

Ego and Attachment Lead to Bondage **Sri Sathya Sai Baba**

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God is love and love is God.
You can connect yourself with God only
through love.
Develop love and achieve the supreme state
of non-dualism.

(Telugu poem)

Liberation doesn't drop down from the sky,
Nor does it emerge from the nether world.
It is not available on earth either.
Only when the veil of ignorance is removed
from your heart can you attain the sacred
state of liberation.

Moha kshaya (removal of attachment) is
moksha (liberation).

This is the truth propounded in the *Vedas*.
(Sanskrit verse)

Embodiments of Love!

Of all living beings, the human birth is the rarest (*Janunam nara janma durlabham*). Human birth is most sacred, noble, and sublime. It is the result of meritorious deeds done in many past lives. It is attained as a result of penance, prayer, and other spiritual practices.

Make proper use of human birth

Having attained such a precious human birth after such hard labour, people today are wasting it instead of putting it to proper use. What is the greatness of human birth? What is its goal and objective? Why have you assumed this human body? It is necessary for everyone to understand this.

In this vast world, birds, animals, insects, and even ants and mosquitoes discharge their

duties. But humanity today has forgotten its duties and is putting this sacred human birth to improper use. Time is fleeting like a whirlwind, and the lifespan allotted to the human body is diminishing like a block of ice that keeps melting every moment. Ultimately, people meet their end before they understand their duty and why they have been given human birth. Then, what is the use of having human birth?

People say human birth is the rarest. Why is it so? They neither understand this truth nor think about it nor make any use of it. Human birth is highly sacred. Such a sacred birth should be put to proper use. But it is not happening. People are wasting their time, energy, and even their body. Why?

The reason is the rank pursuit of physical, ephemeral, and fleeting pleasures. People think that pursuit of worldly pleasures is the be all and end all of life. This tendency corresponds to worldliness (*pravritti*), but the real objective is spirituality (*nivritti*). In pursuit of physical, worldly, and ephemeral objectives, people today have forgotten the true and eternal principle of spirituality. Then what is the use of all this education?

What is the use of all your learning when it does not help you change your destiny?
When bad thoughts enter your mind, all your education and intelligence become futile and meaningless.

(Telugu poem)

What does man ultimately achieve by acquiring all this worldly education? Ravana was

the master of 64 types of knowledge. Even Hiranyakasipu was one of great learning. Similarly, Kamsa was also well educated.

Purify your heart and fill it with love

Ravana performed great penance and worshipped Lord Siva. But what did he attain? All this he did with the objective of attaining worldly goals. Therefore, even after mastering so many types of knowledge, performing so much penance, undertaking so many spiritual practices, and chanting many sacred mantras, his demonic quality was not changed.

You can remove the worldly feelings from your mind only by filling it with divine feelings. People today have filled their minds with unsacred and worldly feelings. They are leading their lives with momentary objectives. Then how can they attain eternal and everlasting happiness? It is not possible.

You should purify your heart and fill it with love. Only by developing love can you acquire true knowledge. It is the duty of youth today to sow the seeds of love in the hearts of mankind, love that will yield the flowers of forbearance and fruits of peace. Students should resolve to become the torchbearers of peace.

Today, there is a great need for peace in society. However, peace and security cannot be acquired from outside; they are present within you. In fact, everything is in you. But you have forgotten this truth.

People today have forgotten their true nature. Reposing their faith in worldly endeavours, they are in search of peace in the external world. But they should realise the truth that Divinity permeates the entire universe.

Verily all this is Brahman (*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*). There is no place where Divinity is not present. All that you see, hear, and experience is nothing but Brahman. It is Brahman and Brahman alone that is seen by the eyes,

heard by the ears, and felt by the mind; it captivates the heart and kindles humanness.

When people realise this truth, there will be no scope for troubles and turmoil in this world.

Wherever you look today, you find fierce conflicts and differences. It has become difficult to know who is human and who is demonic, who is noble and who is wicked, who is human and who is animal.

