

SATHYA SAI SPEAKS

VOLUME 32 (part 2)

Discourses of
BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA
Delivered from July 1999 to December 1999

PRASANTHI NILAYAM

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Publisher's Note

Sathya Sai Speaks series is, according to the late Prof. N. Kasturi, the original translator and compiler, "a fragrant bouquet of flowers that never fade or falter." These discourses were delivered by Swami out of profound compassion toward seekers of Truth during the last few decades. The discourses delivered after 1982 are printed for the first time, which have not been published in book form so far. Volume XVI, covering the year 1983, is the first in the new series. Further new volumes are being added, one volume for each year, covering discourses delivered from 1984.

The retention of Sanskrit words on page after page, without their English equivalents in most cases, was causing confusion to readers, especially foreigners, who were not familiar with Sanskrit. An attempt has been made to aid easy reading by replacing Sanskrit words with English equivalents wherever they

do not affect Baba's original expression. Sanskrit words have been retained wherever it was felt necessary to preserve the essence of the original expression of Baba and where the English equivalents may not do full justice to the text in the particular context. However, in all such places, the English equivalents have been given along with the Sanskrit words. Some very commonly understood Sanskrit words or such words that are repeated too often are retained without English meanings to retain the original flavour of Baba's discourses.

A glossary has been added in all the editions to provide comprehensive and detailed explanations of the more important Sanskrit words for the benefit of lay readers who may be interested in *Vedic* religion and philosophy. It is hoped that this will be of great help to devotees to understand more clearly the topics of Baba's discourses covering a wide spectrum of *Vedic* philosophy.

The volumes of Baba's discourses are being brought out in a larger format, Demy Octavo size, so that they can be companion books with other publications in private libraries. Computerised typesetting using a larger size type, a more readable type face, and better line spacing have been adopted for more comfortable reading of books, especially by elder readers. Very long paragraphs have been split into shorter paragraphs and suitable subheadings have been added in almost every page, to relieve the monotony of the eye and to make reading a pleasure.

Paper quality, improved binding, with new designs and foil printing, have been adopted for these volumes for better preservation and durable shelf life of these volumes.

It is hoped that the revised and enlarged volumes of the *Sathya Sai Speaks* Series up to Volume XV and fresh ones

from Volume XVI onward will be of great benefit to earnest seekers in spiritual realm.

Since we found this volume to be too heavy, we have divided it into two parts, the first part containing discourses delivered from 1 January 1999 to 30 June 1999 and the second part containing discourses delivered from 1 July 1999 to 31 December 1999.

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I

Human Values and Education

*Sadayam Hridayarn Yasya Bhasitham Sathya Bhu-
shitham Kayah Parahithe Yasya Kalisthasya Karo-
thikim*

(Sanskrit verse)

What can the evil effects of *Kali* age do to a man whose heart is filled with compassion, whose every utterance is truth, and whose body is dedicated for the service of others?

Embodiments of love! Man should fill his heart with compassion, always speak the truth and dedicate his body for the welfare of society. The thoughts, words, and deeds of man should always be sacred. The heart unpolluted by desire and anger, the tongue not tainted by untruth, and the body unblemished by the acts of violence —these are the true human values. It is because of the lack of these human values that the

country is facing hardships today. Bharat (India) has been the treasure house of spirituality since ancient times, but, today, it has lost both *sathya* (truth) and *dharma* (righteousness) and is enmeshed in unrighteous falsehood and injustice. It is therefore incumbent upon students to dedicate themselves to the task of restoring the pristine glory of Bharat. Just as the parents are worried and sad if their children lag behind in studies, so also Mother India feels aggrieved on seeing her children lacking moral and ethical values. You have to remember that all those whom you revere as ideal citizens and noble souls were once students themselves. Never forget that students of today are the future citizens and leaders of this country.

Take to righteous actions from an early age

The value of an individual depends on their culture. The real meaning of the word culture lies in giving up bad thoughts and bad actions and cultivating sacred thoughts and performing noble deeds. The country is not a mere piece of land; it is an assemblage of citizens. For the country to progress, the citizens have to cultivate moral, ethical, and spiritual values. It is not possible for the citizens and the leaders to cultivate these values unless they practice them right from childhood. Life becomes meaningless if one does not take to righteous actions from an early age.

Modern students are not able to refine their lives. So, the parents and the teachers should play an active role in shaping the lives of the students. First and foremost, they have to enquire as to how the students can get rid of their evil tendencies. Just as a boulder becomes worthy of adoration and respect when it is carved into a beautiful idol by a sculptor, so also the students will become ideal citizens if they are brought up in the right environment. The teachers and parents are responsible for

the good and bad in students. But, unfortunately, they have not understood their role in shaping the lives of the students.

Spiritual education is for life

No doubt, teachers teach the students in the class. But, what is *vidya*? It is derived from the root word *vid*, meaning, 'to know'. *Vidya* is termed as education in English. The term education has its origin in the Latin word *educare*, which means 'to elicit'. *Educare* has two aspects, the worldly and the spiritual. Worldly education imparts knowledge pertaining to the physical world. Spiritual education is essential, without which human life has little value.

But, in the modern education system, spirituality finds no place. Only worldly education is given prominence. Just as two wings are essential for a bird to soar high in the sky, and two wheels for a cart to move; so also two types of education are needed for man to attain the goal of life. Spiritual education is for life, whereas worldly education is for a living.

Only when man is equipped with these two aspects of education can he be deserving of respect and adoration in society. Possession of these two aspects of education will bring not only respect and adulation but also self-satisfaction.

Worldly education, which relates to the head, is ephemeral. Reading, writing, eking out a livelihood, and attaining name and fame —all these result from worldly education. Worldly education makes man great, whereas the spiritual education makes man good. Spiritual education relates to the heart, which is the origin of sacred qualities like compassion, truth, forbearance and love.

Today parents expect their children to go in for higher studies, amass wealth, and become great, but very few want their children to be good. Goodness is long lasting, whereas

greatness is temporary. Goodness forms the basis for spiritual life.

There are crores and crores of people who have become great by amassing wealth, but what is their contribution to the welfare of society? Absolutely nil. Therefore, strive to be good, not great.

Man should become a composer, not a computer

Modern students are going to various countries for material education without realizing the fact that the heart, the source of true education is within. True education is that which makes man ideal. Parents are the first teachers. They should show their children the way to goodness. Man cannot become good merely by being highly educated. Worldly education confers only *artha* (wealth) and *swartha* (selfishness). Such education is responsible for the downfall of man.

Worldly education is information oriented, while spiritual education is transformation oriented. The information-oriented education makes man a computer, whereas the transformation-oriented education makes man a composer. Man should become a composer, not a computer. Who made the computer? The composer made the computer. Man should therefore understand the meaning of real education.

Today, the moral, ethical, and spiritual values are on the decline. Modern students have no trace of these values in them. They have no respect for their parents and society. In that case how can they expect to be respected by their children?

Our ancient culture exhorts: *Mathru Devo bhava*, *pithru Devo bhava*, and *acharya Devo bhava* (revere your mother, father, and teacher as God). Respect and be respected. Practice before you preach. A composer is one who practices what he preaches.

In the *Mahabharata*, there is a story of a king named Dushyantha. Having been born and brought up in a palace, he was inclined toward worldly and material pursuits. On the other hand, his son Bharata, who was born and brought up in Kanvashram (the hermitage of the sage Kanva) was a repository of moral, spiritual, and ethical values. *Ashram* education inculcates all noble values in man.

Bharata became a paragon of all virtues because he received ideal education right from his childhood. This enabled him to lead a life of peace and security. That is why it is said, start early, drive slowly, and reach safely.

