

## Discipline is the Life Principle of Man

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Birds and animals do not have any type of education, yet they lead a life of discipline. But, alas, man, who is endowed with all intelligence, does not lead a disciplined life. What else can I convey to this assembly of the noble and saintly people?

(Telugu poem)

### *Embodiments of Love!*

Discipline is like the primordial life principle for every living being. For all human beings, it is like their backbone. Discipline means to follow certain rules and regulations implicitly. These rules regulate the life of a person and lead them on the path of goodness. Otherwise, the person will meet their downfall.

Without discipline, there can be no well-being (*Na sreya niyamam vina*). Humanness cannot survive in the absence of rules and regulations. The entire human race will be wiped out if there is no discipline.

### **No society or nation can exist without discipline**

Discipline cannot be acquired from books, nor can it be taught by a teacher. Discipline should become the habit in one's day-to-day life in a natural manner. It is essential to follow discipline every moment of one's life from morning to evening. It is necessary for every community, every society, every race, and every country.

Even in the field of politics, discipline is very necessary. No society or nation or political system or race can exist without discipline. It is discipline that brings about unity between person and person, person and society, and one society and the other. Therefore, discipline is the hallmark of human life.

It is essential to follow discipline not only in our speech but also in games, sports, and other activities.

We devotional singing (*bhajans*). There may be any number of people singing *bhajans* in chorus, but they should all sing at the same pitch. If each person sings at a different pitch and octave (*sruthi*), it will not be pleasing to the ear. Therefore, singing in chorus requires great discipline.

While playing games, the referee tells the players to follow certain rules. Every player, including the captains of the teams, should follow these rules implicitly. At times, the players are so much absorbed in the game that they forget themselves and commit certain mistakes. They may not be aware of their mistake, but the referee who observes this will at once blow the whistle. As he does so, every player should stop where they are. When the whistle is blown, the entire play comes to a standstill. Those who continue to play without caring for the whistle violate the discipline.

Since there is lack of discipline in all fields of human activity, life has become a nightmare. Therefore, discipline is very essential in every field of human activity and in all professions like business, agriculture, etc.

People who occupy positions of authority should also follow discipline and should not misuse their power. Just because they have a pen in their hand, they should not write anything they like. Since the tongue has no bone and can be twisted in any manner, one should not speak as one pleases.

Observe appropriate limits in your writing and speech. Before saying anything, enquire whether what you are going to say is proper or not. Do not write anything arbitrarily, because it may cause great danger to you in the future. Therefore, take proper care while writing something.

The only way to safeguard your position is to follow proper discipline. When you have the protection of discipline, you will not need any other protection. Your discipline itself will provide protection to you.

### **Discipline in sitting**

Discipline is also necessary in walking, sitting, and even in laughing. Some people walk in such a way that even a forty-foot-wide road is not sufficient for them to walk. They keep walking this way and that way as they like.

The proper way of walking is to walk on the footpath without causing any obstruction to traffic. On the other hand, if you think that the entire road is for your individual use and walk this way and that without following discipline, you would not only violate the traffic rules but would also become the cause of harm to others. Take care not to cause any inconvenience to others.

Therefore, it is said: Help Ever, Hurt Never. You should observe discipline that will not only benefit you but will be beneficial to others also.

Observance of discipline should be started at an early age. Start early, drive slowly, reach safely.

Discipline is absolutely necessary for students. In fact, it is necessary not only for students but also for officers, teachers, and all citizens. When you come across your elders, know how to offer respect to them. Always sit in a proper posture, keeping in mind in whose presence you are sitting. Even in such small matters, follow proper discipline.

When small children sit, they sit with their backs bent like a bow. They should not bend their spine in this manner. They should sit properly, keeping their spine straight. When you keep your spinal column straight, your thoughts will directly reach your intellect. In this way, you can attain concentration of mind in a short time.

Our spinal column encases the central nerve current (*sushumna nadi*). When you keep the spine straight, the serpent power or spiritual power located at the base of the spine (*kundalini sakthi*) will rise through the central nerve current directly to the thousand-petaled lotus in the head (*sahasrara chakra*).