Having evolved from the level of animal, humanity should rise to the level of the Divine. But instead, people are going in the reverse direction to animality. This is not what they should do. People should conduct themselves like true human beings.

Truth is the mother, wisdom is the father, righteousness is the brother, compassion is the friend, peace is the wife, forbearance is the son.

These six virtues are the real relations of man.

(Sanskrit verse)

That is why the *Vedas* exhort man to follow the principle: Speak truth, practise righteousness (*Sathyam vada, dharmam chara*). There is nothing greater than truth. Truth remains unchanged in the three periods of time —past, present, and future (*Trikalabadhyam sathyam*). Truth remains changeless at all times, at all places, and under all circumstances. Unfortunately, humanity has forgotten this today.

Modern education lacks spiritual education

No special efforts are needed to have the vision of Divinity. When you remove the veil of ego and attachment that covers your innate Divinity, you will realise the truth.

Humanity today is afflicted by two planets (*grahas*), namely Desire and Hatred (*Raga* and *Dwesh*). When you get rid of Desire and Hatred, you will realise that you yourself are Brahman. Vishnu pervades the entire universe (*Sarvam Vishnumayam jagat*). Then you will

find the entire world as the manifestation of Divinity. Make every effort to at least have a glimpse of Divinity.

Students!

You are under the mistaken notion that spirituality is something difficult. In fact, it is a thousand times easier than the secular education you acquire. Spiritual education is much simpler than worldly education. You find it difficult because you do not know this truth.

When you first try to learn your ABC's, how difficult you find it! But once you gradually go to higher classes, you find learning ABC's so easy.

Today, the system of education in India is limited only to worldly education. There is a total lack of moral values in this system of education. That is why students have forgotten humanness and are neglecting *dharma*. Since people today have given prominence only to secular education, the *Vedas* and *Sastras* (scriptures) have been neglected.

Students consider acquiring degrees like B.A. and M.A. as something very great and do not give importance to spiritual education. What are these degrees like M.A. and B.A.? M.A. + D = Mad, B.A. + D = Bad. Is this what you should learn? Actually, the entire modern system of education misleads the students and puts them on the wrong path.

Students today acquire education to fill their belly and not for the blossoming of their heart and purification of their mind. The mind should become pure, and Divinity should blossom in the heart. This is the real goal of education.

But students today go to the employment office and register their names immediately after they receive their degrees. They waste so much time in going to the employment office time and again. This is not what you should do.

No doubt, worldly, secular education is also necessary, but it does not develop good qualities in you. What is most essential for you to develop? Truth, righteousness, peace, love and nonviolence (*sathya, dharma, santhi, prema*, and *ahimsa*).

All your education, positions of authority, acts of charity, and service have little value without the virtues of truth, righteousness, peace, and love, which are verily the pillars of the mansion of *Sanathana Dharma*.

(Telugu poem)

Values are the sound foundation of the mansion of life

A house needs four walls. The mansion of human life is built on the four walls of truth, righteousness, peace, and love (*sathya, dharma, santhi, prema*). Today, these four walls have collapsed, and humanity has lost its real shelter. People are leading very artificial lives. Can we call this humanness?

If living is important, don't the birds, beasts, and animals live? What bank balance do they have? What type of mansions do they build for themselves? They live in the present and are happy. They are not worried about tomorrow. But people, on the other hand, prepare five-year and ten-year plans.

You struggle hard in life merely for the sake of filling your belly.

You acquire many forms of knowledge from various fields.

But you are not able to enjoy total bliss.

So, take refuge in God and contemplate on Him.

He will certainly show you the right path.

(Telugu Poem)

Oh humanity!

