

Do Sadhana with pure Feelings

Truth is your true mother and Wisdom

the true father,

Dharma is the true brother and Compassion

the true friend;

The true wife is Peace and the true so

Forgiveness,

These six are in fact the true relations of man.

[Sanskrit sloka]

Embodiments of Love! Life is like an ocean with waves of joy and sorrow. Spirituality is the lighthouse to the people who are traveling in the ocean of *Samsara*. Spirituality does not mean rituals and worship alone. Spirituality is that which demonstrates unity in multiplicity. God is love personified and is installed in the heart of every man. That is why since time immemorial, the *Bharatiyas* have prayed for the welfare of all people in the world. Spirituality has a certain discipline. *Na sreya niyamam vina* (Nothing noble and great can be achieved without discipline).

Spirituality and welfare of humanity

In Tamil, there is a sacred book named *Thirukural*, which is equivalent to the *Vedas*. It was written by Thiruvalluvar. He took to the path of spirituality, worked for the welfare of humanity, and led a disciplined and peaceful life. He used to ask his wife to keep a cup of water and a needle by his side while he ate his food. As per the command of her husband, his wife did accordingly day after day, but not even once did she find him putting them to use while having food. When his wife asked him for the reason, he replied, "I don't want to waste even a single grain of rice. The purpose of this needle is to pick up the grain of rice if it were to fall outside my plate and to wash it clean with water before putting it back in the plate. So far I have not used this needle, since I have been very careful not to spill rice grains."

Annam Brahma, raso Vishnu, bhokta devo Maheswara (food is Brahma, the essence is Vishnu, and the one who partakes of it is Maheswara). Food is called Brahma since its essence pervades the whole body and gives it strength. The prayer to Vishnu is to purify the mind, so that the body may be utilised in a proper way. The Eswara Principle demonstrates how to make use of the strong body and pure mind in a proper way. God resides in the heart of everyone in the form of love. But no one is making any effort to realise the Principal of Love in the heart. There is no life without love. Love is God. God is love.

Today, man is leaving no stone unturned in order to experience happiness. But his desires are increasing day by day, just as the ants that come out of an anthill. Increase in desires will only lead to restlessness but not happiness. Man aspires to be happy through the fulfillment of his desires; on the contrary,

he is becoming more and more restless. The lesser the desires are the greater the happiness will be. The *Vedas* teach that all the education that man acquires should be utilised for the welfare of society. The *Vedas* say, *Sarvaloka hithe ratah* (man should involve himself in the service of society). *Sarvajnanopa sampannah* (man should be a treasure of wisdom), *Sarvasamudhita gunaihi* (man should cultivate all good qualities). But today's education does not confer these noble virtues. Modern education bestows mere bookish knowledge, which in turn becomes superficial knowledge. Today, there is no trace of practical knowledge in man.

After his education, man should work for the welfare of society and the world at large. He should not have the narrow feeling that he and his family alone should be happy. Without the world, where is the family? Man and his family are dependent on society and the world at large. So, man and his family can be happy only when the world is safe and secure. Today in all fields of life, be it political or social, no one seems to be concerned about the welfare of the world. Selfishness and self-interest are widespread in all the fields. As long as there is selfishness and self-interest in the people of a country, it cannot prosper.

Brahma and Bhrama

Today man aspires to have the vision of Brahma, but is getting immersed in *bhrama* (illusion). Unity in multiplicity is Brahma and viewing multiplicity in unity is *bhrama*. Man has lost the vision of unity in diversity. He has become highly "intelligent", so as to divide unity into multiplicity. Fie upon such intelligence! Man should make an effort to see the unity in diversity. That is the real *sadhana* (spiritual exercise).

Practice the teachings of the Vedas to experience bliss

Reading the sacred texts such as the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Puranas* does not confer the vision of Brahma. Narada had studied the four *Vedas* and six *Sastras*. He was a great exponent of the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Upanishads*. In spite of all this, he could neither attain peace nor get rid of his delusion. So he approached the sages Sanaka, Sanandana, and Sanat Kumara and requested them to grant him peace and wisdom. Sanat Kumara asked Narada what made him feel that he deserved to attain peace and wisdom.

Narada replied that he had studied the four *Vedas*, the six *Sastras*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Brahma Sutras*.

Then Sanat Kumara said, “Narada! No doubt, you have studied the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, but have you put them into practice? It is a mistake to think that mere study of the *Vedas* and *Sastras* can confer peace and wisdom. One has to practice the teachings of the *Vedas* and *Sastras* in order to experience bliss.”

