

Lack of Values is the Cause of Violence in the World

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Students!

Mankind today is in a state of great confusion. The word 'God' is interpreted in many ways. According to one of the interpretations, God is one who transcends time.

God signifies Light

The word God, in reality, signifies light, which is present in all beings. Our ancients described God as the source of light, effulgence, and radiance. Light changes into darkness and darkness changes into light. Both light and darkness cannot exist at the same time, at the same place. Light is the *abhava* (absence) of darkness and darkness is the absence of light. *Abhava* means non-existence and *bhava* signifies existence. Light signifies knowledge and darkness denotes ignorance.

The word '*bhava*' has many meanings. One of them is the feeling with which you pray to God. Accordingly, prayer is of four types: *bhava prarthana* (praying to God wholeheartedly), *leela prarthana* (extolling His divine play), *guna prarthana* (describing His attributes) and *sankirtana prarthana* (singing His divine Name). One can experience Divinity by following any of these four paths. It is the heart that is the source of all these four types of prayer.

God does not exist in a foreign land; He is in you.

Sin is not elsewhere; it is there where a wrong action is committed.

(Telugu Poem)

Neither merit nor sin exists in a foreign land. They are within you. Everything is present in the human body. The *Atma* that is present in *deha* (human body) is called *Dehi* (indweller). Similarly, it is called *Sariri* (indweller) because it is present in *sarira* (body). It also has the name *Kshetrajna* (knower of the field) as it resides in *kshetra* (body).

Deho devalaya proktho jivo Deva sanathana (the body is a temple and the indweller is God). *Deha* is *Devalaya* and *Jiva* is *Deva*.

Try to understand the difference between *jiva* and *Deva*. Body is the basis of *jiva* whereas the mind and the *Atma* are the basis of *Deva*. To say this in simple terms, one who vacillates is *jiva* and one who is steady is *Deva*. God is always steady. Slow and steady wins the race. One should always be steady. That is the true sign of divinity. It is *jiva* who is unsteady and vacillates like the pendulum of a clock.

*Asthiram jivanam loke,
Asthiram yauvanam dhanam,
Asthiram dara putradi,
Sathyam kirti dwayam sthiram.*
(Sanskrit Verse)

Life in the world is impermanent.
So are youth and wealth.

Wife and children are also not permanent.
Only truth and good name are permanent)

Everything Worldly is Temporary

Human body, its different stages, worldly objects, happiness, and sorrow — all are ephemeral. Youth is also temporary. It is not there in the beginning and will not exist later. It comes and goes in the middle like a passing cloud. Similarly, how long does money stay with us? It flows away like running water under the feet.

Suppose, you have a hundred-rupee note, and you say proudly, “This is my hundred-rupee note.” Then the hundred-rupee note will laugh at you and say, “Oh madcap! How long can I remain with you? Just go to the bazaar and buy something. Immediately, I will leave you. I am not going to be with you forever. I have seen many people like you. My own form is also impaired, since I have been handled by many people.”

All forms are subject to change. Even the form of a hard substance like stone will undergo change with usage. How small is an ant! But, if you watch carefully, you will see that ants will leave a trail behind even on a hard surface if they continuously keep crawling on it in a row. When a hard substance like stone can lose its form, what can be said of a currency note that is made of paper!

The next line of the verse is *Asthiram dara putradi* ..., meaning your wife and children are also temporary. When did your children come? Did they come with you at the time of your birth? No. Prior to birth, you had no children, and after death, they will not be there. Similarly, prior to marriage, you had no wife, and after death, she will not be there. Only after your marriage, do you say, “She is my wife.” Likewise, only after the birth of your son do you say, “He is my son.” Before your marriage, whom did you consider as your wife and son? Nobody.

Therefore, it is said, *Asthiram dara putradi*. However, two things are permanent in this world. *Sathyam kirti dwayam sthiram* (truth and good name are permanent). The good reputation of a man remains even after his death. *Trikalabadhyam sathyam* (truth remains unchanged in the three periods of time — past, present, and future). Truth is present before our birth, during our life, and even after our death. It is changeless. *Ekameva adviteeyam sathyam* (truth is one without a second).