Dushyantha had worldly and material wealth. He was a mighty emperor. What was the use of all that he possessed when he could not achieve spiritual growth? This clearly demonstrates the difference between urban education and *ashram* education.

Values are our life principles

The five human values of *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi*, *prema*, and *ahimsa* (truth, right action, peace, love, and nonviolence) can be compared to the five life principles of man, viz., *prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana*, and *saman*. A true human being is one who practices the five human values. Today man does not speak truth, lest it bring him harm, and does not practice *dharma* because he does not know what it really means.

Under any circumstances should you give up human values. Losing any of the five human values amounts to committing suicide.

If you do not speak the truth, you lose one of your life principles. Truth is your *Atma*. So, till your last breath, uphold truth. The culture of Bharat (India) teaches, *Sathyam vada dharmam chara* (Speak truth and follow righteousness). These

values are the same for one and all.

People all over the world are praying for peace. How can peace be attained? It is only through the practice of *sathya* and *dharma* (truth and right action). Today, man is leading a life bereft of *sathya* and *dharma*, resulting in lack of peace (*santhi*), which in turn has led to the absence of *prema* (love).

How can *ahimsa* (nonviolence) exist in the absence of these four values? Violence is rampant everywhere be it home, bazaar, or factory. Man, bereft of these five principles, has become a living corpse.

Life has to be infused into man today, for which faith in God is very essential. Where there is faith there is love. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is truth. Where there is truth there is God. Where there is God there is bliss. Human life has to begin with faith and end with bliss.

Ancient acharyas and modern teachers

Today, even the parents and the children, the husband and the wife lack faith in each other. The love they exhibit is only artificial. Under such circumstances how can love prevail? One should have deep faith in order to experience true love. Whatever you do, do it wholeheartedly. Fill your heart with compassion. When the heart is filled with love, all actions will be suffused with love.

Jumsai, in his talk, referred to EHV as 3HV. The first H stands for Heart, the second for Head, and the third for Hand. The harmony of heart, head, and hand symbolizes true human life. *Manasyekam vachasyekam karmanyekam mahatmanam* (he is a noble soul whose thoughts, words, and deeds are in perfect harmony). *Manasyanyath, vachasyanyath, karmanyanyath duratmanam* (he is a wicked one whose thoughts, words, and deeds are at variance).

The very name of *hridaya* (heart) —*hri* + *daya*— indicates compassion (*daya*). So, the heart should be filled with compassion. When there is love in the heart all that you utter will be truth. Love in speech is truth. Love in action is *dharma*. Love in thought is peace. Love in understanding is *ahimsa* (non-violence). So, love is the underlying principle of truth, righteousness, peace, and non-violence.

In olden days the teachers were called *acharyas*, meaning those who practice what they preach. Today teachers cannot be called *acharyas* because they do not practice what they preach. The modern teachers are experts in giving platform speeches, whereas the *acharyas* of ancient times were proficient in practical science.

Education should be free

How can the students heed the advice of the teachers if the teachers themselves do not practice what they preach? If the cow is grazing in the field, can we expect the calf to remain a mere witness? The calf naturally follows the cow. The relationship between the teacher and the student should be like that of cow and calf. It means the teachers should treat the students as their own children. But, today, one does not find such relationship between the teacher and the student. Both the teachers and students have become money-minded. As a result the students do not respect the teachers and the teachers do not have love for the students.

In many educational institutions seats are allotted to those who can pay large sums of money. This quota system has brought about all-round degeneration. Since the government is also encouraging this trend, the educational system has become totally bereft of values. To stop this unholy trend, education should be offered free of cost.

Everyone has an equal right on education. Education is the gift of God. No one has the right to sell it. Education should lead to elevation, not agitation. But, today, we find agitation everywhere.

The real “donation”

Today, money can buy admission, attendance, marks, and even degrees for that matter. The medical seats are readily offered to candidates who pay a sum of twenty to thirty lakhs. In order to earn the money spent by them to secure the medical seat, the doctors charge exorbitant fees from the patients. The same is the case with engineering, too. Even for admission in first standard, some institutions are charging twenty to twenty five thousand rupees.

Modern education has made man a beggar. One should be a bigger not a beggar. I am not saying this out of sense of pride, but Sathya Sai Institute is the only institution offering free education. Jumsai said that more and more institutions should be established. It is a matter of pleasure, but care has to be taken to see that education is offered totally free of cost. Only then can we shape the students into ideal citizens. Teachers should share all their knowledge with the students wholeheartedly. They must practice before they preach. This is what I expect from the teachers.

The education that is acquired by paying large amounts as donation is no education at all. Only people having black money will resort to such illegal means to acquire degrees.

“Do (for the) nation” — that is the real donation. Make use of your education for the welfare of society and the nation. Share your knowledge with others. It is not necessary that you should become a teacher to do so. There may be a few poor students in your locality. Conduct special classes for them in

the evening.

Today people fight for money and property right from dawn to dusk. They take to corrupt ways to earn even a single rupee. One should not live just for the sake of money. It is better to die rather than to lead a life just for the sake of money. If you have money in excess, help others; provide free education and free medical care to the poor.

Sathya Sai School in Zambia

In Zambia, there is a devotee by the name Victor Kanu. He is here right now. He has established a Sathya Sai School in Zambia. Many poor children are studying there. Both he and his wife are teaching the children with all love and care. (At this juncture Bhagavan asked Mr. Victor Kanu, sitting nearby, as to how many children are studying in their school. Mr. Kanu said 520 children were studying there.) They are imparting Swami's teachings and human values to all the children. It is going to become a college very soon.

There are many affluent people in the world. But they do not have the spirit of sacrifice to help such sacred institutions. Some of them do contribute something, but they do it for name and fame. They expect their names to appear in letters of gold. Sathya Sai institutions are not for name and fame.

I would like to narrate a small incident in this regard. At a particular place, when I was about to give discourse, one person switched off the fan. I asked him, "Why did you switch off the fan? We need it now. It is very hot here." That person replied saying it was he who donated the fan, and his name was written on the blades of the fan; unless it was switched off his name would not be visible.

Education leads to immortality

The culture of Bharat declares “*Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaikena Amrutatthwamanasu* (immortality can be attained only through sacrifice; neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it).” All the activities and rituals you undertake must be for the welfare of society. You must inspire children to work for the progress of the country. It is only sacrifice that confers immortality. Participate in every good work according to your capacity. Select a few deserving students and give them free education.

Education is not for worldly progress. It is to set an ideal, experience happiness, and share it with others. All the elders, the educationists, the rich, and the students should come together and strive for progress in the field of education. Just as a thread binds flowers of different hues to make a garland, likewise the feelings of love and sacrifice should bring you all together. The flowers may fade away, but the thread remains changeless. A bud changes to become a flower. Similarly, with the passage of time, the child becomes man, man becomes father, and father becomes grandfather. But the feeling of love is changeless. It is true and eternal.

Man should never lose any of the five values. Leaving the values amounts to committing suicide. But man today is no better than animals. The spirit of sacrifice that is found even in animals is not visible in man today. The cow partakes of grass and yields milk. But man partakes of sacred milk and indulges in wicked deeds.

What is the use of all the education he has acquired
if he cannot give up his evil qualities?
All the worldly education will only lead man to
vain argumentation, but not total wisdom.
It cannot help you to escape from the clutches of
death.
So, acquire that knowledge which will make you
immortal.

[Telugu Poem]

The education should enable us to cultivate sacred qualities. Worldly education is negative, and spiritual education is positive. What is the use of having a bulb without electric current? Secular knowledge is like the bulb; spiritual knowledge, like the current. Both are essential for the progress of man and the world at large.

Make proper use of the knowledge you have acquired. Parents should take active interest in the education of their children. Never desire that your son should become a great person, instead pray that he become a good person, like Bharata. That is true human life.

