

Love is the True Form of God Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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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.

*Asthiram jivanam loke,
Asthiram yauvanam dhanam,
Asthiram dara putradi,
Sathyam kirti dwayam sthiram?*

(Sanskrit verse)

Human life is momentary, like a water bubble. Youth and wealth are also temporary, like passing clouds. Even worldly relations are not permanent. The only things that are permanent in this world are truth, righteousness, and a good reputation.

Nobody brings any wealth with them when they are born from the womb of mother, Nor does the wealth go with them when they depart from the world. Even a millionaire has to eat normal food and cannot eat gold. You may amass wealth and feel proud about it, but the amassed wealth will not go with you at the time of death. If you go on hiding your wealth and putting it in banks without performing acts of charity, who knows what will happen to it when you leave this world?

(Telugu Poem)

Virtues are your best decorations

Right from birth to death, people undertake many endeavours in order to derive happiness out of them, but ultimately they depart from this world empty-handed.

Since unrighteousness, injustice, and improper conduct are on the rise, the world is facing many troubles. In fact, the world is on the verge of a catastrophe due to the rise of demonic tendencies. At this juncture, only the students have the capacity to restore peace and order in the world. Only they are capable of ensuring peace and security not only in India but also in the entire world.

Due to the influence of *Kali Yuga* (the age we are in), *dharma* (righteousness) is declining in Bharat (India). I hope that young men and women will resolve to drive away the evil forces of *Kali*, uphold truth and righteousness, and revive the ancient traditions of Bharat, which at one time was the repository of great spiritual wealth.

Students!

When you lag behind in studies, your parents feel sad. But your Mother India will feel a thousand times sadder when you do not progress on the path of morality, ethics, and spirituality. Remember this always.

All the people whom you consider as elders and leaders were also students like you once upon a time. Today's students are tomorrow's citizens, elders, and leaders. Just as you expect your elders and leaders to be ideal, you should conduct yourself in an ideal manner and realise your dreams and aspirations.

But modern young men and women are imitating foreign culture. When you observe

their speech, behavior, and dress, it looks as though they are trying to decorate themselves with borrowed jewelry. How long can you experience happiness by decorating yourself with borrowed jewelry? Instead, you should strive to acquire the jewels of virtues and derive happiness by decorating yourself with them.

Students!

In the name of fashion, you are behaving in a perverted manner. You are blindly following the whims and fancies of your fickle mind. This is not the culture of Bharat (India). How long can you follow the traditions and manners borrowed from other countries? Do not rely on imported culture. Follow the sacred culture of Bharat, which is the land of merit, spirituality, and righteous action (*punya bhumi*, *yoga bhumi*, and *karma bhumi*).

It is your good fortune that many noble souls and *Avatars* took birth in this sacred land to safeguard and foster its pristine culture. Since ancient times, Bharat has been known as the birthplace of charity and sacrifice. It is reputed for the virtues of love, compassion, and sacrifice. Forbearance and empathy have been the main objectives of the people of Bharat.

But where have all these noble qualities gone from this land of Bharat today?

Selfishness causes conflicts and dissent

During the 14-year exile of the Pandavas in the forest, one day Krishna visited their hermitage. Not finding the other four brothers in the hermitage, he asked Dharmaraja, "Where are your brothers?"

Dharmaraja's heart was always filled with feelings of righteousness. At all times and in all situations, his mind was focused on God. In fact, all the Pandavas were embodiments of peace and righteousness.

These noble-hearted Pandavas were insulted by the wicked Kauravas in many ways. But unmindful of all the wickedness of the Kauravas, the Pandavas continued to follow the path of truth and righteousness.

Replying to Krishna's question, Dharmaraja said, "Krishna! My one hundred brothers are in Hastinapur and four others have gone into the forest for some work."

Pretending to be surprised at this reply, Krishna said, "Are you out of your senses? Aren't you only five brothers? Your saying that your one hundred brothers are in Hastinapur is absolutely meaningless."