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)

What do we require today? First and foremost, we require moral, ethical, and spiritual values. These are like our life breath. But moral, ethical, and spiritual values have touched the nadir today. You do not find them anywhere. Righteousness and justice are in wilderness. Today, villages have become havens of injustice, unrighteousness, and untruth. There may be a cure for any disease, but there is no cure for the diseases of desire and hatred (*raga* and *dwesha*). Why? The reason is selfishness and self-interest.

Students!

No doubt, everyone has some amount of selfishness, but it should be within limits. You subject yourself to great suffering because of your unlimited desires. What gives you happiness? Is it eating, drinking, begetting children, or earning money? No, no. You don't find real happiness in any of these. The happiness you derive from these is only momentary.

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.*

(Sanskrit verse)

Worldly pleasures are momentary. As students, you know this.

You think you will be happy by acquiring degrees like M.B.B.S., M.B.A., M.Tech., and M.F.M. But are you really happy when you acquire these degrees? No. You want something more. What you want now is a good job.

Do you remain happy after securing a job? You are happy only for a couple of months. Then you start craving a promotion. But are you happy after getting a promotion? No. You want to get married because you think you will be happy when you are married.

But are you happy after your marriage? After marriage, you want a son, then you want a daughter. Are you happy after begetting a son and a daughter? No.

Meanwhile, husband and wife get engaged in endless quarrels. Then you remember God. You pray, "Oh God! Why am I trapped in these worries? Please come to my rescue."

In fact, all this suffering is due to your limitless desires. There is no permanent happiness in fulfilling desires. The happiness derived from desires is only temporary, like passing clouds.

When will you experience real happiness? You are not even happy in your old age, after transferring all your responsibilities to your children. You start worrying that diseases may afflict you. Who will take care of you when you fall sick? When you are 90 years old and bed-ridden, even then you want happiness and comfort. When the doctor comes to give you an injection, you ask him, "Sir, please give the injection carefully so that it doesn't give me pain."

In this manner, right from birth to death, you crave happiness. Where is the real happiness?

True happiness lies only in sacrifice

Thyagaraja said, Oh mind! Tell me, whether happiness lies in wealth or in the proximity of God (*Nidhi chala sukham, Easwara sannidhi vhalo sukham, nijamuga telupumu manasa*). He refused to accept all the wealth and precious gifts that were offered to him by the king. Real happiness lies only in the proximity of God.

There is no harm in deriving happiness from worldly objects, but it should be within limits, and your focus should always be on spirituality. Fulfill your desires to the extent necessary, that is enough.

You enjoy eating food, but if you overeat, your stomach will be upset and you will suf-

fer from indigestion. You inhale air, but you cannot retain it inside. As much air that you inhale, the same has to be exhaled. In the same manner, you may earn money, but you should put it to proper use and spend it on acts of charity and helping the poor and needy.

Since ancient times, the culture of Bharat (India) has been propagating this great lesson for mankind: Immortality is attained not by action, progeny, or wealth but only by sacrifice (*Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaike amrutatthwamanasu*).

You may perform any number of rituals and sacrifices (*yajnas* and *yagas*), you may beget any number of children, you may earn any amount of wealth, but none of these can confer immortality on you. Immortality lies only in sacrifice. True happiness lies only in sacrifice. There is no greater happiness than what you derive from sacrifice.

What do you have to renounce? Should you renounce your house and property? God does not expect you to renounce these things. God wants you to give up your evil qualities. What should you offer to God? He is not asking you to offer your virtues. He is asking for your evil qualities, because nobody will accept them, not even your own parents.

Students!

You may think the love of your parents or the love of your wife and children as the ultimate love, but that is a grave misconception. God's love for you is the greatest.

Offer your evil qualities to God

Your parents love you because they think that you will give them happiness when you grow up and attain a good position in life. There is an element of selfishness in their love. The same is true about the love of your wife and children. Only God loves you without a trace

of selfishness and self-interest. Offer your evil qualities to God, who is totally selfless.