Solitude means communion with God

What ultimately remains with a person? It is truth alone. God is the embodiment of truth. Truth is God. Therefore, you should rely on truth. In fact, you are the embodiment of truth. It is not something new to be discovered afresh. Truth will manifest in you if you sit in deep silence and solitude.

What does the word ‘solitude’ mean? People have wrong notions about this word and misinterpret it in many ways. They think that sitting alone in a room with all doors and windows shut is solitude. This is not solitude but loneliness. Many others think that sitting under a tree in a forest or in a mountain cave is solitude. That also is not the true meaning of solitude.

Solitude means to be in communion with God, wherever you may be — in the bazaar, in a meeting, or in the midst of a large number of people. Wherever you are, your mind should be focused on God without being distracted by worldly and family matters. Solitude is total communion between you and God. Nothing else should divert your attention from God. That is the real meaning of solitude. Whatever you may be doing or even traveling in a bus or train or plane, always keep your mind firmly fixed on God.

While doing meditation or contemplating on God, do not allow any other distraction to di-

vert your mind. Then only can you have the experience of divine light.

In a forest, when branches of trees rub against each other, fire is produced. Likewise, when there is a constant communion between *jiva* and *Deva*, one can experience the light of love. There is a sea of difference between the love of God and that between husband and wife, parents and children, and brothers and sisters. Worldly love is momentary, ephemeral, transient, and unsteady. But the love between you and God is permanent, changeless, and without delusion.

One who is endowed with such true and eternal principle of love will attain all types of happiness, and everything will be under their control. That is why Thyagaraja said, "Oh Rama! If I have the power of Your grace, all the nine planets will be under my control." Purandaradasa also said, "What are the eyes that do not see God for? What is the vision that is not focused on God for?"

Use your senses to experience God

Once, Lord Krishna appeared before Surdas as a young cowherd and asked him, "Sir, where are you going?" Then Surdas questioned Him, "My dear, may I know who you are?" Krishna replied, "I am a cowherd."

Cowherd has two meanings. One meaning is the cowherd who takes cattle for grazing; the other is Gopala, the protector of cows. Gopala is another name of Krishna.

Lord Krishna asked him again, "Where are you going?" Surdas replied, "My dear, I am going to Dwaraka." Krishna said, "This is not the path that leads to Dwaraka. Come, I will show you."

Krishna asked Surdas again, "Do you know who really I am?" "You yourself have told me that you are a cowherd", said Surdas. Krishna asked him again, "Do you know what type of a cowherd I am? I am Gopala. You are going all the way to Dwaraka to meet Gopala, who

is right in front of you now. I will restore your eyesight so that you can see Me."

Surdas said, "Oh Krishna! Though people have eyes, they have become verily blind, since they do not try to see Your auspicious form. In this world, how many people are there who have eyes! But what is the use? How many are able to see You? Nobody. In fact, it is enough if I have eyes that can see You.

"People have ears, but they are deaf to the melody of Your enchanting divine flute. Is there anyone who has heard Your divine flute? None at all.

"When I have God Himself with me, why should I crave for the abject worldly life? I do not want all this. When You are with me like *Meru* (mountain of gold), why should I crave for small coins? Oh Gopala! You are not an ordinary cowherd. I now know, You are Lord Krishna. I could visualise Your beautiful form on hearing Your sweet words."

God always talks softly and sweetly.

*Vachanam Madhuram,
Nayanam Madhuram,
Vadanam Madhuram,
Madhuradhipathe Akhilam Madhuram.*

His speech, His eyes and His looks are sweet.

He is the Lord of sweetness and sweetness itself too.

Live in world without worldly attachment

Everything about God is sweet. Tulsidas compared the feet, hands, eyes, and face of God to lotus. What is the reason? Where does a lotus grow? It is born in mud and grows on the surface of water. It is neither touched by mud in which it is born nor by water on which it floats. However, it cannot live even for a minute without either mud or water.