Dharmaraja said, "Aren't the Kauravas my brothers? As long as there is unity, love, forbearance, and empathy among us, we are 105 brothers. All of us stand united when we have to face an outside enemy. But, when some differences crop up amongst us, we five are separate and they are separate."

You should understand the inner meaning of this statement in relation to the situation prevailing in society today. Due to lack of unity and the rise of conflicts and dissensions in today's world, every party and community stands fragmented. Each follows their own selfish interest. As a result, there are many factions within a single party and many divisions within a single community.

Individuals are different, but the divine *Atmic* principle is the same in all.

Due to the lack of unity in society, this *Kali Yuga* has become the *Kalaha Yuga* (Age of Conflicts). Conflicts are on the rise day by day. There is utter lack of empathy and forbearance among individuals. There is hatred between man and man, village and village, district and district, and State and State.

In such a situation, how can there be peace and security in the world? There are so many differences even in a family today. How much strength is there in unity! But, unfortunately,

people are destroying unity. As a result, there is total lack of humanness in humanity.

Tulsidas propounded the principle of unity

While composing the *Ramayana*, Tulsidas was totally lost in contemplation of Rama and wrote the sentence, “The sacred Name Rama represents the fire, sun, and moon (*Hetu krisanu bhanu himakar ko*).” In fact, he did not write it. When he opened his eyes, he found that it was already written.

Krisanu mean fire, *bhanu* means sun, and *himakar* means moon. The meaning of this statement is, “Oh Rama! You are the embodiment of the fire, the sun, and the moon.”

Without the sun, moon, and fire, the world cannot exist. Be one a theist, an atheist, a theistic-atheist, an atheistic-theist, a mendicant, a pleasure seeker, or a renunciant, none can deny this. In fact, the fire, sun, and moon are direct manifestations of Divinity. What do they do?

There are three main reasons for the birth of a person. One is ignorance, the second is sin, and the third is afflictions. The fire of knowledge is necessary to dispel the darkness of ignorance. Not only that, the fire of knowledge reduces all your sins to ashes. The sun destroys the darkness of delusion and sorrow. When the sun shines, darkness disappears. The moon cools down the agony caused by afflictions. It even destroys your sins.

Apparently, there is a lot of difference between the sun and the moon, but there is also an intimate relationship between them. The moon does not shine with its own light; it shines with the light of the sun. While the sunlight is bright and hot, moonlight is cool and not so bright. The light is the same; while at one place it is hot and at another place it is cool.

Our intellect symbolises the sun, and the mind symbolises the moon. That is why the *Vedas* proclaim, “The moon was born out of the

mind and the sun out of the eyes of the Supreme Being (*Chandrama manaso jata chaksho suryo ajayata*).”

The mind is the reflection of the moon, and the moon is the reflection of the mind. The sun is the source of power of light in our eyes, and it symbolises the power of our intellect.

Where is the fire? It is present in our stomach in the form of digestive fire (*jatharagni*). It is also present as the fire of affliction and sin (*tapagni* and *papagni*).

Students know this very well. They chant the verse “*Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir*” before partaking of food. Most of them do not know where Brahman resides. They mechanically chant the verse because they consider it a routine practice in the hostel.

But God gives a reply from within: “I am present in all beings in the form of digestive fire (*Aham vaishvanaro bhutva praninam dehamasrita*). You don’t need to doubt where I actually reside. I am present in your stomach in the form of digestive power, and I digest the food that you eat and give the necessary nourishment.”

There is another example to explain the meaning of this statement of Tulsidas, “The sacred Name Rama represents the fire, sun, and moon (*Hetu krisanu bhanu himakar ko*).”

In the divine Name Rama, *Ra* stands for *Thath*, *Aa* for *asi* and *Ma* for *twam*. When *Thath*, *twam*, and *asi* come together, we get the *Vedic* aphorism, *Thath twam asi* (That thou Art). It means: you and I are one. This is the principle of oneness that Tulsidas taught to the world.