Will the darkness in the world be dispelled by the message of light?

Can the disease be cured by merely listening to the efficacy of medicine?

Can the poor get rid of poverty by listening to the principles of Economics?

Can hunger be satiated by mere repetition of the names of various delicious dishes?

No. Similarly, you can attain bliss only when you put your knowledge into practice.

[Telugu Poem]

Sanat Kumara went on to say, “Narada, you say you have gone through the *Upanishads*. But have you understood the first declaration of the first *Upanishad: Isavasyam Idam Sarvam* (God permeates the entire cosmos)? Have you recognised the Truth that God exists in everybody. You are chanting the *slokas* (verses), but you are not trying to experience them.”

Dharma leads to divinity

Today spiritual aspirants are wasting their time in such futile exercises. Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted. Instead the aspirants should try to enter a path that will endow them with wisdom. There are nine paths of devotion. They are: *sra-vanam* (listening to the stories of the Lord), *kirtanam* (singing the glory of the Lord) *Vishnusmaranam* (contemplating on the form of the Lord), *Padasevanam* (serving the Lotus Feet), *vandanam* (salutation), *archanam* (worship), *dasyam* (servitude), *sneham* (friendship of the Lord), and *Atmanivedanam* (self-surrender). Are you putting any of these into practice in your daily life? No. You are merely mouthing words, but not practising.

The proper study of mankind is man. What is the proper study? Your thoughts, words, and deeds must be in harmony with each other. *Manasyanyath vachasyanyath karmanyanyath duratmanam* (he is a wicked one whose thoughts, words, and deeds are not in harmony). In the modern world, you find such wicked people everywhere. But there are good people also. If there are no good people in the world, how can the sun rise? Good people are there in the world, no doubt. But, the present-day scenario is such that only the wicked seem to be prospering.

Sathyam matha, pitha jnanam (truth is your mother and wisdom is your father). A true father is one who imparts the knowledge of non-dualism to his son. But the present-day parents are not concerned about truth; whatever untruths their son utters to cover up his mistakes, they take that as truth! It is only because of such parents that the children are going in the wrong direction. Parents are to be blamed if the children take to the wrong path. As the parents, so are the children. If the parents themselves are found arguing with each other, the children will go a step ahead and engage themselves in fighting with each other! The condition of the country depends upon fathers and mothers. But today, the situation of the family is very unfortunate.

Humility bestows deservedness

Since ancient times, Bharat has radiated peace and happiness to the rest of the world with its power of spirituality. All the aspects of the culture of Bharat are suffused with divinity. The eyes, the ears, the nose and the hand are the different limbs of the body. Body is a limb of the society. Society is a limb of mankind. Mankind is a limb of nature. Nature is a limb of God.

It is because of the impact of modern education that man is misusing his limbs. He has forgotten the truth that humility is the hallmark of true education. Education confers humility. Humility bestows deservedness. Deservedness will lead to *dharma*. It is through *dharma* that one can attain Divinity. Modern education has become job-oriented. Without *yoga*, what is the use of *udyoga* (job)? One has to attain *yoga*, which means control of the senses.

Buddha did penance (*thapas*) for many years in order to attain *yoga*. Ultimately, Buddha attained *Nirvana* (liberation). But, today, people are ruining themselves because they are immersed in *thamas* (dullness). Buddha laid emphasis on *samyak drishti*, *samyak vak*, *samyak sravanam*, *samyak chintanam*, and *samyak karma*. This can be interpreted as:

See no evil, see what is good.

Talk no evil, talk what is good.

Hear no evil, hear what is good.

Think no evil, think what is good.

Do no evil, do what is good.

Buddha made proper use of the five senses, experienced bliss and shared it with others. But, today all five senses are being misused. Actions are based on thoughts. So, man has to cultivate noble thoughts. *Hridaya* (heart) is the temple of God. Thoughts, words, and deeds will be pure, steady and selfless only when man has a pure *hridaya* and noble feelings. Purity, patience, and perseverance are very essential for mankind. Without firm faith, man cannot achieve anything in life.

Happiness and sorrow co-exist

Ages have passed, years have rolled by, but there is no transformation in man. When you have a bitter thing in your mouth, even the sweet tastes bitter. Sweet will taste sweet only when you spit out the bitter thing and rinse your mouth. What is that you have to do in order to pour milk into a glass, which is already full of water? You have to pour out the water and then pour in the milk. Likewise, man has to get rid of evil thoughts in order to cultivate sacred feelings.