The good and the great

If one goes through the sacred texts of the *Ramayana*, the *Bhagavata*, and the *Mahabharata*, one understands the evil effects of *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), and *lobha* (greed). In the *Ramayana*, Rama symbolized goodness, whereas Ravana, greatness. Though Rama and Ravana were equally proficient in all forms of knowledge, Ravana could not make proper use of his knowledge because he had no control over his senses. On the other hand, Rama exercised control over his senses and sacrificed everything for the sake of truth. The *Ramayana* is

known as *Ramacharitra* (the story of Rama) and the story of Ravana is known as *Kamacharitra* (the story of desire).

The *Bhagavata* speaks of the consequences one has to face if one becomes a victim of anger. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were air-powerful, but ultimately perished because of their anger toward God. Hiranyakasipu was a great, scientist. Today man has traveled only up to the moon, but Hiranyakasipu could even reach the stars. But his anger ruined him.

In the *Mahabharata*, Duryodhana and Dussasana symbolize greed, which is a negative power. On the other hand, the Pandavas stand for the positive power. They adhered to *dharma* under all circumstances. Similarly, in the *Bhagavata*, Hiranyakasipu symbolises negative power and Prahlada, positive power. Thus, wherever you see, you find positive and negative, good and bad co-exist. Accept the good and give up the bad and earn a good name. Then, you are not merely great, you are also good.

The method and the means

Teachers! You have participated in this conference for the past three days. All of you have noble ideas, but you have to think of a proper way to implement them. Attach more importance to values than money and see that students make all-round progress.

Students! I want you to become ideal leaders. Make use of your education to serve the poor. Conduct free tuition classes for the poor children and share your books with them. Only then will the feeling of brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God develop.

As I have told you earlier, *educare* has two aspects: one is *pravritti* (outward) and the other, which comes from the heart, is *nivritti* (inward). God is the *Hridayavasi* (indweller). So, all

that originates from the heart is essentially divine. Therefore, let all your thoughts, words, and deeds originate from your heart. Do good, be good, and see good. This is the way to God. Accept both pleasure and pain as gifts of God.

In order to get cured of malaria, one has to swallow a bitter mixture. Likewise, one has to face hardships in order to attain happiness. That is why it is said that a pleasure is an interval between two pains. Light has no value if there is no darkness. Likewise, pleasure has no value without pain.

Consider every good work as God's work

Students! To the extent possible, serve society. Of course, you need to take up jobs and earn your livelihood. But do not be avaricious. Be satisfied with what you get. Alexander conquered many kingdoms and seized a lot of wealth. When his end approached, he realised that he could not take even a single penny with him. He requested his minister to keep his two hands raised above the head during the final journey so that the people would understand that even the mighty emperor Alexander had to leave the world empty-handed.

Likewise, everyone has to leave this world empty-handed. Even a millionaire has to partake of only food; he cannot eat gold. So, be satisfied with the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter.

Do your jobs properly and undertake service activities in your leisure time. Develop faith in God. If you do not have faith in God, you will not have fear of sin. Then you will become a demon. So, fear of sin and love for God is very essential. If you have these two, you will be successful in all your endeavors. Consider every good work as God's work.

Work for your Motherland and serve the poor

Embodiments of Love! Stop hankering after foreign lands after you complete your studies. Serve your Motherland. Lord Rama said, *Janani janmabhoomischa swargadapi gareeyasi* (mother and motherland are greater than heaven). So, work for your Motherland and serve the poor.

The best way to love God is to love all and serve all, but serve only when it is necessary. You are born to experience love. Your life is full of love. But you are not able to understand this Principle of Love. There is nothing greater than love in this world. Love is God, God is Love. So live in love.

26 July 1999

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Whatever you do, do it as an offering to God. Do not make a distinction between “my work” and “God’s work”. When you make a division, you give rise to enmity, because of differences. When there is enmity, there is no room for divinity, purity, and unity.

—Baba

Power of Love

A deep enquiry will reveal that
Nothing equals Love in this world
Be it charity, sacred rituals, penance,
Wisdom, purity, or adherence to truth
And Sanathana Dharma.

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love! The main aim of human life is to acquire the knowledge of the Self. This is the true *Purushartha* (goal of life). Human life will find fulfillment if this goal is attained.

The ability to distinguish between that which is permanent and that which is transitory, the ability to control the internal and external senses, yearning for liberation and the path of inquiry — all these four (the four auspicious qualities) depend on devotion. The word *bhakti* (devotion) (derived from the root word *bhaj*) means pure, unsullied and selfless love toward God.

In this world, no other virtue is greater than love. Love is truth, love is righteousness, and love is wealth. This world originated from love, is sustained by love, and ultimately merges in love. Every atom has its origin in love.

There are innumerable powers such as atomic power, magnetic power, etc., in this world, but the power of love surpasses them all. Life bereft of faith and love is meaningless and useless. For man in this world, love is life and love is everything. It is from love that the five elements (*pancha bhutas*) have emerged. It is love that shines brilliantly in every individual. But man, not being able to comprehend the significance of love attributes physical relationship to it. The love of a mother toward her child is *vatsalya* (affection). The love that exists between wife and husband is *moha* (infatuation). The love that exists among friends and relations is *anuraga* (attachment). The love toward material objects is *ichcha* (desire). Love directed toward God in totality is known as *bhakti* (devotion).

Never underestimate the power of love

It is only love that encompasses and permeates the entire world. None can exist without love even for a moment, be it human beings or animals or birds or insects. This love is the very form of God. But today, man is misusing this sacred love by diverting it toward the ephemeral world. Never underestimate the power of love. Our ancient *Rishis*, leading a life of solitude in dense forests, could live in harmony even with wild animals only because of the power of their love.

There is nothing that love cannot achieve in this world. It can even melt the hardest of rocks. When the principle of love in every human being is unified, it becomes cosmic love (*viswa prema*). Do you want to quench your thirst for love? Yearn for His grace and worship Him.

In order to experience bliss, develop love more and more. The more you develop love, the more you will experience bliss. Bliss (*Ananda*) cannot be attained without love. In fact, it is love that takes the form of bliss.

Chant the divine name always

Hiranyakasipu made every attempt to wean Prahlada away from the Godward path. But never did Prahlada give up chanting the divine name of Narayana. One day, Hiranyakasipu, on being prompted by Narada, called Prahlada and asked him, “Son, what is that you have learnt so far?”

In reply, Prahlada sang a verse in praise of Narayana:

*Narayana Param Brahma,
Narayana Param Prema,
Narayana Param Thapa
Saryam Narayana Sama.*

He said, “Father, I have learnt that Narayana is the Supreme Lord. He is the embodiment of love. Repetition of His name is the greatest penance, and everything is Narayana only.”

Like Prahlada, you too chant the divine name always. Saints like Jayadeva, Gauranga, Thukaram, and Ramakrishna Paramahansa prayed to the Lord fervently and yearned for His love. Cry for the Lord, just as Sakkubai and Meera did, unable to bear the pangs of separation. They could have His vision and earn His grace only due to such intense yearning. But, due to the impact of *Kali* age, people want to attain divine grace without making any effort whatsoever. Wickedness, misery, and violence are on the rise because love for God is waning. Transform all your wicked qualities like jealousy and anger into love.

God presides over every activity

God is the creator of this world. He is the presiding deity of action (*Karmadhyaksha*). You cannot have a table unless there is a carpenter to make it. You cannot construct a house unless there is a builder. Likewise, for everything there is a creator. All that you see, mobile and immobile, is the creation of God. That is the reason, He is extolled as *Karmadhyaksha*. He presides over every activity.