Many noble souls were born in this land of Bharat (India) to teach this principle of oneness and install divinity in the heart of everyone. In order to understand this exalted principle, you have to imbibe nonviolence in your heart. When you develop the spirit of nonvio-

lence, you will visualise the entire world as the manifestation of Rama.

Get rid of your evil qualities and realise the Atmic principle

Do not waste your life ignoring God for the sake of momentary pleasures. Why are you unable to realise this truth? Every student and every person is endowed with knowledge. But they are not using their power of discrimination to put their knowledge to proper use. That is why people today are in a miserable state. They waste their sacred, long, and noble lives in pursuit of momentary pleasures.

Adi Sankara cautioned one and all:

Do not be proud of your wealth, progeny
and youth;
The tide of time may destroy them in a
moment.

*Ma kuru dhana jana yauvana garvam
Harathi nimeshath kalah sarvam.*

The body undergoes change constantly, and the life principle may ebb away from the body at any moment. Why do you develop attachment to such a momentary body and waste your life? Get rid of your evil qualities, wicked thoughts and bad intentions. Practise nonviolence (*ahimsa*).

What is the meaning of nonviolence? *Ahimsa* means not to hurt others by thoughts, words, and deeds. Never leave unity of thought, word, and deed, even for a moment. Only when you observe unity of thought, word, and deed in all your endeavours will divine feelings manifest in you.

The principle of nonviolence is very subtle. Most people do not understand its correct meaning. Even eating food more than necessary constitutes violence. Why? You hurt yourself by excessive eating.

Even unnecessary talking amounts to indulging in violence. Talk only to the extent necessary. That is nonviolence.

When you misuse the faculties given by God, all your wealth, power, and position will become meaningless. Since you are caught up in the mire of trivial worldly pursuits, you are unable to realise the infinite *Atmic* principle.

None can escape the consequences of their actions

Ravana had no dearth of wealth. In fact, the entire Lanka was made of gold. He did not lack anything in the world. He was endowed with physical strength, the power of wealth, and a big army. He also acquired great power by performing penance. In spite of all this, he lost everything due to his carnal cravings.

Hanuman got himself bound by demons to enter the court of Ravana to teach him a lesson. The demons questioned him, "Who are you?"

He replied in the most humble and pleasant manner, "I am the servant of Rama (*Dasoham Kosalendrasya*)."

Prior to this, the demons had not seen any monkey in Lanka. In fact, no monkey had ever entered Lanka till then. That is why, out of curiosity, the demons started coming out of their houses to see Hanuman.

Hanuman was highly virtuous and valorous. Yet he got himself bound by the demons in order to show the path of goodness to Ravana. He thought to himself, "It is not possible for me to enter Ravana's court unless the demons capture me and take me to him. When I come face to face with Ravana, I will be able to directly talk to him and show him the right path."

The demons tied Hanuman's hands and legs with ropes and took him to Ravana's court. Hanuman saw Ravana seated on a high platform, while he was standing down. He thought it was an insult to Lord Rama that His servant should be at a lower place and His opponent at a higher place. Therefore, he made a seat for himself higher than Ravana's by lengthening his tail and coiling it up.

Ravana asked him, “Oh monkey! You destroyed our garden. Why did you come here?”

Hanuman replied, “I allowed your son Indrajit to capture me with a purpose, and that purpose is to teach you a lesson. Oh wicked one! Having been blinded by lust, you are causing untold suffering to Sita, who is the mother of the universe. You are ruining your life due to your evil thoughts. What happened to all your power of penance? What is the use of your life if you cannot control your mind and senses?”

“How should a king be? One who has no control over his senses cannot be called a king. A true king should be ideal and earn a good name. You have committed the worst of sins.”

Unable to bear the insult, Ravana flew into a rage. He commanded his soldiers to set fire to Hanuman tail, since the tail is so dear to a monkey. Demons are usually foolish and ignoramuses. They cannot foresee the consequences of their actions.