Man's life is like an ocean full of opposite waves of union and separation. These waves co-exist; in fact one cannot exist without the other. So, one has to be equal-minded.

Happiness and sorrow co-exist.

It is impossible to separate them.

One cannot have comforts alone.

Comforts accrue from troubles and sufferings.

[Telugu Poem]

Man should purify his mind with pure thoughts

Today we find pollution everywhere. The air that we breathe, the water that we drink, the sound that we hear, the food that we partake of, all are polluted. The root cause for all this is that the mind itself is polluted. It is because of evil feelings in the mind that everything appears evil. *Mano moolam idam jagat* (the whole world is based on the mind). Even if man dies, mind will not die. So, man should purify his mind with pure thoughts. Pure thoughts can be cultivated only by chanting the divine name.

Some people may talk derisively about the efficacy of the divine name. But, the joy and bliss that you derive by chanting it is supreme. Today people think of only worldly matters, but not God. What is the benefit that accrues from thinking of mundane matters? Nothing at all. In fact, it makes you more and more restless.

People find the reflection of their own defects in others. Those that find mistakes in others do not know their own mistakes. How can you get the belch of a mango if you have not eaten it? The belch you get depends on the food you take. The good and bad that you see and experience are the results of your own thoughts. First recognise the defects in yourself and

get rid of them. It is a great sin to criticise others. God is in everyone. So, criticising others amounts to criticising God Himself. Do not criticise or ridicule anyone. Respect everyone; only then will you be respected. It is foolishness to expect others to respect you without yourself respecting them.

If your feelings are good, you will see only good in everyone. Mind is the root cause for everything. Man cannot exist without the mind. A torch cannot function without cells. Body is like a torch, eyes like bulbs, and intellect like a switch. But, without the mind, which can be compared to a cell, the body cannot function. So, the mind has to be kept in good condition.

Cultivate noble qualities in New Year

Embodiments of Love! You have been celebrating the New Year Day year after year. But are you cultivating new and sacred qualities? No. You are unable to give up bad qualities. With each New Year, new and noble qualities should be cultivated. Desires have to be controlled. The lesser the desires, the lesser your sorrows. Excessive desires lead to the ruination of will power (*ichcha sakthi*). Decline in will power leads to loss of power of action (*kriya sakthi*). Develop unity of *ichcha sakthi*, *kriya sakthi*, and *jnana sakthi* (power of wisdom). Will power will increase only when desires are reduced. Happiness is eluding man due to limitless desires. Excessive desires spoil health and cause depression in the mind. Reducing desires amounts to reducing the burden on the mind. Less luggage, more comfort makes travel a pleasure. Life is a long journey. How can you enjoy the journey if you are carrying heavy luggage? Go on reducing your luggage. The same message is conveyed in the *Vedas* too. *Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaike amrutathwamanasu* (immortality can be attained

only through sacrifice; neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it).

Have fear of sin and love for God. Only then there will be morality in society. If you do not have fear of sin and love for God, you will not be respected even by your own mother, wife, and children. If you have fear of sin and love for God, the whole world will love you. Sage Vyasa has given the essence of the 18 *Puranas* in the dictum, *Paropakara punyaya papaya parapeedanam* (to help others is merit; harming others is sin). Help ever, Hurt never. If you cannot render help, at least restrain yourself from hurting others. That itself is a great help.

Master the mind and be a mastermind

The sacred land of Tamil Nadu is the birthplace of many great saints and sages, who undertook many spiritual practices with great determination and led noble lives of peace and happiness. They gave up body attachment and developed love for the *Atma*. But, today, man is developing attachment to the body more and more, forgetting the Principle of the *Atma*.

*This body is a heap of rubbish
and is full of diseases.
O mind, do not be under the illusion
that body is permanent.
Take refuge at the feet of the Lord.*

[Telugu Poem]

The body and the mind are negative; only the *Atma* is positive. You say, my body, my mind, my intellect, my senses, and so forth. When you say, my handkerchief, the handkerchief is separate from you. Similarly, when you say, my body, my mind, etc., you are separate from them. Then who are you?

Put a question to yourself. All this is matter and you are the Master. Master the mind and be a mastermind.

On the spiritual path, *japa* and *dhyana* are not that important. Purity of mind is most important. You do not need to undertake spiritual practice. Love everyone. Do not limit your love to you and your family alone. Do not spend your life in narrow-mindedness. All belong to the same universal family. All are one; be alike to everyone. Divine love is pure, selfless, attributeless, and eternal. He is a sinner who tries to find faults with divine love. Worldly love is negative and full of selfishness. Man can attain Divinity only when he gives up selfishness.