Today, spiritual aspirants undertake various types of *sadhana* (spiritual exercise) such as meditation, penance, *yoga*, and chanting *Vedic* hymns. Love should be the undercurrent of all these spiritual exercises or else it will be a sheer waste of time. No benefit accrues from chanting *mantras* if they are not coupled with the feeling of love. The *Vedas* declare: *Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaikena amritatmanasuhu* (neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer immortality; it can be attained only through sacrifice). Immortality is nothing but love. Love is nectarine, it is infinite and all bliss.

Today people are not making any effort to understand this principle of love. It is only the power of love that can nullify a curse or a sin. It is only love that can remove all the bitter feelings and enhance the sweetness of life.

Every human being is expected to be a friend and well wisher of the world. But such feeling of friendship and love is lacking in man today. Just as a honeybee sucks nectar from a flower, so also man should be able to draw the water of happiness even from the well of misery. That is the true quality of love.

Pleasure is an interval between two pains. Pleasure and pain co-exist in God's creation itself. Take for instance how

God has made the human body. The bright and beautiful face has pitch dark hair above it. But, in fact, that adds to the beauty of the face. Likewise, pleasure has value only when pain is associated with it. Good and bad co-exist in everything. But today, man is not attracted by good, he sees only bad in everything.

Incredible speed of Love

Every action is under the control of God. Earth revolves around itself at the rate of 18.5 miles per second. It takes one year for the earth to revolve around the sun. Light travels at an incredible speed of 1,86,284 miles per second. It takes 22,000 crores of years for the light to go around the universe.

According to the *Vishnu Sahasranama sthotra*, the entire universe is the very form of Vishnu (*Viswam Vishnuswarupam*). Even if man were to travel at the speed of light, it will take 22,000 crore years to circumambulate Lord Vishnu. Who can live for such a long period of time? Due to the evil effects of *Kali* Age, man is not able to live even for hundred years, let alone 22000 crore years!

But it is possible to go around the *Viswa Swarupa* (God in the form of universe) in one second. It is love that makes it possible. The speed of love is such that it can go around the universe in one second. The speed of light may be estimated, but not the speed of love.

But man has put barriers around such transcendental and infinite love and is using it for trivial purposes. That is why the world has become chaotic today. People may attribute various reasons for the lack of peace and security. But the main reason is that man is not able to develop love within. He is not making any effort to realize the presence of the infinite, immortal, and nectarine love within.

Let your thoughts, words, and deeds be suffused with love. Let your life be filled with love. Nothing else is required to have the vision of the Divine (*Sakshatkara*). Love is God, live in love.

Divine grace is true wealth

Today, love finds no place in the human heart, since it has become a den of desires. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is truth. Where there is truth, there is God. So develop faith in God.

Yesterday someone asked Me how to develop faith. I replied that faith is way of life. It is but natural to a man. The feeling of *I am* itself signifies faith. *I am* means I exist. *Am* (existence) itself denotes faith. Without faith in your existence, you cannot live even for a moment in the world.

Truth, sacrifice, and righteousness constitute humanness. Truth is *neethi* (morality), *Dharma* is *reethi* (code of conduct), and sacrifice is *khyathi* (reputation). The combination of all these is *manava jathi* (human race). One cannot be called a human being on the basis of form. One has to adhere to truth, uphold *dharma*, and develop the spirit of sacrifice to deserve the title of human being.

Visualize the unity among all beings and conduct yourself with compassion in your heart.

With intense yearning, contemplate on God at least once a day.

Only then can you have the vision of God.

God does exist, but He cannot be seen by the naked eye.

He can be seen only when you get rid of worldly delusions.

*What is the state of man today?
 He is overjoyed when he has wealth and grief-
 stricken when he loses it.
 He indulges in pomp and show and loses every-
 thing in the process.
 He conceives of dubious ways and means.
 Just as earth revolves around the sun, he revolves
 around money.*

[Telugu Poem]

Divine grace is the true wealth. Acquire that and you would have acquired everything. Character is important, not wealth. But man is wasting his life hankering after wealth. No doubt money is necessary, but it should be within certain limits. Spend your time in serving others. Love your fellowmen. Surrender yourself to God. Nothing surpasses divine love. The entire world is permeated with love.

The *Vedas* declare: *Anther bahischa tat sarvamvyapya Narayana sthitha* (That all-pervasive God is present within and without). All names and forms are His. Names and forms may vary, but the *Atma* is the same in all. Recognize the unity of all beings. That will result in universal love. The world is a mansion. All belong to the caste of humanity. Unity should prevail in such a mansion.

Let the mind shine like full moon

Embodiments of Love! Today is *Guru Purnima*. What is its significance?

*Guru Brahma Gurur-Vishnu
 Gurur-Devo Maheswara
 Guru Sakshath Param Brahma
 Thasmai Sri Gurave Namah.*

The Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara are within us. That is why I often say you are not one but three. This is the meaning of the three words *Bhur*, *Bhuvah*, *Suvah* in the *Gayathri mantra*. *Bhur* means *bhuloka* (earth). The earth is made up of matter. Therefore, the human body, which is also made up of matter, is called *bhuloka*. This can also be referred to as materialisation.

Bhuvaha means life force.(*prana*) It is this life force that makes the body move. It is known as vibration.

Suvaha means wisdom. This is known as radiation. The *Vedas* declare: *Prajnanam Brahma*. This *Prajnana* is nothing but radiation. Human being is a combination of materialisation, vibration, and radiation. You don't need to search for God outside. Turn your vision inward. There you will find God.

Today is full moon day. The *Vedas* say: “*Chandrama Manaso Jatha Chaksho Suryo Ajayatha Mukha dindrascha Agnishcha* (the moon was born out of the mind, the sun out of the eyes, and the fire and Indra out of the mouth of the *Supreme Purusha*).” Moon is the presiding deity of the mind. That day is *Purnima*, in the true sense of the term, when the mind is filled with pure love. Let your mind shine brilliantly like the moon on a full moon day. This is possible only when you fill your mind with love.

Currency for the Divine Bank

Embodiments of Love! Today, we find people depositing their money in banks. Likewise, deposit the power of your senses, your mind, and the wisdom in the bank of God. They will never diminish; they will continue to grow forever and will be returned to you in times of need. Sustain and safeguard sacred love. Never give vent to hatred. Consider whatever happens as good for you. You might have seen in newspapers

that the Indian army had a confrontation at the border. But whatever has happened is good for India in the sense that the Chinese, the Americans, and the Russians have become more friendly with India and India has earned a good reputation in the international community. It is the peace-loving nature of India that has made this possible. Peace is the real virtue of India.

Only divine love and grace can protect the union

Once, when I went to Bombay, the then head of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Sri K.M. Munshi, convened a conference of intellectuals. He asked Me to address them. One person from the audience asked Me, “Swami, America and Russia are manufacturing more and more weapons. But India is lagging far behind in this respect. Should not India also manufacture weapons?” I told him, “Dear one, what Bharat (India) needs today is not arms and ammunition. It needs to uphold *Dharma*. *Dharmo rakshathi rakshithaha* (if you protect *dharma*, *dharma* will protect you in return). We should not waste money in manufacturing weapons.

Some countries are spending a lot of money on defense and, as a result, the people of those countries are suffering for want of proper food. Only divine love and grace and not weapons can protect a nation. You might have read in the *Mahabharata* that Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva implicitly obeyed the command of Dharmaja, the embodiment of *dharma*. Likewise, India, America, and Russia can be compared to Dharmaja, Arjuna and Bhima respectively. Just as Arjuna and Bhima obeyed Dharmaja, so also America and Russia will follow India provided India upholds *dharma*. What India needs to possess is *Sathyasthra* and *Dharmasthra*, the weapons of truth and righteousness. Both are inherent in the

principle of love. Just as a gigantic tree emerges out of a small seed, the entire universe originated from love.