What does “serpent power” mean? People who know yoga say that the serpent power (*kundalini sakthi*) lies at the coccygeal plexus (*mooladhara chakra*) in the form of a serpent and gradually rises upward and ultimately reaches the *sahasrara chakra*.

During the practice of yoga, the flow of oxygen is blocked in the process of doing *breath control* (*pranayama*). This is also called “holding the breath (*kumbhaka*). When the flow of oxygen to the coccygeal plexus (*mooladhara chakra*) is blocked in the process of holding the breath, the serpent power, or spiritual power located at the base of the spine (*kundalini*) will slowly rise upward for the sake of oxygen.

*Kundalini* is not a serpent; it is a type of energy, and it rises upwards crossing all the *chakras* in the spine. Therefore, you should keep your backbone straight so as to enable the *kundalini shakti* to rise upwards smoothly. That is why people who practise yoga sit straight.

This is a very good practice. It gives you memory power and develops the power of concentration. Therefore, sitting is also a great discipline.

In order to follow this discipline properly, certain purifications are also necessary. First of all, purify your body. What does purification mean? It is not mere cleaning of the body with soap and water. You should engage yourselves in good deeds to purify the body. It is only the good deeds that can purify it.

Good deeds give mental purity (*Chittasya shuddhaye karmah*). Purity of heart is possible only through good deeds. You should purify your mind with good thoughts. When the body and the mind are purified in this manner, the intellect will always remain pure.

What is the primordial sound that emerges from the body? *Soham, Soham, Soham* (That I am). From where does this I (*aham*) emerge? It emerges from the *Atma*. The mind is born out of this I (*aham*).

Speech is born out of the mind. Therefore, this I is the son of the *Atma*; the mind is the grandson, and speech is the great grandson. Hence, the great grandson, the grandson and the son, all belong to the same family.

Therefore, the mind should be as pure as the *Atma*. Likewise, speech should also be as pure as the mind. There is an intimate relationship between the I (*aham*), mind, speech, and the *Atma*. Fill these with sacred feelings.

### Discipline in speech

At times, we go back on our words. There is no greater sin than this. Emperor Bali said, "Is there a greater sin than going back on one's own promise?" Therefore, protect the purity of your speech.

When Baba was in Shirdi, many devotees went for His *darshan*. In Bandra, Mumbai, there lived a person by name Tarkhad with his wife and a sixteen-year-old son. His wife and son had immense faith in Baba. Tarkhad would never put any hurdle whenever they wanted to go to Shirdi.

Since Tarkhad was associated with the Prayer Society (*Prarthana Samaj*), he did not like going on any pilgrimage. Therefore, in spite of repeated requests of his wife, he never visited Shirdi. This also was a sort of weakness. What does it matter if you are associated with a particular religious sect? You may belong to any religious group, you should realise the truth that God is one.

Some people take to wrong path in the name of caste and religion. Tarkhad told his wife and son, "I will not come. You can go."

His son said, "Father! I don't want to go."

The father asked, "Why you don't want to go?"

The son replied, "In my daily worship, I follow a certain discipline implicitly. Every day, I offer sugar candy to Baba as a food offering (*naivedyam*). Having the faith that Baba has accepted this food offering, I partake of it as sanctified food (*prasadam*) of Baba. I don't want this practice to be disrupted. Therefore, I don't want to go to Shirdi."

The father loved his son very much. Since he did not want any hurdle to come in the way of his son's pilgrimage to Shirdi, he said to him, "My dear! I will perform this task. You go."

The son emphatically asked his father, "Will you really do it? Will you worship Baba as I do everyday and offer the sugar candy to him and partake of it as sanctified food? Give me a promise. Then

I will go to Shirdi. Otherwise, I won't go."

Observing the deep devotion of his son, the heart of the father melted. "How noble is this boy who follows discipline religiously! Though I am much older than him, I lack this sense of discipline", he thought. The father promised his son that he would do it.

The mother and son left for Shirdi. The father performed the worship in a befitting manner as per the promise he gave to his son. Just as his son would do, he would offer sugar candy as *naivedyam* to Baba and partake of it as sanctified food (*prasadam*) before his lunch in the afternoon. He followed this daily routine for a few days.

Next day was Tuesday. That day morning, he had a bath, performed worship, had his breakfast, put on his dress and went to his office. When he returned from his office in the afternoon for lunch, he asked his cook to bring the sanctified food.

The cook said, "Sir, as you were in a great hurry, you forgot to offer sugar candy as *naivedyam* to Baba in the morning."

The father felt very sorry for having broken the promise given by him to his son. He was worried not only because he had not offered sugar candy to Baba but also because he had not kept his word.

Next day, Tarkhad's wife and his son came to Baba to offer their salutations to him. Baba said to Tarkhad's son, "My dear son! Yesterday, I went to Bandra but nobody offered food to me. Even the sugar candy that you used to offer daily was not offered. I came back very hungry. Will you give me something to eat now?"

Tarkhad's son was shocked to hear these words of Baba. When he went back to his room, he buried his head in the lap of his mother and started shedding tears. He told his mother, "Father did not keep his promise and did not offer sugar candy as *naivedyam* to Baba, so Baba returned to Shirdi hungry and disappointed. Mother, I will not stay here any longer because I don't want to violate my discipline. I will return to Bandra at once."

As he was saying this, Baba sent a person by name Jog to him with a message. What was the message? "You don't need to go back now. It is your father who has not kept his promise, not you. Therefore, my immense grace is there on you.

You can stay here as long as you want.”

The son stayed in Shirdi for ten days, more but all the while he was full of disappointment and dissatisfaction.

When he returned home after ten days, his father apologised to him. “Though you are young and I am older than you, I request you to forgive me”, said his father. Then the son replied, “Seek forgiveness from Baba, not from me.”

Whatever community or culture you may belong to, always keep your word. You may belong to Brahmo Samaj<sup>1</sup>, I may belong to Arya Samaj, someone else may belong to Daiva Samaj, but everyone should observe the sanctity of his speech.

Truth is one. It is very essential to adhere to truth. You argue in a court before a judge. If you yourself do not adhere to truth, you will become the cause of ruin of many individuals and families.

You may have studied law. Emperor Manu taught many sacred codes of conduct in his treatise. All that you have studied in law will become useless if you do not adhere to truth. You can have the direct manifestation of divinity when you follow the code of conduct implicitly in your life.

### **Discipline in eating**

We should observe discipline in eating also. We should eat only as much as it is necessary. When we eat in excess, we will suffer from indigestion. But many a time, we don't observe this discipline. We don't listen to the voice that comes from within us.

Before eating food, we chant this prayer:

Brahman is the ladle as well as the oblation.  
He is the sacrificial fire as also the sacrificer.  
He is the goal of one who is engaged in the act  
of sacrifice.

*Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir  
Brahmagnou Brahmanahutam  
Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam  
Brahma Karma Samadhina.*

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<sup>1</sup> A religious reform movement of people who worship Brahman as the highest reality. Arya Samaj and Daiva Samaj are other such movements.

When you pray in this manner before you partake of your food, God immediately responds thus:

I am present in all beings in the form of digestive fire.

United with the exhalation (*prana*) and inhalation (*apana*),

It is I who consume the four kinds of food.

*Aham Vaishvanaro Bhutva  
Praninam Dehamasrita  
Pranapana Samayukta  
Pachamyannam Chaturvidham.*

“I am present in you in the form of digestive fire (*vaishvanara*). Give me food only as much as is necessary.” This is the command that comes from within us.

But you eat much more when the food is tasty. Then the digestive fire present in your stomach starts cautioning you repeatedly, “Be careful. Be careful. Do not put anything more.” But you do not listen to this. You go on loading your stomach with tasty food items, thinking whether you would get them again or not. Ultimately, the stomach becomes weak and you suffer. Therefore, you should observe proper discipline in eating.

If you do not follow this discipline, you will suffer from indigestion. Indigestion is the root cause of so many diseases. All diseases stem forth from bad stomach. Therefore, you should fill only three parts of your stomach and leave the fourth part empty. If you do so, you will be following the proper discipline in eating. Follow this discipline religiously everyday.