Develop morality. Money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows. Today man entertains only negative thoughts. Man cannot expect to have positive rewards when his heart is filled with negative thoughts. When the heart is full of worldly desires, how can you have love for God? It is impossible. Cultivate positive feelings; only then you will have positive results.

Only God is your true friend

If you have selfless love, you need not be afraid of anything. Even if the sky were to fall on your head, be fearless. Never be afraid of following the truth. Truth is God, love is God. Live in love. Get immersed in the divine love. The wicked and evil-minded people cannot understand the divine love. Do not enter into friendship with such people. Only God is your true friend, who has no trace of selfishness and who helps you always under all circumstances. Have the firm conviction that God always helps and never hurts anyone. Whether you are in the forest or in the sky or in a city or in a village or

on the top of a hill or in the middle of a river, God is always with you, in you and around you.

Worldly friends are such that they say hello to you only when you have money and power. Hello becomes hollow once you lose both. As long as there is water in the pond, thousands of frogs gather there. Once the pond gets dried up, not even a single frog will be seen around. Same is the case with worldly friends. But God's friendship is not like that. He is with you at all stages and in all situations. Love him from the depth of your heart. Take refuge in Him. He will definitely protect you. Did He not come to the rescue of Prahlada, who surrendered to Him completely? *Yad bhavam, tad bhavathi* (as is the feeling, so is the result). God will come to your rescue if you have total faith.

Some actions will yield instant results, whereas others may take a few hours, a few days, a few years or a few births. For example, when your finger is cut, bleeding starts immediately. It takes a few hours for the food to get digested. It takes a few years for a seed to grow into a tree and yield fruit. Be it good or bad, you have to face the consequences of your actions. So, do not indulge in bad actions. Always do good, be good, and see good. This is the way to God. Do not say "I will try;" you must do it.

God is love, so He always gives only love

Some people, when faced with difficulties, think that God is punishing them. It is a mistake to think so. God never punishes anybody. It is only the king who gives punishment, not God. God is love, so He always gives only love. The punishment you suffer is the result of your own actions. God neither punishes you nor protects you. You are punished by your own

sins and protected by your own good deeds. You may utilise light for writing wrong account or for reading the holy Ramayana. But, the light is not affected by what you do. Similarly, God is the eternal witness. He is like the light, not affected by what you do, be it good or bad.

Spiritual practices and purity of mind

Embodiments of Love! Many New Years have come and gone, but what is that you have achieved? You may have participated in *bhajans* any number of times. But, you still continue to be immersed in negativity. Put a question to yourself what have you gained by participating in *bhajans*. *Bhajans* should develop positive feelings in you. Any *sadhana* (spiritual practice) done with noble feelings will yield good results. You may be doing a lot a spiritual practices for many years without any result. But, never give up any spiritual practice. Continue your *sadhana*. One day or the other, you will get the reward.

You think that you have attained *swatantrata* (independence). *Swa* means *Atma*. So, the true independence lies in following *Atma Dharma*. Body is like a water bubble. Mind is like a mad monkey. So, do not follow the body; do not follow the mind. Follow the conscience. Your conscience always gives you the right prompting. It is a sin if you do not follow the dictates of your conscience. Conscience is your master.

Follow the master

Face the devil

Fight to the end

Finish the game.

Some people say that they have not got any benefit in spite of chanting the divine name for twenty to thirty years. No benefit accrues from chanting the divine name if the mind is filled with impurities. First purify your mind and fill it with positive feelings. Only then you can experience the benefit of chanting the divine name. Bad thoughts and bad feelings will not help you in any way. Even if you happen to come across anything bad, do not let it enter your mind.

God's work will never fail. So, all the work that is done with divine feelings will never meet with failure. If you fail in your endeavour, it means you do not have divine feelings. You will always be successful if your feelings are pure and divine. At least from today onward, cultivate noble feelings. Talk sweetly and softly. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly.

Embodiments of Love! On New Year day, it is a practice to mix sweet, sour and bitter things and eat them. It is to indicate that joy and sorrow have to be treated with equanimity. It is the tongue that tastes the delicacy and it is the heart that tastes love. The taste of love is peerless. It is sweeter than even nectar. Love alone can match love. God is love, love is God. Live in love. Whatever *bhajans* you sing, sing with love. God is *Bhavapriya*. He sees your feelings, not the rhythm or tune. If your feelings are pure, God will take care of everything.

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Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan