-self (*Atma* and *Anatma*), worldly and spiritual, good and bad, and merit and sin is the human mind. It is like a wall in the mansion of life, which causes division in unity. One can experience unity when one removes this obstacle of the mind. The One willed to become many (*Ekoham bahusyam*). Only one manifested into many. People see diversity in unity due to the mental delusion caused by their ego and attachment.

Ego and attachment cause delusion

We construct a big building, with a bathroom, a drawing room, a kitchen, a bedroom, and so on. What is between the rooms? It is only the walls constructed by us. When we remove these walls, the entire premises becomes a big hall.

Just like the walls in a building, the human mind is the cause of diversity in human life. By its very nature, the human mind has both posi-

tive and negative thoughts. One should understand this principle of the mind and conduct oneself with discrimination.

Negative thoughts arise in the mind when it associates with all that is worldly. Involvement of the mind in worldly scenario increases mental agitation and anxiety. Negative thoughts develop more and more because of mental anxiety. Positive and negative thoughts are just like the warp and woof of cloth. If you remove the threads, you can do away with cloth. When there are no thoughts, there is no mind. It is the negative thoughts that harm people. These can be controlled only by constant practice.

Once, Arjuna asked Krishna, "Swami, the mind is very fickle. It is also very powerful. It is not that easy to control the mind." He prayed to the Lord to teach him how to control the mind.

Krishna said, "Oh madcap! In this world, nothing is easier than controlling the mind. Wherefrom does the mind originate? It originates out of thoughts. If you make your thoughts proper and good, you will never have any problem with the mind. What practice should you do? Only one practice. Have full faith that the entire universe is the very form of God. Recognise that there is one divine principle in the entire diversity of many names and forms in this world.

Jewels are many but gold is one.

Cows are many but milk is one.

Beings are many but breath is one.

Flowers are many but worship is one.

Religions are many but goal is one.

Beings are many but *Atma* is one.

(Telugu poem)

Bulbs may be of different wattages and different colours, such as red, black, and blue, but the electric current in all of them is one. Like-

wise, beings have different names and forms but Divinity in all of them is one and the same. Just as there is one current in all the bulbs, the same *Atma* is in all beings.

We have to practise this and recognise, “I am the Self, I am the *Atma*.”

But “I am the *Atma*.” is also a thought. Even that thought should not be there because it means I and *Atma* are two entities. It is duality. Where there is duality, there is ignorance. *A man with a dual mind is half blind*. Today we are not totally blind. We don’t have clear vision. We are just half blind.

To get away from this half blindness, we should get away from this dual feeling of I and Self. We should say, “I am I.” We should enter the path of oneness. Arjuna also followed this path.

God is like the current. You cannot see the current separately. It has no form. When the current enters the bulb, it gives light. In the fan, it gives you a cool breeze. In the stove, it helps you to cook. In a machine, it makes it work. You can make use of the current in an instrument. Without the instrument, it is not possible to make use of the current.

The body, the mind, the intellect, the ego, the senses are merely instruments. The *Atmic* principle in them is like the current, which makes them function. They cannot function without the divine principle.

Recognise the value of human life

People should try to know the divine principle that makes all the organs function. For this, the form of the Divine is most essential. Some say that God has no form. The one who feels so is ignorant, without any knowledge. Form is most essential.

You want liberation. You want bliss. You want peace. You want to experience Divinity. How do you experience it? You want to drink milk, water, or sweet pudding (*payasam*). For this, you need a tumbler or a vessel. Without a container, you can’t take the material. So, you need a container for everything you partake of.

When the container of the body receives bliss, you can experience it. Divinity is also like a liquid; to experience it you need the container of your body. You cannot make use of this liquid otherwise. If you have no container as such, at least you should join both palms and make a container.

Hence, container is most essential. That is the body. In the temple of the body, the Self is the eternal indweller. The body is a temple and the indweller is God (*Deho devalaya proktho jivo Deva sanathana*). It is not enough to merely think of God. You have to make appropriate effort.

- Will the darkness in the world be dispelled by the message of light?
- Can the disease be cured by merely listening to the efficacy of the medicine?
- Can the poor get rid of poverty by listening to the principles of economics?
- Can hunger be satiated by mere repetition of the names of various delicious dishes?
- No. You can attain bliss only when you put your knowledge into practice.

(Telugu poem)

You have to acquire, experience, and catch hold of what you aspire to. To dispel darkness, you need light.

You don’t need to worry how long it will take you to remove this darkness that has been with you for many lives. A building may be closed for ten years. There may be pitch darkness day and night in that building for ten years. But it does not take much time to dispel that darkness. As soon as you light a lamp, the entire darkness would go in a moment.

