

Fuse spirituality with education

*Bharat has men who are capable of educating
Even the ancient sages about the essence of scriptures;
Men who sacrificed their lives for the uplift of society;
Men who have immense administrative capabilities.
Bharat has many such eminent personalities.
Alas! Of what use are such men in Bharat
If they have no awareness of the wail of the oppressed?
When will they respond to the heart-rending cries of the poor?*
[Telugu Poem]

Students! Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached. The need of the hour is men who set an ideal by their valor and courage in the battle of life, and not men who pursue physical, ephemeral, fleeting pleasures.

Students! Investigate the concept of ideal education propagated by the ancient sages. They enthroned righteousness and welcomed truth. They enshrined valor and courage. You

should emulate such people, who strove for the glow of Indian culture. In fact you are the true inheritors of the legacy of Indian culture. You should resolve to uphold *dharma* and work for the welfare of the country.

Absence of human values leads to decline in spirituality

Science and technology has improved by leaps and bounds over the past 200 years, yet no sanctity has been attached to it. This has stimulated development in human civilization, but not within man. The absence of human values will lead to a decline in spirituality. Develop the strong faith that the body has been gifted to uphold human values.

Since ancient times, *Bharatiyas* (Indians) stood for peace, forbearance, and forgiveness. A study of the history of Bharat will reveal the fact that many invaded Bharat and plundered its wealth, but never has Bharat invaded any foreign land on its own. *Bharatiyas* have considered divinity and purity as their two eyes. In such a sacred land, justice and righteousness have been consigned to flames, resulting in trials and tribulations, turmoil and unrest on a large scale.

Education does not mean mere bookish knowledge. Acquired knowledge should be put into practice and shared with the rest of the community. Does the ability to read and write make one educated? Does securing college degrees make one educated? If education is for a living, are not birds and beasts living? There are millions of educated men and women all over the world, but what is the benefit accruing to their respective nations? None. They are utilizing their education for selfishness and self-interest alone.

Embodiments of Love! Boys and girls! Eschew selfishness and self-interest and resolve to serve society.

*The eternal and long lasting values
have disappeared into thin air.*

*Good nature in men and women is on the decline.
Ancient Aryan wisdom is frittered away
Western education is on the rise.*

[Telugu poem]

Bharatiya education makes one ideal and self-reliant. It inculcates the sense of sacrifice in man. Having called yourselves children of Bharat, you should keep in mind the welfare of Bharat Matha. Modern education enhances the intelligence, but not broadmindedness. It makes the students stonehearted. True education is one that instills compassion in you. Patriotism coupled with sacrifice; devotion coupled with love should become a part and parcel of your life. Education confers humility. Humility confers deservedness; deservedness secures for you wealth as well as divinity and devotion to God.

*In this sacred land of Bharat,
Forbearance is our best wealth;
Of all forms of rituals, the highest is
The observance of truth and morality;
Of sweetness of disposition,
The greatest is maternal love.
Jettisoning the national ideal
That honor is greater than life itself,
What a pity people have fallen
a prey to exotic practices
What can I say about the plight of Bharat!
Like the elephant unaware of its strength,
Alas! Bharatiyas have become docile today.*

[Telugu Poem]

Since ancient times, Bharat has stood as an ideal for the rest of the world. Unfortunately, we witness a different scenario today. We find educational institutions proliferating in

every street, in every village. What is the gain therefrom? Absolutely nil.

*Humility, the hallmark of a true student, is not noticed.
Harm is done to those that help,
A sense of gratitude is lacking.
Teachers are made a laughing stock.
This is the progress of modern education.*

[Telugu Poem]

To realize the purpose of education, serve society. Cleanse the country of all evils. True education is that which makes one a complete man. Only when one gets transformed into a complete human being is the purpose of education fulfilled.