Similarly, you are born in the mud of past lives and are living in the world, which is like

water. Just like a lotus which is not touched by mud or water, you should lead your life unaffected by your past lives and be detached from the world.

Do not be affected by the water of *prapancha*. What is *prapancha*? *Pra* means to manifest and *pancha* signifies five elements. Therefore, *prapancha* is the manifestation of the five elements. These five elements are there wherever you go, even if you go to the moon. You cannot exist without these five elements. You may live in this world, but you should not have any attachment with it.

Ladies apply collyrium to their eyes in such a way that it does not touch their eyeball. You eat many oily items like *palav*, *kurma*, etc., but your tongue does not become sticky. In the same way, though I live in this world, I am not touched by it. I am not affected by the dualities of happiness and sorrow, attachment and detachment, union and separation. My relationship with everyone is at the *Atmic* level and not at physical or mental level.

It is the mind of man that establishes his relationship with worldly objects. Therefore, turn your mind toward God. That is what is really meant by solitude.

Treasure love and righteousness in your heart

Where is God? He is everywhere. There is no place where God is not. Everything in this world is the manifestation of God. Therefore, there is no need to specially search for God.

God shines in us in the form of truth. Truth follows righteousness. Where there are truth and righteousness, there is love. Where there is love, there can be no violence. One who leads his life with truth, righteousness, love, and peace will not indulge in violence. Therefore, treasure *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi*, *prema*, and *ahimsa* (truth, righteousness, peace, love and nonviolence) in your heart.

Let your tongue always speak truth, your hands perform righteous actions, and your heart experience love. Then there will be peace in your mind. Consequently, there will be no scope for violence in your life. In fact, where there are *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi*, and *prema* there cannot be any violence. Banish violence even from your thoughts. It is due to the lack of values that there is so much violence in the world today.

First of all, develop love. When you have love, you will attain everything. Therefore, never give up love. I give prominence to love and righteousness in all My Discourses. I cannot give a Discourse without talking about these two. In fact, love and righteousness are verily My life breath. Whatever may be the subject of My Discourses, love and righteousness are common in all of them.

The main teaching of the *Veda* is *Sathyam vada, dharmam chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). Man should implicitly follow these two in his daily life.

Students!

You study a number of books and specialise in various subjects. But how far are you able to treasure the principles of love and truth in your heart? Do perform *seva* (selfless service), but what sort of *seva* should you perform? Perform the *seva* that destroys your ego. There should be no place for ostentation in your *seva*.

Many devotees ask Me, "Swami, give me good intellect and strength to follow the right path." In My opinion, those who ask this are not devotees at all. You are endowed with good intellect, but you do not make use of it. This is not like a bank transaction where you give and take. Food is served to you on a plate, but how can your hunger be satiated unless you eat it? You will get strength only after you eat the food. But you are not eating. Consequently, you do not get strength and thus consider yourself weak and helpless.

Put into practice what you hear

Practise and experience all that is being taught to you. In what way are people putting these teachings into practice? People go to religious places to listen to discourses, *hari katha*, (stories of God), or *bhagavata parayana* (reverential reading). As long as they are listening to these, there is a feeling of detachment and renunciation in them. But, how long do those feelings of renunciation and detachment last? They disappear as soon as these discourses are over. They do not remain with them even till they reach their home.

What benefit can such type of people derive by listening to spiritual discourses? They merely listen but do not put into practice. You get the desired benefit only when you put into practice what you hear. You can know the taste of food, satiate your hunger, and get strength only when you eat the food. If you do not know the taste and do not have the strength, it only means you have not eaten the food.

What you hear, you should practise and assimilate. But due to the effect of *Kali* age (the age we are in), even attending spiritual meetings has become a fashion today. Everywhere there is fashion and no compassion! When you develop compassion, there will be no room for fashion. But today listening to spiritual talks itself has become a fashion. If someone asks you, "Where did you go?" you say, "I went to listen to the talk of so and so." If he asks you, "What happened there?" you say, "So much happened there." If he again asks you to tell him a little of what you heard, you say that nothing entered your head. Then, why did you attend the meeting?

Once there was a businessman who used to attend talks on mythological texts daily. The preacher, in his talks, emphasised the importance of renunciation and exhorted the listeners to develop the spirit of renunciation. Ten years passed in this manner. Starting a special spiritual session for one week, the

preacher once said to the businessman, "You should attend this spiritual session daily till its completion. Do not give any break. If you successfully complete this session, you will derive great merit."

It so happened that the businessman had to go to another village on very urgent work. He asked the preacher whether he could send his son for the spiritual session in his place for one day. The preacher told him, "Yes, your son can come and attend the session."

When the businessman went home, another thought came to his mind. "The preacher lays great emphasis on the spirit of renunciation in his talks. He says, the world is temporary, wealth and youth are also temporary. If my son listens to all this, he may develop the spirit of renunciation, give up everything, and leave home". As this doubt gripped his mind, he went to the preacher early in the morning next day and asked, "Sir, your talks are very good, but what will be my fate if my son becomes a renunciant and leaves home on hearing your talk?"

The preacher said to him, "You have been listening to my talks for the last 10 years. How much spirit of renunciation have you developed? Will your son become a renunciant after listening to my talk for one day? It is not so easy to develop the spirit of renunciation."

People listen to discourses for years together, but not even an iota of detachment or devotion takes root in them. As long as they hear the discourse, they are happy. But once they leave the venue of the discourse and cross the compound wall, they are back to square one.

What is the use of listening to discourses for such a long time? I have been giving discourses every day. I do not feel any strain while giving the discourses, but you feel a lot of fatigue while listening to them. Are you treasuring at least one teaching in your heart?

On the other hand, you ask Me, “Swami, I want this, I want that. Do this for me, do that for me.” How can I do that? How can you expect to get liberation without putting anything into practice? Are you not ashamed to ask Me like this? With what face do you ask? How much are you putting My teachings into practice?

First and foremost, try to understand this. You have been listening to My discourses for years together. But there is no check on your worldly pursuits; they go on increasing day by day. On top of it, you ask Me to do this and that. Do as I say. Then, I will do everything for you without your asking. But you are hero in asking and zero in practice!

The condition of devotees today is such that they are ever ready for food but never ready for work. They do not follow any instructions given to them. First of all, follow the instructions and try to put into practice at least one or two of them. Practice is very essential.

All the sacred texts like the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Bhagavata*, the *Quran*, and the *Bible* are meant for practice and not merely for *parayana*. In fact, all the sacred texts of all religions are meant to be practised and not merely for studying. Practice is conspicuous by its absence today. Many people do merely religions of sacred texts. What is the use of merely doing the religions of the *Ramayana* or the *Bhagavad Gita* or *Vishnu Sahasranama* without practice? Such *parayana* is a futile exercise. What benefit can accrue from merely reading them unless you put them into practice? One teaspoon of cow’s milk is more useful than barrels of donkey’s milk. Therefore, practice is most important.

Do not indulge in too much talk. Lead a peaceful life. Do not develop unnecessary relationships. Never give up love. Help all those who need help. Help Ever, Hurt Never. It is enough if you put this principle into practice. Always talk softly and sweetly. Only then

will your stay in the ashram, listening to discourses, and study of sacred texts be fruitful.

People live in the ashram but create problems for themselves and also for others. What is the use of their stay in the ashram? You come to the ashram because you want to get rid of all your troubles and worries. But people develop all sorts of attachments after coming here. Ashram is the place where there should be no *shram* (problem). Therefore, if you are staying in the ashram, lead your life free from all problems. When I am giving discourses every day, I may repeat certain things. I do this so that you may contemplate on them and put into practice.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan*, “*Rama Jayam Raghurama Jayam...*”)

— From Bhagavan’s Divine Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall in Prasanthi Nilayam on 11 July 1996.