Music college in Prasanthi Nilayam

Embodiments of Love! In this world, you can achieve everything with love. I am the best example for this. Love is My greatest property. I love everybody and do not desire anything except love. The power of love can transform earth into sky and sky into earth. There is nothing in this world that cannot be achieved by love.

Here is a small example. Many students are coming here for studies. But modern education is not doing any good to the world. All the subjects like physics, botany, and chemistry will help only to eke out a livelihood. But none of them can attract the human heart as music does.

Even God is attracted by music. Once, Narada asked Vishnu, “Swami, You have various branch offices like *Vaikunta*, *Kailasa*, and *Swarga*. But I want to know the address of Your head office so that I can contact You without delay.”

Vishnu said, “*Madbhakthaa yathra gayanthi tathra thistaami Narada* (you will find Me installed wherever My devotees sing My glory).” That is why God is extolled as *Ganapriya* and *Ganalola* (lover of music). It is music that melts human heart and literally moves everyone.

So, music should be started in our colleges. I wanted to start a music college here. But I did not tell anybody about this. I usually do not tell what My plans are. Whatever I Will certainly happens.

Last week a devotee named Puri from Indonesia came here and prayed to Me to start a music college here for which, he said, he would donate 10 crore rupees. The modern music is essential. But along with that, street plays, *Harikathas* (singing

the stories of God) have to be encouraged. Music plays a vital role in fostering Indian culture.

The construction of this college will commence in the next month i.e. *Sravana*. The current month is *Ashada*, in which, according to the elders, a new project is not undertaken. That is the reason I postponed the commencement of construction to next month.

Super specialty hospital in Bangalore

Last month when I was in Bangalore, one day, the Chief Minister of Karnataka came to Me and said, “Swami, You have constructed a Super Specialty Hospital in Prasanthi Nilayam, which is of immense benefit to the poor. But diseases are common for both the rich and the poor, urban and rural. It will be of great help to the people of Bangalore city if You would be kind enough to establish another Super Specialty Hospital here.” I just smiled and did not say anything.

The very next week, the Chief Minister, the Finance Minister, the Revenue Minister, and many other dignitaries came here with the documents concerning the registration of 70 acres of land. This plot is situated adjacent to the Information and Technology Park. They are supplying water and electricity. If you are prepared to undertake noble tasks, the whole world will support you.

An American devotee named Sinclair has come forward to donate money for this hospital. Previously he had donated for the Super Specialty Hospital in Prasanthi Nilayam also. I have not told about this project to anyone else, otherwise there would have been a shower of gold.

There are many men of sacrifice in this world. But I do not like to ask anyone. One should never doubt whether the good task undertaken will find fruition or not. Many more things are

going to happen in the future.

Education of Love

Fill your hearts with love. There is no wealth, no *dharma*, no meditation greater than love. I expect all of you to live in unity like brothers and sisters. If you become embodiments of love, you will become divine. *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavati* (the knower of *Brahman* verily becomes *Brahman*).

Students are the long-journey passengers, traveling in this train of society. All the elders are bound to get down soon. So, it is the paramount duty of students to develop sacred love. The main education offered in our institute is love alone. Do not love God for the sake of worldly desires. Love Him with spiritual outlook. Gopikas prayed to Krishna,

*Let us listen to the melody of Your divine music
so that the seeds of love to germinate
in the field of our heart, which has become
barren due to the absence of love.*

*Let there be rain of love in our hearts, and
let the river of love flow incessantly through it.*

[Telugu Verse]

I am giving you all free education and free medical care, in return you have to give Me only one thing, and that is love. Develop love. That is all I want from you. I want you to take a vow that you will lead a life suffused with love from today onward. With this, I bring my discourse to a close.

28 July 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

3

Recognise the principle of 'I'

Embodiments of Love! Where the mind is active, all the three worlds exist there. Where there is no mind, nothing exists there. Mind is the main cause of man's suffering and misery. In order to control the mind, man has to keep his desires under check.

*The trees demonstrate the sacred principle of
equality by providing shelter to everyone
Regardless of caste, creed, religion, nationality.
The mighty mountains withstand the cold, rains,
and the severe heat, thereby teaching man
Not to be unduly attached to the body.
The birds are satisfied with what they get to eat
each day.
They do not store food.
Thus they teach the sacred lesson that
one should not be worried about the future.
Death conveys the message that body is temporary
and the feeling of I and mine is but an illusion.
Nature is the only school that confers on man*

*true wisdom, and
God is the only Sadguru.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love! Nature sets an ideal to the entire humanity to imbibe the spirit of sacrifice and lead a spiritual life. *Anithyam Asukham Lokam Imam Prapya Bhajasva Maam* (the world is temporary and full of misery, so contemplate on God). Under these circumstances, why is man not able to cultivate the spirit of sacrifice? In spite of his knowing the truth that the body is temporary, he is still bound by desires. Since there is no end to desires, man is subjected to endless misery. In order to get rid of his misery, man should follow the ideals of Nature. Nature is the best preacher. It exhorts man to cultivate love, compassion and spirit of sacrifice.

Since ancient times, in this sacred land of Bharat, many sages, seers, and also the kings propagated the spirit of sacrifice and the principle of spirituality, showing to mankind the way to peace and security. Bali was one such king who propagated the spirit of sacrifice through his own example, by undertaking many sacred rituals like *yajnas* and *yagas*. He even discarded the advice of his guru, Sukracharya, who tried to dissuade him from keeping his promise to Vamana. He told his guru that there was no greater sin than going back on one's own promise and that he would abide by his word to Vamana, come what may.

Let intellect control the mind

Bharat, which has given birth to such noble kings and has been the land of sacrifice, spirituality, and peace, has now become a place of injustice, untruth, and restlessness. One should

never get carried away by this body, which is bound to perish one day or the other. Only the principle of the *Atma* is true and eternal. One should lead one's life keeping this eternal *Atmic* principle in view. and not the fleeting materialistic pleasures of the world.

Nature is endowed with two aspects. One is related to the worldly view and the other to the spiritual view. All that you see, hear, and think is related to the physical world. The unmanifest principle of the *Atma* is the basis for this manifest Nature.

Here is a mansion. You can see its grandeur and beauty, but not its foundation. The body can be compared to a mansion and the mind to its foundation. Just as the mansion is based on its foundation, likewise the body is based on the mind. If the mind is steady, so too is the body, and vice versa. Having attained human birth, it is necessary to understand the nature of the body, the mind, the intellect, and the senses in order to make proper use of them.

Mind exists even after death

Before driving a car, one should know where the brake, clutch, accelerator, etc. are located and how to operate them properly. Our body is a car, the mind is the steering, eyes are the headlights, heart is the engine, stomach is the petrol tank, and the four objectives of human life, namely, *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksha*, are the four wheels. The tyres, which are outside, are under control of the steering, which is inside. Likewise, mind is the steering that controls the direction of the journey of human life. So, one should make every effort to understand the nature of the mind. Mind exists even after death. Purity of man depends upon the purity of his mind. If the mind is polluted, it pollutes all his life.

Though the mind of modern man is highly polluted with negative thoughts, he aspires to live in peace and happiness. But how can he expect positive results without giving up negative thoughts? The peace and happiness that he experiences in the world are only temporary. In fact, real happiness is not in the world outside; it is within. Mind is the cause for everything, good and bad, happiness and misery.

The *Vedas* declare: *Manah eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayo* (mind is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). If man follows the dictates of the mind, he becomes worse than an animal and ultimately ruins his life. His life will be sanctified only when he follows the dictates of *buddhi* (intellect). He who goes by the vagaries of the mind can never be steady in life. How can he then attain permanent happiness?