In the interview room a short while ago with our Vice Chancellor and others, I told them about this. Suppose you have a totally crumpled and soiled hundred rupee note, which even a beggar will not accept. Even if you throw it in the garbage, the person who collects the garbage will not touch it. Nobody will accept it. But the same hundred rupee note will be accepted by the Reserve Bank, and they will give a new hundred rupee note in return.

Likewise, nobody will accept your dirty mind, which is like a soiled and crumpled hundred rupee note. Not even your mother, father, wife, or son will accept it. Therefore, offer your dirty mind to God, who is like the Reserve Bank Chairman. He will give you a pure mind in return (*loud applause*).

When you offer all your evil qualities to God, they will not trouble you. You will be happy and the world will also be happy. Don't keep your evil qualities with you, and don't pass them on to others also. Offer them only to God, with the sense of total surrender.

Oh Lord!

Only You are my father and mother, friend and relation, wisdom and wealth.

You are my everything

Twameva matacha pita twameva,

Twameva bandhuscha sakha twameva,

Twameva vidya dravinam twameva

Twameva sarvam mama devadeva.

(Sanskrit Verse)

What is meant by offering everything to God? It does not mean sitting idle without doing any work. Do your work, perform your duty, but offer everything to God with the feeling, "Do all actions to please God (*Sarva karma bhagavad preetyartham*). When you perform actions without any expectation of the fruits thereof and offer them to God, God will give you what is good for you.

You write a letter, put it in an envelope, and post it. Your duty ends there. The letter will reach its destination, whether it is America, Germany, or Japan. Once you post the letter, you don't need to worry whether it will reach its destination. It is for the post office to ensure that the letter reaches its destination. It may first go to Mumbai, from there to New York. Whatever may be the mode of dispatch, the letter will reach its destination.

Similarly, discharge all your worldly responsibilities and offer them to God. It is for God to decide what type of happiness He should give you.

Unfortunately, people today lack faith, which is very necessary. Faith is like the life breath of a person. A person without faith (*viswasa*) is like a body without life breath (*swasa*). Faith should be saturated with love. Life without love is useless.

Worldly relations are false

A young man, in his effort to acquire the knowledge of many spiritual subjects, used to meet his guru everyday, who lived outside the village. One day the guru taught him,

Relationships like mother, father, brothers,
sisters, and friends are not real.
House and wealth are also illusory.
Hence, beware! Beware!

*Mata nasti, pita nasti,
Nasti bandhu sahodara,
Artham nasti, griham nasti,
Thasmath jagrata jagrata.*

(Sanskrit verse)

Birth is a misery, old age is a misery, family
is a misery, and death is a terrible misery.

So, be careful! Be careful!

*Janma dukham jara dukham
Jaya dukham punah punah
Antya kale maha dukham,
Thasmat jagratha jagratha.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

Then the disciple said, "Swami, all these teachings may be relevant for renunciants like you, but not for people like me. My parents have so much love for me that they will eagerly await my return, standing at the entrance of the house. My wife also loves me so dearly that she does not eat food without me. Therefore, your statement of *Mata nasti pita nasti*, ... does not hold any meaning for me."

The guru heard all this and gave him a pill, saying, "Oh dear son! I will prove my statement by giving you direct evidence. Take this pill. After reaching home, put it in your mouth and drink some water. You will become like a dead man for some time, but you will be able to hear all that transpires around you. Then you yourself can know the truth."

The student readily agreed to this test. Youths of today want to test and see for themselves before believing anything. They have a great taste for tests!

The young man went home and did as instructed. Seeing him lying unconscious, all the inmates of the house cried loudly, considering him dead. The wife wept bitterly, saying, "I am my parents' only daughter. Now I have lost my husband. What is my fate now?" Even while crying for her husband, she was worried only about her future.

Their neighbours came to sympathise with them. Since he was a very good boy and was following the spiritual path, everyone was grief-stricken at his 'death'.

After some time, the guru also entered their house on the pretext of coming that side for some work. After hearing everything, the guru said, "I will bring him back to life, but do what I say."