### **Discipline in actions**

Whatever you do from dawn to dusk, perform all your activities with proper discipline. Be it worship or walking or sitting or eating, everything should be done in a disciplined way. Then your life will become exemplary.

Discipline in whatever you do is verily *karma yoga* (the path of selfless service). This *karma yoga* will lead to perfection in action. People have right only on action. Even our President often quotes this verse from the *Gita*,

You have right only to action, not to its fruit.

Karmanyevadhikarasthe Ma Phaleshu Kadachana.

We should always keep ourselves engaged in action (*karma*).

What type of actions should you perform? Perform only sacred actions. First and foremost, purify your body by performing noble deeds. That is the primary discipline. Since the time you wake up in the morning till you go to bed at night, always befittingly follow the discipline.

Oh people!  
You struggle hard in life merely for the sake of filling your belly.  
You acquire myriad types of knowledge from various fields.  
Examine and enquire for yourself what great happiness you have achieved  
By spending all the time from dawn to dusk in acquiring worldly knowledge and earning wealth while forgetting God.

(Telugu poem)

Obey the divine command. Whatever discipline you observe in your daily life, never give it up. Then only can you call yourself truly educated.

What is the meaning of *vidya* (spiritual education)? What does 'vid' mean? It means knowledge (*jnana*). This is the path to attain knowledge.

Oh people!  
Do not feel proud of your education.  
If you do not offer your salutations to God and do not think of Him with devotion,  
All your education will become useless.

(Telugu poem)

Do not be proud of your bookish knowledge, thinking that you have read so many books. Join both your hands in reverence and offer your salutations to the Lord. This is the first step in spirituality.

What is meant by bringing the ten fingers together? It means *namaskar* (respectful salutation). What is the inner meaning of *namaskar*? It is to bring about unity in the five senses of perception and five senses of action. That is unity in diversity. *Namaskar* connotes unity of everything.

The *Atmic* principle is, in reality, one. Therefore, *namaskar* has a great significance in the field of spirituality.

*Namaskar* has a deeper meaning: "Na-mama", meaning "I am not." It signifies destruction of ego. "Mama" means "mine". "Na-mama" means

"nothing is mine." Therefore, offering everything to the Lord with total sense of surrender saying, "Oh Swami! Everything is Yours" is the principal inner meaning of *namaskar*.

### Disciplining the senses

People today do not know what discipline really means. Nor do they know what sense control means.

Your eyes see anything and everything. You should tell your eyes, "Oh eyes! What are you looking at? Do not look at anything that is bad."

See no evil, see what is good;  
Hear no evil, hear what is good;  
Talk no evil, talk what is good;  
Think no evil, think what is good;  
Do no evil, do what is good;  
This is the way to God.

Therefore, think good, do good, be good, see good, and say good. You should develop discipline to follow this noble path. People may talk to you in any manner, but you should observe a certain limit in your speech.

Students! Even birds and animals observe certain discipline. But people, who are highly educated and intelligent, do not observe any discipline.

You can see yourself. There are monkeys near your hostel and college. Every day, they observe silence at least for one hour. Even birds observe silence for one hour.

But poor humanity! The tongue gets no rest even for a minute! The tongue keeps making noise all the time like a drum. It does not observe silence at all.

On the other hand, we make fun of those who observe silence. Instead, we should follow this discipline of silence enthusiastically saying, "This person is observing silence. Let us also follow the same."

It is said that silence is God (*Nisshabdham Brahma*). In fact, the sound that is there in silence is Brahman.

There is immense greatness in observing limit in speech. When you control your talk, you are able to control everything.

How is it that God gave so much power to the

tongue? Our eyes have only the power to see and no other power. Similarly, our ears have the power to hear and no other power. The nose has no other power except the power to smell. But the tongue has ‘double promotion’. It has two powers; it has the power of taste as well as the power of speech. Since it is endowed with two powers, it has to be controlled in the first instance.

### Teaching according to the learner’s capacity

Teachings should be imparted according to the situation and circumstances. It is not possible to give the same type of teachings to everyone. Each one can absorb these teachings according to his capacity.