Truth originates from the hridaya

So, first and foremost, man should make his mind steady and sacred. Before undertaking any activity, he should discriminate whether it is good or bad, right or wrong. But man is using his power of discrimination (*viveka*) only to suit his selfish ends, which is individual discrimination. What is needed today is fundamental discrimination, that which is based on the sacred principles like truth, love, and righteousness.

Truth is God, love is God. So, live in love. Truth is one and the same for all countries in all periods of time. Truth originates from the *hridaya* (heart). The mind can be controlled once you have total faith in truth and follow it implicitly.

The primary effort of man should be to control the mind. This is not possible unless desires are put under check. But, today, man is filled with excessive desires. No doubt one can

have desires, but they should be within limits. Today, even the *sanyasins* (renunciants) do not have control over their desires, let alone common men. When their *ashrams* grow, their desires also grow more and more. Why should one have unlimited desires? Adi Sankara declared: “*Ma kuru dhana jana yauvana garvam, harathi nimeshath kalah sarvam* (Do not be proud of wealth, progeny, or youth; the tide of time may destroy them all in an instant).” Youth and wealth are like passing clouds.

Keep control over mind in times of difficulties

One should keep one’s mind under control and act according to the situation. You have just heard a singer singing Thyagaraja’s composition, “*Samayaaniki Thagu Maatalaadene.*” Thyagaraja was one who understood the truth and had love for God. But, one cannot keep control over one’s mind in times of great difficulties. It is because of this weakness that one even starts blaming God for one’s own troubles. Thyagaraja was no exception to this. When he was unable to withstand suffering in the face of difficulties in life, he put the blame on Rama, saying, “O Rama, my *bhakti* (devotion) toward You is very strong, but You do not have the *shakti* (power) to protect me.” Then he enquired deeply within and repented for his indiscreet statement. He sang,

*O Rama if You lacked power,
Would a mere monkey jump across the mighty ocean?
Would Mother Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth,
become Your consort?
Would Lakshman worship You?
Would the intelligent Bharata serve You?
How can I, with my limited mind,*

*Understand the greatness and grandeur
of Your divine power?"*

[Telugu Poem]

One has to have a broad mind in order to understand the infinite Divinity. Today, man has become so narrow-minded that he has given up *asayalu* (ideals) and is leading his life only to fulfil his *asalu* (desires). Lead a life full of sacred feelings. Give up worldly feelings. Have total faith in God. You can accomplish anything with faith.

Only one with the mind is manava

Sathya (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), and *thyaga* (sacrifice) constitute humanness. *Sathya* is *neethi* (morality), *dharma* is *reethi* (code of conduct), and *thyaga* is *khyathi* (reputation). The combination of all these three is *manava jathi* (human race). But all these are missing in modern man. So, we find only *akara manava* (human in form) but not *achara manava* (human in practice). Today man is restless due to the vagaries of the mind. But the mind is essential for man. Only the one with the mind is *manava* (man). Bereft of the mind, he is not man. Therefore, man should conduct himself fully aware of the divinity within. Unfortunately, many do not believe in the existence of God. Where is God? He is all-pervasive.

*Sarvata Pani Padam Tath
Sarvathokshi Siromukham
Saravata Srutimalloke
Sarvamavruthya Thisthati.*

With hands, feet, eyes, mouth, head, ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe.

Embodiments of Love! More than physical prowess, man needs power of the mind. Man should have control over his emotions and keep them under check in times of distress.

Life is a challenge, meet it.

Life is a game, play it.

Life is a dream, realise it.

Life is love, enjoy it.

Man bereft of love is lifeless. Love, love, love. Love is everything. Live in love. Love lives by giving and forgiving; self lives by getting and forgetting.

Experiencing Oneness is true wisdom

The present population of the world is approximately 600 crores. But the principle of 'I' is one and the same in everyone. Each refers to them as 'I'. How can one know these 600 crore people? Once you recognise the principle of 'I', you would have recognised all. Here, you find many bulbs glowing; the same current flows through all of them. Similarly, the principle of 'I' is the same in all. Instead of questioning, "Who are you?" question yourself, "Who am I?" Know yourself first, then you will know all.

What is the cause of conflicts and restlessness in this world? Lack of recognition of principle of oneness is mainly responsible. If someone were to criticise you, do not get agitated. Remember that the same *Atmic* principle is present in both of you. The one who accuses and the one who is accused are not two different entities. There will be no scope for agitation if you understand this truth. Peace and serenity will reign supreme in the world once this principle of oneness is recognised. Likewise, God and devotee are not separate from each

other. Worshipper and worshipped are one and the same. The devotee worshipping God actually means worshipping himself. *Ekatma Sarvabhuthantaratma* (the same *Atma* is present in everyone). This principle of oneness is Brahma. Viewing this oneness as many is *bhrama* or *bhranthi* (illusion). This *bhrama* is responsible for the restlessness in the world. True spiritual practice lies in cultivating the spirit of oneness. There is no greater *sadhana* than this. Whatever *sadhana* one undertakes, one should do it with love. Then, there will be no scope for anger and jealousy.

In order to understand the *Vedic dicta*, *Easwara Sarvabhuthanam* (God dwells in all beings), *Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma* (all this is verily Brahman), one should inculcate noble qualities. *Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaikena amrutathwamanasu* (neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer immortality; it can be attained only through sacrifice). People respect you as long as you occupy exalted positions in society. But nobody follows you when you lose your position and power. The *Vedas* address human beings as *Amrutasya Puthra*. Live up to that title. You are *amrutasya puthra* (sons of immortality), not *anrutasya puthra* (sons of falsehood).

Understand the truth that you are God

There is *chinmaya* (awareness) in *mrinmaya* (physical body). That awareness is true wisdom. The *Vedas* refer to this as *Prajnanam Brahma* (constant integrated awareness). This constant integrated awareness makes the body, mind, and intellect function. All four *Mahavakyas*, namely, *Prajnanam Brahma*, *Ayatma Brahma*, *Aham Brahmasmi*, and *Tattwamasasi*, speak of this constant integrated awareness. Understand the truth that you are God. You may think that you are separate from Swami. But in fact, I and you are not separate. 'I am

yours, you are Mine,' 'You and I are one.' Understand this truth and act accordingly. "*Abheda darshanam jnanam* (experience of oneness is true wisdom)." There is only one without a second. If you go on adding the number 1 to itself, the value increases. On the other hand, even if crores of 'I's are added to 'I', it still remains 'I'. That 'I' is Divinity. Once you understand this truth, you will realise that all are embodiments of Divinity. The essence of *Vedanta* is contained in these four *Mahavakyas*.

Vision of God through Love

You have all come from Kerala. You might have heard the arguments of many atheists that they do not believe in the existence of God, since He is not seen. Where can you find anything without form? One cannot deny the existence of air just because it is not seen. Likewise, one cannot deny the existence of God. God exists, but you cannot see Him. All names and forms are His. Once you develop this faith, you will develop love for God.

Gopikas could not bear the pangs of separation from Krishna when He left for Mathura. On deep enquiry, they realised that there was no separation between Krishna and them since He is present everywhere at all times. The one that went to Mathura was not 'Krishna' but his body. Realising this truth they sang this song, "*O Krishna, can we ever understand You? You are smallest among the small and mightiest among the mighty. You are present in all the 84 lakh species.*" None can decide that God is here and not there. He is everywhere. Only through love can one have the vision of God. One can see one's own reflection in the mirror only when a particular chemical is coated on the other side. Likewise, coat the chemical of love on your *hridaya* (heart) in order to have the vision

of God. Fill your heart with love; then there will be no place for evil qualities like jealousy, anger, and hatred. Wax melts when it comes into contact with heat. The heart also melts like wax when the rays of love fall on it.

The story of Prahlada is direct proof of this. He constantly chanted the name of Narayana with all love even in the face of innumerable hardships. He was pushed from the mountain top and thrown into the sea. Attempts were made to get him trampled upon by huge elephants and bitten by poisonous snakes. But not even once did he give up chanting *Narayana*. Love of Prahlada melted the heart of the Lord, and He came to His rescue in times of need. True devotion lies in being in a state of equanimity in both pleasure and pain. Prahlada stands testimony to this. He had neither grief nor fear in the face of severest sufferings. He had total faith that God was within him.

There can be no room for grief or fear wherever God's name is chanted, since God Himself manifests there. *Sukhadukhe samekruthwa labhalabhau jayajayau* (one should remain equal-minded in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat). Such equanimity can be attained only through love.

Embodiments of Love! All are embodiments of love. Love is the fundamental force. When once you develop love within, you will never hate anybody. Today, hatred is on the rise everywhere. Ego is the root cause for hatred. Give up ego and you can have the vision of *Atma*. All this can be accomplished only through love. You should lead your life with love. There is no greater devotion than this.

25 August 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

Develop intense devotion

*Where the six noble qualities of uthsaha (enthusiasm),
sahasa (determination), dhairya (courage),
buddhi (intelligence), shakti (energy), and
parakrama (valour) are evident,
God' s protection and grace prevail there.*

[Sanskrit verse]

Embodiments of Love! Lord Krishna has said that *karma* (action) is responsible for man' s birth as well as death. Man is bound by action in his daily life. Right from birth to death, man spends his time in performing some activity or the other. The path of action (*karma marga*) is very dear to God. In fact, He is the very embodiment of action and He is present in every activity.

*It is Karma (action) that is responsible for birth,
sustenance, and death of every being in this world.
Karma is God for all beings.*

It is the cause of both pleasure and pain.

[Telugu Poem]

Action is the cause for everything

While *karma* (action) is responsible for pleasure, pain, birth, death, etc., *kala* (time) is also very essential for every *karma*. Without these two, man cannot live even for a moment. However, action is the cause for everything. What was the cause for King Harishchandra to become the caretaker of the cremation ground, for the separation of King Nala and his spouse Damayanti, and for the imprisonment and suffering of Sant Ramadas? It was the *karma* alone.

As is the *karma*, so is the consequence thereof. These two are inseparable and interrelated. Time acts as a link between these two. A day is one unit of time. Seven days make a week, fifteen days a fortnight, thirty days a month, and twelve months a year. Time is moreover divided into three periods: past, present, and future. Multifarious activities take place in these three periods of time.

What is time? What is space? Here are two flowers. The distance between these two flowers is space. They were buds yesterday; they blossomed today and will fade away tomorrow. A bud cannot become a flower instantly, and the flower does not fade immediately. The change takes place gradually. That which is the root cause for this change is time.

You all know that the second-hand in a clock rotates continuously, making the sound 'tick, tick, tick...' You might wonder whether it takes rest at all. Yes, it does. The time gap between two consecutive ticks is its period of rest.

This world is a combination of *kala* (time), *karma* (action) and *karana* (cause). Every action has a reaction. When your

finger gets cut with a knife, blood oozes out immediately. Here, the reaction is instantaneous. There is no time gap whatsoever. On the other hand, the food we eat takes at least two hours to be digested. Take the case of a seed. A seed sown today takes three to four days to sprout. Here the time gap between action and reaction is slightly more as compared to the previous instances. On the other extreme, we have a case where it takes years for a sapling to grow into a gigantic tree and yield fruit.

The consequence of one's actions are inevitable

Thus, the time gap between action and reaction may vary depending on the nature of action. But, know for sure that none can escape the consequences of their actions. It is impossible to say when, how, and where one will face the consequences of one's actions.

Why should one pray, meditate, contemplate on God or engage in good actions when one is anyway bound to face the consequences of one's actions? You may not be able to see the transformation that comes within you by your good actions and prayer. You may not even be able to visualise it with your mind. Yet, this transformation in you is sure to attract God's grace. The benefits derived from prayer or good actions may not be visible to the naked eye. Yet the benefits do accrue in the form of God's grace.

Take the example of a bottle of pills. You may note the date of expiration date mentioned on the bottle as the year 1994. You may also find the bottle and its contents intact even in the year 1999. But this does not mean that the pills will be effective if used today. The pills may be there, but they lose their power after the date of expiry. Likewise, the consequences of one's actions are inevitable, be they good or bad,

but divine grace will let their effects lapse.

One has to face the consequences of one's actions

Once the demon Dundubhi challenged King Vali for a duel. Vali killed Dundubhi and, in a fit of rage, threw his battered and bruised body at a distance. It so happened that the bleeding body landed on the Rishyamuka Mountain, splashing blood on sage Mathanga, who was deeply engaged in meditation there. Enraged, Mathanga cursed Vali thus: "Whoever is responsible for this reprehensible act will have his head splintered into pieces if he were to set his foot on this mountain."

That is why Sugriva, Hanuman and others chose to live on Rishyamuka Mountain when they were banished from the kingdom of Vali. They were certain that Vali would not dare to come there.

Who was responsible for all this? It was Vali himself. He could have stopped with the killing of Dundubhi. Instead, he flung the body away, driven by his anger, ego, and hatred. These three evil qualities were responsible for his ruin.

Ekapada was a great and diligent teacher. But he was a hard taskmaster, too. He would not permit his students to relax at any point of time. His wife was in the family way. The babe in the womb of his wife questioned his father, "Father, how is it that you go on teaching the students without giving them any break for rest?"

To this Ekapada replied, "Students should never be given free time, for an idle mind is a devil's workshop. It leads to many perversions."

Furious at the impudence of his son, Ekapada cursed him, "You have the audacity to question my acts! May you be born as *Ashtavakra* (one with eight bends in the body)." Ashtavakra had to blame himself for this unfortunate situation because he

questioned the propriety of the acts of his father without understanding the reasons behind them.

How to earn divine grace

King Shanthanu, father of Bhishma, wanted to marry Sathyavathi, daughter of Dasaraja. In order to fulfil the desire of his father, Bhishma approached Dasaraja and requested him to give Sathyavathi in marriage to his father. Dasaraja agreed on the condition that only the one born to Sathyavathi would be made the crown prince. Consequently, Bhishma took a vow that he would remain unmarried. He earned Divine grace by his devotion to his father.

Vinatha and Kadru were the two wives of sage Kashyap. While playing a game, they entered into a competition. The terms of the competition were that the loser and her son would serve the winner and her son for the rest of their lives. Kadru emerged victorious. As per the terms of the competition, Vinatha and her son served Kadru and her son.

One day, Kadru told Vinatha, “You are like my sister. I will make you free if you procure the *amritha bhanda* (vessel of nectar) from heaven.” Unable to bear the sufferings of his mother, Garuda undertook this stupendous task and brought *amritha bhanda* from heaven, thus freeing himself and his mother from bondage. Pleased with the devotion of Garuda, Lord Vishnu showered His grace on him by making him His vehicle.

What was the reason behind Garuda becoming the vehicle of Lord Vishnu? It was *sathsankalpa* (noble resolve) that earned him proximity to the Divine.

For every happening in this world, *kala*, *karma*, and *karana* (time, action, and cause) are essential. God acts after taking into consideration the three factors of *kala*, *karma*, and *karana*.

Such noble truths have been expounded in the ancient scriptures of Bharat. But alas! Modern students are not making any effort to understand them, let alone practice them.

Absolute faith is essential for God to manifest

Today we are celebrating the birthday of Lord Krishna. You attach importance to His body, but not to His teachings. You will be celebrating Krishna's birthday in true spirit only when you put His teachings into practice.