All the people in the house told him, "Swami! We will surely do what you ask us to do."

The guru said, "Look! In order to bring him back to life, one of you should be prepared to die. After chanting a mantra, I will sprinkle

water on him from my water pot, and he will get up.”

Saying this, the guru first asked the mother of the young man, “*Amma!* Are you prepared to die for your son?”

The mother replied, “Swami! I have other children to look after. Who will take care of them when I die? What will happen to them when I am no more?”

The guru put the same question to the young man’s father. He said, “I have the responsibility for the maintenance of the entire family. Isn’t it? How can I die?”

Thereafter, the guru asked the young man’s wife. “Dear daughter! For a wife, her husband is everything. Isn’t it? I think, you will have no objection to dying for his sake.”

The wife said, “I am my parents’ only daughter. They will be very sad if I die.”

All three went inside the house and thought of a master plan. After some time, the young man’s father came out and said to the guru, “Oh revered guru! You are the embodiment of compassion. You do not have any responsibilities. Therefore, why don’t you sacrifice your life for my son? We will construct a marble tomb for you and will worship you with great devotion and dedication.”

When the guru sprinkled water on his face, the disciple got up. The guru said to him, “See what your father, mother, and wife said. All of them told me to sacrifice my life. At least now try to understand that the entire world is unreal (*mithya*).” Nobody is related to anybody in any way.

Develop self-confidence

The love that people exhibit for each other is only body attachment. Selfishness and self-interest is the basis of this love. Only God is totally selfless.

There is nothing wrong in maintaining relationships with others, but love God wholeheartedly. Whatever work you do, consider it as God’s work. Whomever you see, respect them as the embodiment of God. As propounded in the *Bhagavad Gita*, God is present in all: I am present as the *Atma* in all beings (*Mamatma sarva bhutantaratma*). Therefore, do not ridicule or hate anybody.

At the same time, do not put too much faith in others. Instead of having faith in others, put all your faith in God. (*Swami showing His handkerchief*) This cloth is made of so many threads. Since many threads came together, this cloth has become strong. If you separate the threads of the cloth, you can break them with your fingers.

Therefore, focus all your love on God. Love all, serve all, considering everyone as divine. But do not believe everyone. Have faith only in God.

This body is a den of dirt and prone to diseases.

It is subject to change from time to time.

It cannot cross the ocean of worldliness.

It is nothing but a structure of bones.

Oh mind!

Do not be under the delusion that the body is permanent.

Instead, take refuge at the divine Lotus Feet.
(Telugu Poem)

In the present circumstances, in this modern age, in this *Kali Yuga*, make God your only refuge, with full faith. Because people have lost faith in God, the nation is in utter turmoil and chaos. Develop moral values. Tread the path of righteousness. Experience spirituality. Then you will also attain worldly happiness.

Since there is no spiritual education either in schools or colleges, students today are going astray. This is not the students’ mistake; the mistake lies with the education system, which has not made any provision for spirituality in schools and colleges.

How can the mansion of life stand without the foundation of spirituality? Self-confidence is the foundation, self-satisfaction are the walls, self-sacrifice is the roof, and self-realisation is life. Therefore, develop self-confidence. That is spirituality.

You cannot perform even a small task without self-confidence. Focus your thoughts on God instead of wasting your time in unnecessary talking, entertaining evil thoughts, and taking to a wrong path. Contemplation on God is the real wealth that will secure your future. Earn such permanent wealth and good name. Only then will your life become meaningful.

Serve society and strive for its welfare. Become dear to all by rooting out your ego and giving up body attachment. Why has this body been given to you? The body is gifted to undertake righteous actions (*Sariramadyam khalu dharma sadhanam*).

Preserve at least one or two good teachings of Swami in your heart from what you hear every day. It may not be possible for you to remember everything, but remember at least one or two important teachings and practise them.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan*, “*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin...*”)

From Bhagavan’s Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam, on 16 August 1996.