There is unlimited water in the Ganga. But each one can take water from it according to the capacity of his container. All cannot take the same quantity of water.

On the path of spirituality also, God gives each one the amount of power depending upon the discipline they follow and the capacity they possess.

If we want to increase our capacity, we should observe discipline properly. Here is a small example.

Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa lived in an ashram with his young disciples. He used to impart the knowledge of spirituality to them through many stories of God. Unfortunately, due to the influence of the present age (the *Kali Yuga*), people today discourage young children from following the path of spirituality and make fun of those who follow it. Even parents disapprove of their children’s spirit of devotion, saying: “Where is the need for such intense devotion at this young age? First enter into some profession and do some work. You can contemplate on Rama, Krishna after your retirement. Why do you want to follow the path of devotion at this age?”

But during the times of Ramakrishna, many young men gathered around him to seek spiritual knowledge from him. These disciples used to go to Kolkata turn by turn to purchase articles of daily need by crossing the Ganga in a boat.

(Here, Bhagavan narrated the story of how Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa imparted different types of teachings to his two disciples, Brah-

mananda and Vivekananda, when they reacted differently on hearing his criticism by the people in the boat, because the former was very gentle and docile while the latter was very energetic and high-spirited.)

We cannot attain divinity without discipline. If you follow a certain routine on one day, and on the next day you follow a totally different routine, that is not correct. Here is a small example.

Suppose you do devotional singing (*bhajans*) or meditation everyday at 6 o’clock in the morning or evening. Sometimes, you may have to go on travel. During this travel, you may be in a bus at 6 o’clock. Some people say that you should not change the place and time of your spiritual practice. We should never forget our duty even if there occurs a change in the place. You may be in a bus, but 6 o’clock is 6 o’clock wherever you are. When you are in a bus at 6 o’clock, think about the place where you do *bhajans* at that time. Then your mind will reach that place. You need not go to the place, the place will come to you.

You should follow the discipline without any break. If you follow the discipline, the time and the place will come running to you.

What can death do to us who are under the protection of the Lord of god of death (*Kalakala prapannanaam kalah kim na karishyathi*)? What does this mean? Time swallows human beings whereas God swallows time itself.

Who is Kala (Time)? God Himself. People think Kala means Yama (god of death). No, no. It is not correct.

Salutations to time,  
To the one who is beyond time,  
To the one who has conquered time,  
To the one who transcends time,  
To the one who is the embodiment of time, and  
To the one who ordains time.

*Kalaya namah,  
Kala kalaya namah,  
Kaladarpa damanaya namah,  
Kalateetaya namah,  
Kalaswarupaya namah,  
Kalaniyamitaya namah.*

Everything is Kala. Time is God.

Some children have some doubts. Our sacred texts say, Kala (Time) is the son of Surya (Sun). Chil-

dren may consider it a laughable story. They may ask how the sun can have a wife, a son, and a family? Where do they live? The children may consider it as a concocted story. No, no. It is all truth. How?

Who is Kala? Kala is time. How is time born? How does it walk? Time is born because of sunrise and sunset. That is why Kala is considered as the son of Surya. Suppose, in the morning the sun rises at 6 o'clock and in the evening it sets at 6 o'clock. From 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock in the evening, it comes to 12 hours.

What is the source of this time of 12 hours? How is this time of 12 hours born? It is born from the sun. Therefore, Kala is called the son of Surya. When we consider the inner meaning of it, we find that all this is true and true only. In fact, it is truth of truths (*sathyasya sathya*).

There is no scope for untruth to find place in our sacred texts. Many such words are there in our mythologies and epics (*Puranas* and *Itihasas*). But because of our worldly outlook, we do not believe them. This is a mistake. We should enquire into the inner meaning with patience. Then only will we get the proper answer.

### **The Puranas contain eternal truths**

Lord Vishnu, goddess Saraswati, and goddess Lakshmi are depicted as though they have emerged from lotus flower. Here, the lotus signifies the heart. It means: everything emerges from the heart.