It is enough if you know this truth once. You don’t need a long time for this. People do not recognise how sacred, valuable, and noble human life is. To make efforts to know the value of one’s own Self is true spiritual practice.

A diamond does not know its value. The one who owns the diamond and the one who has discrimination really know its value. How is it that people do not know their own value? The reason is ego. It is because of ego that people have forgotten their true nature. They have forgotten their own truth because of identification with

this ephemeral, transient, physical world. This is the cause of all troubles. We see with our eyes, we listen with our ears, we experience with our mind, and consider this world to be true. How long does it last?

Turn your mind Godward

Today you are all listening to Swami's Discourse; you see Swami and experience the bliss. How long does this truth last? It lasts up to the time you return home at night, take your food, and go to bed. After you go to sleep, you have many dreams. In the dream, this waking state is not there. Believing all that happens in the dream, you experience pleasure and pain.

But how long does the dream last? It lasts until you wake up. In the waking state, there is no dream. In dream, there is no waking state. But you are there both in the waking state and in the dream state. You are omnipresent. What is that omnipresence? That is Divinity. You are the very form of Divinity.

When you understand these simple things, you will recognise even profound truths. But people today worry about the past. There is no use worrying about the past. The path that you have already traveled —why look back at that? Past is past, forget the past.

Thinking of the future, you build castles in the air. But the future is not sure. Who has full faith that they will see tomorrow? So, there is no use thinking about tomorrow. The past is past. The future is not sure. Don't brood over future.

Live in present. This is not ordinary present. This is omnipresent. Past results are in the present. Future results are also in the present. The seed sown earlier is a plant today. Had you not sown the seed last year, you would not have had the tree today. The seed of the future is also present in the present tree. The present tree is, therefore, an omnipresent tree with past and future seeds. Similarly, present time is omnipresent. Therefore, be happy in the omnipresent.

Why are people grief-stricken today? Because they forget the present and worry about

the past and future. The reason for both is the mind.

The mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of humanity (*Manah eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayo*). Swami said this many times.

You put a lock on the door. To open the lock, you insert the key and turn it to the right. Then the lock opens. To lock it, you turn the key to the left. The same lock, the same key. The difference is only in turning right or left.

In the same way, heart is the lock, mind is the key. Turn God-side, you get detachment; turn world-side, you get attachment. Turn the mind toward God, you get liberation. Turn the mind toward the world, you get bondage. So, the mind is responsible for both liberation and bondage.

The other day, Swami mentioned individual practice, family practice, and community practice. The world will progress through these three practices. What do you mean by individual practice? It is the spiritual practice done by the individual himself. What is the practice — is it chanting, meditation, or spirituality? No! None of these. It is the full blossoming of the individuality of a person.

Without blossoming of one's own individuality, all practices are useless. Individuality is needed. How do you develop that? You should never take to narrow path. Then only will you have the full development of your personality.

What do you mean by personality in the first instance? Personality signifies manifestation of the latent divinity of the individual. The body of a person does not mean their personality. Who is truly a person? One who manifests their latent bliss is a person in the true sense of the term.

Manifest your latent Divinity

How was this word 'person' derived? It is a derivative of the Roman word *persona*. First of all, we have to know what is meant by *persona*. Jesus, who descended from divinity, is called *persona*. So, *persona* means divinity. This means that divinity is present in every person. That divinity is omnipresent.

Let us think of another simple subject. You say, this is my body, this is my mind, this is my hand, this is my nose, these are my eyes, etc. Everything is mine, mine, mine. Then who am I? Put the question. Here also lies the personality. Here also lies omnipresence.

You say, my eye. In this word eye also there is I. You say, my hand, my body, my stomach, my mind. I is there in all of them. So, I is everywhere. That I denotes your true personality.

You say, "I have come." Who is the one that has come? The one that has come is the body. When you say, "I came yesterday," you mean the body. So, that I identifies with the body. But the divine I is beyond name and form. Though it shines in different ways, it remains one.

Truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names (*Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti*). It is only one, not two. That is your true Self. In the English alphabet, you must have seen the letter I. In numbers also, one is written as 1. So, 1 and I are similar.

However, if you add up I plus I, I plus I a million times, its total will be I only. But when you add up 1 plus 1 plus 1, you get millions. So, I will remain one only. That is the *Atma*. But when you write it as number 1, it becomes millions. There is unity in diversity. When you consider the body as I, you get multiplicity. When you realise *Atma* as I, you get unity.