Education is meant to broaden the mind

Students! Resolve to make the best use of the education that you have received. Respect and revere elders and set an ideal to humanity. Let your conduct befit the degrees you have acquired. Nothing great in obtaining good marks, see that you do not invite bad remarks. In the modern system of education, a student is declared pass if he secures just 35% of marks. What about the balance 65%? If a person completes only 35 out of 100 tasks assigned to him, can you call him a successful one? One should secure 100% marks. That is true education.

Attaining high marks is not the aim of education. Education is meant to broaden the mind. Education and discrimination should go hand in hand. The prosperity of the nation depends on the progress you make in the field of education.

*The future of the nation rests on the students.
Moral and ethical values are confined only to books.
Heart has become a dwelling place for evil qualities.
Actions have become completely self-centred.
This is the progress of modern education. [Telugu Poem]*

Education acquired should be translated into action. When you put your knowledge into practice, only then do you become an ideal person.

Students! As I have told you repeatedly, knowledge can be classified into five categories: bookish knowledge, superficial knowledge, general knowledge, discrimination knowledge, and practical knowledge. General knowledge and common sense are very much essential.

You should set an ideal by exercising practical knowledge and following the four Fs. The first F is *Follow the Master*. Who is your master? Conscience is your master. So, follow your conscience. The second F is *Face the devil*. The third F is *Fight to the end*. The fourth F is *Finish the game*. Play the game of life in the true spirit of sportsmanship.

Students lack self-confidence. Confidence in the Self is very essential. Lack of confidence in Self will lead to depression. Today, 90% of the people are afflicted with depression. Depression will lead to weakness of mind. “*Na ayamatma balahinena labhyah* (a weak-minded one cannot realise the *Atma*.)” If you have confidence in the Self, you will never be weak-minded.

Render service to others till your last breath

Bharat has stocked plenty of wealth for you. What is this wealth? It is the spirit of sacrifice, which can be acquired through service to society. Do not waste time. “*Karmanubandeeni manushyaloke* (human society is bound by action.)” “*Sareeramadyam khalu dharma sadhanam* (body is gifted in order to undertake righteous actions, not to eat, drink, and make merry.)” Render service to others till your last breath.

The essence of 18 *Puranas* can be summed up in one phrase: “*Paropakarah punyaya papaya arapeedanam*.” Help ever; hurt never. Set an ideal that is helpful and delightful to one and all.

Education is for life and not for a living

Students! “*Janthoonam narajanma durlabham* (human birth is the rarest of all.)” Human life should be one of character, good actions, and good qualities. It should be dedicated to the service of society, not for amassing wealth. Education is for life and not for a living. One need not strive for money. If education is properly utilised, money will come on its own. Today, educational institutions have become business centers.

*Money has become our God;
Pride has become our creed;
Selfishness sits supreme in the minds of men;
Egotism has become our fashion;
Greed has become our beauty;
Dharma has come to naught;
Compassion has sunk low;
Morality forever is lost;
Hypocrisy has become the light of our life;
Love and kindness lie sick and diseased;
Modern education has blinded men with lust;
Life has become a burden;
Minds have gone astray;
Delay no more, for delay is disastrous;
Fuse morality with education in sweet harmony;
Live up to the reputation as children of Bharat.*

[Telugu Poem]

Moral values should be the underlying current in each and every action of man. Only when you have moral and ethical values can you deserve to be called children of Bharat.

Embodiments of Love! Loka samastha sukhino bhavanthu (Let the whole world be happy) has been the motto of Bharat since ancient times. Resolve to revive and rejuvenate the pristine glory of Bharat. Propagate these noble ideals in every vil-

lage, every street, and every house. Observe unity in every activity of yours. Believe in the dictum, “Brotherhood of man and Fatherhood of God”.

Do not feel jealous of anyone. Jealousy is an incurable disease. Praise and censure are inevitable for man. Only the tree that bears fruit is stoned. Likewise, only the good face problems. Do not attach importance to these trials and tribulations.

A Tree welcomes stoning because it is aware of the fact that people have recognised its value. Similarly, man should not feel dejected when he is censured. Treat dualities like pain and pleasure with equal-mindedness. Develop this broad-mindedness. Divinity blossoms in those with such a sacred attitude.