Then, Hanuman said to Ravana:

Oh wicked Ravana! I want to teach you a lesson.

This Lanka does not belong to you any more.

Listen to my words with full attention.

You did not use your power of discrimination and thus committed a sin.

Therefore, you are going to die soon.

Oh wicked Ravana! I want to teach you a lesson...

Sita is the mother of the universe, and she is your mother, too.

You abducted the mother of the universe and committed a great sin.

Lord Rama will cut off all your heads with one arrow.

Oh wicked Ravana! I want to teach you a lesson...

Didn't you know this was a sinful deed, which you should have desisted from.

Your soldiers set fire to my tail, with which I will set all the palatial buildings of Lanka ablaze and quietly go my way.

Oh wicked Ravana! I want to teach you a lesson...

I allowed Indrajit to capture me because I wanted to see your court and your ten heads.

Why should I tell you again and again?

You have lost your right to live.

Oh wicked Ravana! I want to teach you a lesson...

(Telugu Song)

Nobody can escape the consequences of their actions.

Everyone has to face the consequences of their actions, whoever they may be.

No one can know what lies ahead for them in future.

But this much is sure: everyone has to reap the consequences of their actions.

Even the mighty Rama suffered the pain of separation from His consort Sita and cried like an ordinary person.

Even the mighty Pandavas had to go into exile and live in forest.

(Telugu Song)

Good actions bear good fruits, and bad actions result in bad fruits. Therefore, always perform good actions. As the action, so is the result; as the food, so is the belch; as the flour, so is the bread.

Some actions yield immediate results, whereas others will take a few days or a few months or a few years or even a few ages to give results. For example, when your finger is cut with a knife, immediately blood oozes out. Here, action and its result are simultaneous. Similarly, if you slip and fall while climbing a staircase, you suffer a fracture immediately. The fall and fracture occur at the same time.

However, the food you eat takes at least two to three hours to get digested. Here, there is a gap of two to three hours between the action and the result.

When you sow a seed in the soil, it will not grow into a sapling immediately; it will take two to three days. Then it will take the sapling a few years to grow into a tree and yield fruit. You cannot get the fruit immediately after sowing the seed; it will take a few years.

Likewise, every action of person is bound to yield a result either in a few moments or a few hours or a few days or a few years or even a few ages.

God resides in the hearts of all

But there is a way to escape from the consequences of actions. When you develop true love for God, you can escape from any type of suffering. In order to earn the love of God, you should understand that God is the indweller of all beings and act accordingly.

Man should realise the truth that God is the indweller of all hearts (the *sarva hridayavasi*). There might be differences in names and forms of individuals, but the five elements are common in all. Firmly imprint this truth on your heart.

To understand this principle of oneness, you should conduct proper enquiry. Do not think that there are many gods. In the same way, do not observe differences between individuals. All are one, God is one.

One God has many names (*Ek prabhu ke anek naam*). The same God manifests in different names and forms.

God is the light. In order to experience this light of knowledge of Brahman (*Brahma jnana*), you have to undertake various practices.

Here is a bulb. What is required for a bulb to give light? You should connect it to an electric wire. But merely connecting it to the wire is not enough; you should let electricity pass through it and make the bulb shine.

Truth and love are true divine powers. *Truth is God, love is God, live in love.* God is one

without a second (*Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma*). When the electric current of truth flows through the wire of righteousness and enters the bulb of peace, you get the light of love (*loud applause*).

The unity of truth, righteousness, and peace results in the light of love. Love is the true form of God. Mere physical relationship cannot be called love. True love manifests from the heart.

Embodiments of Love!

Whatever you do, always remember two things. God is truth and death is certain. Nobody can escape death.

Then, what should you always keep in your mind? Never look at the faults of others. Treat the big defects of others as small and consider your own small defects as big. Then you will not commit big mistakes.

Students!

It is necessary for you to follow a noble path in life. Try to experience Divinity even in matters of daily life. There are two things that you should forget: First, forget the harm done to you by others. If you don't forget it and take it to heart, you will develop a revengeful attitude. Second, forget the good you have done to others. Otherwise, you will develop the expectation of a favour from those whom you have helped.