Good and bad emerge from us only. That is why it is said: As are the feelings, so is the result (*Yad bhavam tad bhavathi*). Never brush aside these things as untruth without knowing their inner meaning. Take some time and get rid of your doubts. Become free from worries. But don't spoil your mind with doubts. There is no scope for doubting the Puranas.

Who are the authors of these Puranas? These are not written by ordinary writers. These are written by great saints and *rishis* like Valmiki and Vyasa. They were great scholars. There are no other scholars greater than them.

Only such great people can be called poets. Not all can become poets. The *Ramayana* was written

by Valmiki and eighteen Puranas were written by Maharshi Vyasa. Both of them were great sages. Therefore, there is no possibility of even a small untruth to find place in these texts.

Some people may call them untrue stories on the basis of their own feelings, but the reality is that they are true and nothing but true. You may believe it or not, but all that is written in them is true.

They set great ideals. They have not shown wrong path to anybody nor have they spoilt anyone. They show the path of truth. They are ideal texts. You should follow these ideal texts and make your life ideal.

If you want to make your life ideal, talk less. Obey the command of God and follow discipline. Whatever be the circumstances, never give up discipline. You can see from the example of sixteen-year-old son of Tarkhad, who extracted a promise from his father because he did not want to break the daily discipline he followed implicitly.

There may be difference in age between a father and his son, but the *Atma* in both of them is the same. Truth is one. It is not that this truth is for children and that is for elders; this truth is for Brahmins and that is for Sudras. Truth is one for all. Truth is one, not two.

God is one without a second (*Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma*). Truth is only one. This is the type of truth that has been proclaimed and propagated by the culture of Bharat (India). Bharatiya (Indian) culture is endowed with noble ideals in all fields and it has been imparting the knowledge of these ideals to the entire world. There is absolutely no defect in this culture. We should never forget such a divine, glorious, and ever-new culture of Bharat.

Do not be carried away by the vagaries of your mind. Put a check on your mind and bring it back when it wanders hither and thither. Direct your mind in such a way that it follows your command. The mind is your servant; you are not the servant of your mind. Hence, use your mind as your servant. Do not become its slave.

Whose slave should you become? Slaves of God. That is why Ramdas sang, "Oh Lord! I should

become the servant of Your servants. I should serve Your devotees. Right from dawn to dusk, I am Your servant. Not only that, I am the servant of Your servants.”

### Love is Krishna, Krishna is Love

There is a great teaching in the *Bhagavatha*. Kuchela took to Lord Krishna a few fistfuls of beaten rice, tied in an old cloth. Krishna opened the cloth bundle with His own hands. Seeing this, Kuchela felt quite embarrassed. “My cloth is so old and dirty that nobody would even like to touch it. I am very poor, but Krishna is the emperor of emperors. What a great sinner I am that I have made Him touch this old cloth!” He felt so sorry thinking in this manner.

Meanwhile, Krishna took a fistful of beaten rice from the bundle and put it in His mouth. There was still some rice left in the cloth.

When Krishna was about to eat that also, Rukmini came running and caught hold of Krishna’s hand. Seeing this, Kuchela thought that Rukmini was trying to prevent Krishna from eating rice because it was tied in a dirty cloth. But Krishna knew the heart of Rukmini and Rukmini knew the heart of Krishna.

In order to make Kuchela know the truth, Krishna said to Rukmini, “Rukmini! Why have you caught hold of My hand? I am a servant of Kuchela. Hence, whatever he has brought, I am taking it as a sacred offering (*prasadam*).”

Rukmini said, “Krishna! You are Kuchela’s servant, but I am Your servant. I also have a right to have a share in this *prasadam*. Therefore, whatever is left, give that to me.”

You can see yourself how broad and noble are the feelings, thoughts and resolves (*sankalpas*) of God. But you doubt them due to lack of your understanding.

God is very broad-hearted. He does not have a narrow mind. No other person has such a broad heart. The broadness of God’s heart is incomparable.

Then Kuchela could comprehend this truth. When Kuchela went back, he found a very big mansion in the place of his hut. His wife and children were richly attired and looked very wealthy. His wife

came running and caught hold of his feet. “Oh master! God is the embodiment of grace. He has such a broad heart. Nobody can match His glory and grandeur. Did you meet Him? Did you talk to Him? What did He say?” In this manner, she started asking question after question.

Kuchela replied,

As soon as He heard of my arrival, He ordered His guards to take me inside.

He got down from His throne, came near me, looked at me from top to toe and embraced me tightly, as if He was pining for me for a long time.

How can I describe His compassion for a poor Brahmin like me!

Who else can confer such abundant wealth on poor Kuchela, who could offer Him only a fistful of beaten rice?

He is love personified.

(Telugu poem)

Love is Krishna, Krishna is love. It is not possible to describe Him in any other way. You can see how broad God’s heart is. Divinity signifies expansion of love. But people today suffer from contraction of love. They have become narrow-minded.

### Develop broad-mindedness

Here is a small example. A short while ago, I was talking to the hostel warden and the teachers in the interview room. All the teachers got a special chair made and offered it to Me yesterday. In fact, they had intended to offer it on 70th Birthday, but they failed to do so because the chair was not ready then. Only yesterday did it arrive. All of them came, caught hold of My feet and prayed to Me to accept it.

I said, “My dear ones! My practice is only to give and not to take. Tell Me how much money you have spent on this chair?” They did not tell.

But I said, “This is the amount that you spent on this. Take this. Then I will accept this chair.”

They felt distressed, started shedding tears and prayed, “Swami! We cannot accept money from You. Kindly grant our prayer and accept the chair.” In this manner, they prayed earnestly. I was moved by the noble feelings of their sacred heart. They had taken great pains to get this chair



made. Therefore, I accepted this chair and started using it.

Our students are also very good and full of devotion. They have great love for Swami. But sometimes evil thoughts enter their mind and spoil it.

Today morning, I told the warden, “I have a stock of Basmati rice. There are three hostels here — primary school hostel, higher secondary school hostel, and university hostel. Take two hundred bags of rice for each hostel tomorrow.”

The warden relied, “Swami! We have got money. Outside each bag of rice may cost one thousand to eleven hundred rupees. Therefore, we will give money.”

I said to him, “Oh madcap! Is it how you have understood Me after staying here for such a long time? When I am giving these rice bags with so much love and broad-heartedness, your heart is so narrow that you want to offer money for it. What a great blunder it is!” I am giving this rice for students because students are My property. Do you think I will take money from students?

“On festive days, father goes to the market and gets some dresses stitched for his children. Will the father say: ‘Look here, I have got a shirt made for you. Give me a hundred rupees?’ When even the worldly father does not do such a thing, how can Swami, who is the father of the entire universe, ask money from you? It will never happen.”

Swami has such a broad heart. You should also have a broad heart like Swami. I consider you as Mine. You also should say, “We are Yours.” You have every right to say, “Our Swami, our Swami, our Swami.” You should become deserving to have this right. That is what I expect from you.

When you limit yourself to coming here, studying, and going back, without earning this deservedness, then what is the use of all your education? This education is utterly useless. This is not what you have to learn. What you have to learn is to broaden your heart and follow the command of Swami in letter and spirit. Then only will you attain bliss. Till such time, you will not experience total bliss. The day you start following Swami’s command, from that very day, you will start experiencing nectarine bliss.

I am always ready to confer bliss on you, but you

are not ready to receive it.

When a photographer wants to take your photo, he will say ‘ready’ before clicking. You may move this side and that side before this, but when the photographer says, “sir, ready”, you should be steady. Only then will you have a good photo. Prior to that, it does not matter even if you move. You should be ready when he says ‘ready’.

We may be ready when the worldly photographer asks us to be ready. But the divine photographer will not say, ‘ready’. So, we should always be ready.

When He will click? We do not know! Only when you are always ready will your picture be imprinted in His heart properly. God is the greatest photographer. But He will not say, ‘ready’. He may click at any moment. Therefore, be always ready. That is the quality of a true devotee.

(Bhagavan concluded His divine discourse with the *bhajan*, “*Chittachora Yashoda Ke Baal ...*”)

—From Bhagavan’s divine discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam, on 19 June 1996.