All are the embodiments of God. Krishna declared, “*Mamaivamso jivaloke jivabhuta Sanathanah* (All are sparks of My divinity.)” Do not consider yourselves as mere mortals. Have firm faith that you are divine. Only then will you be able to work for the emancipation of this country, and it will be restored to the status of teacher to the rest of the world.

Education is the very form of God

The Vice Chancellor quoted from the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, “*Matrudevo bhava, Pitrudevo bhava, Acharyadevo bhava, Atithidevo bhava* (revere your mother, father, preceptor, and guest as God.)” This was the teaching given to the students at the time of leaving the portals of *Gurukul* in ancient times. This act of benediction is termed Convocation today.

Education is the very form of God. The word “education” originated from the root word “educare”, meaning “to bring out” or “to elicit”. Educare has two aspects: that which relates to the head and that which relates to the heart. That which emerges from the head is *pravritti* (external); that from the heart is *nivritti* (internal).

Unless the head is empty (free from evil) it cannot be stuffed with good. Modern education relates to the head, but true education relates to the heart. Sacred qualities like compassion, truth, forbearance, and love originate from the heart.

Here is a small example. Physical features like height, weight, and complexion can be seen by the naked eye, whereas there are innumerable qualities like compassion, truth, and love that are unseen. Merely acquainting oneself with the physical features of an individual does not make one aware of one's true personality.

Essence of Bharatiya vidya

Hiranyakasipu's scientific achievements far exceeded those of the modern scientists. He could even reach the Pole star, whereas the modern scientists have traveled only up to moon. Prahlada cautioned his father Hiranyakasipu, "Oh! Father, you have conquered all the worlds but not your senses. The same sentiment was expressed by the Prime Minister of England, Churchill, "Man has conquered all, but he has not conquered himself." On being questioned by a westerner as to why he was in a pensive mood, Gandhi replied that he was ruminating over the modern educational system, which was making him stone-headed.

Education should fill one's heart with love and compassion. Two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen add up to make water. Greatness lies in sharing water equally, not in making it. Everyone has an equal right to water. Today, everyone is fighting for rights, but what about responsibility?

Students! You do not need to fight for rights. Discharge your responsibilities, and rights will follow. Do your duty. Duty is God; work is worship.

What is your right? To make everybody happy is your right. Serve everybody and make everyone happy without expecting anything in return. Service is God. The best way to

love God is to love all and serve all. Speak softly and sweetly. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly. That is the essence of *Bharatiya vidya*.

Education does not mean, “Twinkle, twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are.” All this is artificial education. True *Bharatiya vidya* is one, that fosters spirituality and human values.

Our institute is based on sacrifice

Students! Propagate the ideals of true education in the four corners of the world. Sacrifice everything for the sake of truth, and tread along this sacred path. Truth is God; Love is God; Live in Love; Live in Truth. Imbibe these principles. Once you are along the path of love and truth, you will gain all wealth and wisdom. Be steady, do not waver.

Students of our institutions live up to these ideals and bring a good name to the institute. There is no institution comparable to our institution in this country. Business has taken over education right from K.G. to P.G. in other institutions. But our institute is based on sacrifice. Foster this sacred quality of sacrifice. Offer education to your fellow beings free of cost.

The *Vedas* declare, “*Na karmana, na prajaya, danena tyagenaike amrutatwa manasuh* (Immortality can be attained only through sacrifice and not through wealth, progeny, or action.)” Be prepared to sacrifice, True *yoga* lies in sacrifice.

First and foremost, make your parents happy. Make everybody happy and be an ideal. The *Vedas* declare,

*Sahanavavathu, sahana bhunakthu,
Sahaveeryam Karavavahai
Tejaswi navadheethamasthu
Maa Vidhvisaavahai.*

May the Lord protect and nourish us!
May we grow in intelligence and valour working together!
May we live in friendship without any conflict!

I wish that you practice and propagate these sacred ideals.
Blessing you, I bring this discourse to a close.

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