Therefore, it is necessary to forget the harm that others have done to you and the good you have done to others. Only then will you develop the purity to experience the *Atma* and attain God's grace.

Guideposts on the spiritual path

You think you are performing some great spiritual practices by doing meditation, penance, and yoga. But all these are related only to the body and the mind, which are not

permanent. Then how can the result of these practices be permanent? It is also impermanent.

You may ask, “Why have these spiritual practices been prescribed?” These practices are guideposts on your spiritual journey, which show you the right path.

When you proceed on a journey, you find guideposts on the way to indicate that this is the way to Dharmavaram, this path leads to Penukonda, Bengaluru is in this direction, and so on and so forth. Similarly, repetition of the Name, mediation, penance, yoga, etc. only show you the way, but they are not the destination.

When you see a sign, you are not to sit there; you have to walk in the direction shown to you on the sign. With the help of these ‘guideposts,’ you should perform your journey toward God.

Where is God? His hands and feet are everywhere... (*Sarvatah panipadam...*) Wherever you look, He is there. When you go on performing these spiritual practices, you will ultimately realise this truth.

Your body attachment is a big hurdle coming in the way of realising this truth. Body attachment leads to many other attachments. Therefore, gradually reduce your body attachment and desires.

This is how Hanuman became a dear servant of Lord Rama. Ultimately, he realised his oneness with Rama. Every pore of his body was filled with the divine Name of Rama. He realised that he was not different from Rama and Rama was not different from him.

Once, Rama questioned Hanuman, “In what way do you relate to Me?”

Hanuman replied, “Swami, I am Your servant at the physical level and Your reflection at the mental level, but at the *Atmic* level, You and I are one. It is only my body and mind that

come in the way of realising my oneness with You.”

You can very well understand this. Consider a mansion with a bedroom, a bathroom, a kitchen, a drawing room, a dining hall, and a storeroom. All the rooms look separate from each other. Why? Because there are walls between them. When you remove the walls, you will have one spacious hall.

Similarly, due to the walls of body attachment, you find diversity all around. When you give up body attachment, everything becomes one.

The human body is like a fort surrounded by seven walls.

In the centre of it is a garden.

One who has outer vision does not know how to enter this garden, which symbolises the *Atmic* principle.

The only way to enter the garden is through *namasmarana*, which dispels the darkness of ignorance and shows the right path.

The light of Atma shines with the wick of truth and the oil of righteousness.

When this light ebbs away, your wealth, your relations and worldly possessions will not follow you.

Worldly life is like a tree, and cravings for sensual pleasures are the ropes that bind one to the tree.

One will be released from this bondage when one develops a sense of detachment and starts leading a spiritual life.

(Telugu Song)

Develop the desire to love God

When your desires go on increasing, your happiness goes on decreasing. Therefore, reduce your desires and develop love for God. As your love for God increases, your happiness also increases. As much you have love for God, so much will be your happiness. In the same way, if your love for God decreases, your happiness also declines.

True happiness does not lie in the pursuit of worldly desires. Here is a small example. You can start practising this either from tonight or tomorrow morning. If you drink six cups of tea and smoke twenty cigarettes in a day, your intelligence (*prajna sakthi*) will go on decreasing. Your will power depends on the actions you perform.

From tomorrow onward, drink only two cups of tea and smoke five cigarettes. After ten days, satisfy yourself with only one cup of tea and one cigarette. Thereafter, stop them all together. You yourself will see how the power of your intellect blossoms. Your memory power will also increase.

As you increase your desires, your memory power declines and you even lose power of concentration. As you reduce your desires, your power of concentration also grows. Therefore, *Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure*. Reduce the luggage of desires. Only then can you attain true happiness.

There is one desire that you should develop, and that is the desire for God, which alone can confer peace on you.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan, Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*)

—From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall on 29 July 1996.