The *Upanishads* teach you to understand unity in diversity. Beings are many, breath is one. Nations are many, earth is one. You should never say, "I am an American, I am an Australian, I am a Britisher, I am an Indian." Not like that. No! All belong to the same earth. Divinity in all of you is the same.

What is this earth? In Sanskrit, we call it *bhumi*. But in the spiritual sense it is called *Bhuma* which means unlimited Brahman. The earth is not permanent but *Bhuma* is permanent. Understanding this truth connotes true spirituality.

However, do not consider the world as an obstacle in the path of spirituality. Living in the world, do your duty, discharge your responsibility,

but keep the focus on the goal; never forget it.

Here is a small example. A housewife goes to the river. She cleans the vessel, fills it with water, keeps it on her head and walks her way back while conversing with other women. She may even quarrel with them, but she will never forget the container, which she has kept on her head.

There is another example. A dancer performs a dance. She moves her hands, turns her eyes this way and that way while following the rhythm and observing the tune. But in spite of all this, she performs the dance correctly. She has focus on her dance. No distraction can make her forget her dance. This should be our true aim in life.

Always remember that you are the Atma

You may be a householder; you may be a student or a businessman. Whatever task you may be engaged in, keep your focus on your aim of knowing the *Atma*. That is spirituality.

Spirituality is not merely limited to spiritual practices. Keeping the mind focused constantly on the *Atma* and experiencing bliss in the heart is true spirituality. Then whatever you do, it will become sacred and worthwhile.

But you have to keep a watch on the mind because the mind stands as an obstacle in everything. Keep the mind aside. Tell the mind, "Don't stand between God and me. You relate to the world. My relationship with God is sacred and spiritual." Pacify the mind in this way and keep it cool.

There is a very good ideal in the *Ramayana*. While walking in the forest, Sita followed Rama, and Lakshmana followed Sita to protect her. It was not a royal road; they just walked one behind the other on a narrow path. At one point, Lakshmana desired to see Rama. But in between was Sita. He could not dare to overtake Sita or show anger toward her lest it should displease Rama, because she is the very property of Rama. So, if he prays to mother Sita, "Mother, please give me the way, so that I can see Rama", she will certainly oblige. Then Rama

will be happy, Sita will be happy and Lakshmana will also be happy.

This anecdote illustrates a profound truth. Lakshmana is the individual Self (*Jivatma*), Sita is illusion (*maya*), and Rama is *Atma*. All three are one behind the other. When the individual Self wants to see God, illusion comes in between as obstacle.

You should not have hatred for illusion (*maya*), because illusion is the vesture of God. Instead, pray wholeheartedly. Then there will be no illusion, and you will see God. You can never overcome illusion through hatred. You have to make friendship with illusion. With good words, it will give you the way, and you can see the Lord.

Illusion (*maya*) is, in fact, our own delusion. Otherwise, it has no existence. It is our imagination. That imagination should go.

Here is a small example. There is a rope. But in the darkness you are afraid, mistaking it as a snake. No snake has come; it is only your illusion. Switch on a torch and see. The rope remains as it is, there is no snake.

The snake has not gone, the rope has not come. First, the rope had not gone and the snake had not come. It is not that the snake ran away as you switched on the torch. Then and now it was and is the same rope. That which came and disappeared was illusion. Illusion (*maya*) has no separate form as such. It is only thoughts that constitute it. Fill your thoughts with love and proceed on the path of sacrifice. Then you will never be affected by illusion.

But you struggle for your selfish interests. You are afraid what others would think, what others would say. Why should you have fears like this? If you do not chant the Name of the Lord now because of such baseless fears, then who will come to your rescue when the messengers of death take hold of you?

When the messengers of Yama (god of death)
put the noose around your neck and start
dragging you away, saying, come, let us go.
When your relations tell your family members to
take you out of the house, saying your end
has approached.

And when your wife and children start weeping
and wailing,
How can you chant the Name of Hari?
(Telugu Poem)

Start early, drive slowly, reach safely. Don't delay and waste time. Start now. Experience the bliss of chanting the Divine Name now. Later is later. Next is next. Do not waste time at all.

Engage your mind in the practice of sacrifice. Take to the path of renunciation with due practice. This is the right attitude of the mind. In the midst of all kinds of thoughts and activities, always remember that you are the *Atma* and nothing but the *Atma*. Never forget these divine feelings. Have the feelings at all times, at all places, everywhere that you are divine.

There is no other spiritual practice greater than this. Nothing more is necessary. You don't need to leave your duty and responsibility. Discharge your duties with divine feelings. Then only will you attain lasting peace.

—Bhagavan's Divine Discourse at Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal on 18 April 1993.