Mysterious are the ways of the Divine. It is difficult to comprehend how the Divine grace works. There are innumerable instances of God coming to the rescue of His devotees in times of need. Sant Kabir was a weaver by profession. One day he fell seriously ill and was unable to attend to his duties. The all-merciful Lord, in the form of Kabir, wove yarn and thus came to his rescue.

Similarly, God came in the form of a potter and helped Gora Kumbhar by making pots Himself, when he was in distress.

Sakkubai, an ardent devotee of Lord Panduranga, continuously chanted the Lord's name. One day, she could not perform her daily chores since she was running high temperature. Even under these circumstances, her husband and mother-in-law would not allow her to take rest. At this juncture, Lord Panduranga assumed the form of Sakkubai and performed all her duties.

It is indeed difficult to understand how, when, and where God would come to the rescue of His devotees. Absolute faith is essential for God to manifest.

Dasaratha had to send Rama to forest for fourteen years as a consequence of his promise to Kaikeyi. Though unused to any form of hardship, Sita had to endure the difficulties of for-

est life. But Lakshmana had no obligation to go through such an ordeal. Because of his intense devotion to Rama, he also followed Him like a shadow. He brought fruits, flowers, and tubers from the forest to serve Rama and Sita, and himself fasted. Every moment of his life, he spent in the service of Rama. He put both his body and mind in the service and worship of Rama as a *sagunopasaka*.

Bharata asked Rama to return to Ayodhya, but His efforts did not succeed since Rama refused to return. So, Bharata reconciled himself to returning, but stayed outside Ayodhya in Nandigrama. His body was in Nandigrama, but his mind was with Rama. Lakshmana worshipped Rama with body and mind, whereas Bharata's worship was purely mental since his mind was united with Rama. Since Bharata's worship was purely mental, he was a *Nirgunopasaka*.

Direct and indirect perception

In science, there are two modes of perception, direct and indirect (*pratyaksha* and *paroksha*). That which is directly perceived (conscious) is *pratyaksha*, while that which is indirectly perceived (subconscious) is *paroksha*. This difference between direct and indirect perception is similar to the relation between hypnosis and hypnotism.

What is hypnotism? A hypnotist has the ability to enter the consciousness of the object irrespective of distance or time. He can experience Divinity both with body and mind. The one who undergoes the experience with mind alone without the body is the hypnotised.

Lakshmana was well versed in this knowledge. The names of Rama and Lakshmana are inseparable. This happens naturally with no special effort as we always say Rama-Lakshmana. One hardly ever hears the combination Bharata-

Rama. Though Bharata's mind was one with Rama, his body was separated from Him by time and distance.

Hypnosis and hypnotism are not modern terms. These are found in the *Vedas*. Since people do not know these facts, they find new terms or new words for these concepts. Hypnotism is referred to in the *sastras* (scriptures) as *ateendriya shakti* (power beyond the senses). It means that one having this power can converse with one who is in deep sleep. Even the dead will come and converse with one having such power. Not only this, one can enter the mind of another sitting in front of him.

One with such powers can perceive a far away object. Hence, the term *ateendriya*. It is not the object of the senses, since it is beyond them. Our ancients possessed such powers. These powers are obtained by *karma* only. Therefore, all our actions should be pure and sacred. For this, purity of mind, heart, and thoughts is absolutely necessary. Only a person with pure body, mind, and intellect can be called a true human being.

Do not expect returns for your acts of service

There should be complete harmony in thoughts, words, and deeds of man. That is what we mean when we say, "The proper study of mankind is man." Axioms like "Work is Worship," and "Duty is God," are not of modern origin. These were the teachings of our ancient seers, though they used different terms for these.

Consider all activities as an offering to God and all work as God's work. Just as two wings are essential for a bird to soar high in the sky, and two wheels for a bicycle to move, *prema* (love) and *seva* (service) are essential for man to reach his destination. No benefit accrues from rendering service devoid

of love. Do not expect any returns for your acts of service. The satisfaction that you derive from rendering service is itself a reward.

Be like Lakshmana

Today, many people are undertaking rural development activities. They come and tell Me, “Swami, we are doing *grama seva* (service to villagers).” For whose sake are you rendering service? Is it for My sake? No. You are serving for yourself. As long as you have the feeling that you are serving others, you are an egotistic person. It is not service in the true sense of the term, as long as there is the sense of ego in you.

You think that you are worshipping Me. It is a great mistake to think so. When the same *Atma* is present in everyone, who is the worshipper and who is worshipped? In the path of spirituality, it is a mistake to think, “I am your devotee, You are my *guru*.” True wisdom lies in realising that you and I are one.

Krishna said to Arjuna: “Arjuna, you call yourself My devotee. When once you have surrendered to Me, then there is no difference between you and Me. So, there is no separate identity of devotee and God.” “*Ekatma darshanam jnanam* (visualising the one Spirit in all is true wisdom).”

Likewise, if someone were to criticise, you do not get disturbed. Remember that the same *Atmic* principle is present in both. There will be no room for misunderstanding if you realise this truth. Seeing unity in multiplicity is the principle of Brahma and viewing unity as diversity is *bhrama* (delusion). This delusion is the root cause for your suffering.

Embodiments of Love! First develop faith in yourself.

*Where there is faith, there is love.
Where there is love, there is peace.
Where there is peace, there is truth.
Where there is truth, there is God.
Where there is God, there is bliss.*

True devotion lies in having faith and attaining bliss. If you have no faith, how can you have bliss? Many devotees ask Me, "Swami, I want happiness." Where is this happiness? Can you buy it in the market? Will any company supply you bliss? No. It is very much in you. You are not able to experience it since you do not have faith in yourself.

You do not have love for God. Love is within you, but you are diverting it toward the world, not toward God. Worldly love is like passing clouds. Develop the love that is unwavering. It neither comes nor goes, it is in you always. Have unflinching faith in its existence.

Question yourself, "Do I exist?" You get the reply, "Yes, I do exist." That is the true faith. Here is a flower, here is a handkerchief, here is a tumbler. The word 'is' denotes true faith. Have faith in your existence, "I am." That is true faith.

You do not need to enquire into the nature of God or to search for Him. Have total faith in Him. What is the use of living in Prasanthi Nilayam if your mind is constantly going around the market? Like Lakshmana, whose body and mind were both engaged in the service of Rama. Bharata was physically away from Rama; yet, his mind was always with Him. Consequently, Bharata resembled Rama in all respects. You might have seen in photographs of Rama's coronation that Rama and Bharata have the same blue complexion. Bharata's mind was totally centred on Rama. Because of such intense concentration, both became one.

Similar was the case of Lakshmana, who not only served Rama physically but also contemplated on Him day in and day out. Rama's love for Lakshmana was so intense that when Lakshmana fainted on the battlefield, Rama lamented, "O Lakshmana, I cannot live without you. I may get another mother like Kausalya, a wife like Sita, but not a brother like you."

How can God lament! It was only a divine play enacted by Rama to show to the world the nobility and the greatness of Lakshmana. Such sacred love is like a powerful magnet. Such selfless, unattached love transcends action, space, time, cause, and effect.

People ask Me, "Swami, temples are built for Hanuman and Rama. Why has no one built a temple for Lakshmana?" I ask them, "You simpleton, is there a temple for Rama where Lakshmana is not there?" If you realise this fact, such a doubt will never arise.

Of what value is part-time devotion?

At the time of Krishnavatara, there were two sisters, Radha and Radhika. Radhika was a *sagunopasaka* and Radha, a *nirgunopasaka*. Radha constantly chanted the name of Krishna, while Radhika was engrossed in the physical form of Krishna. She was extremely sad because Krishna had gone away to Mathura. She gave up food and drink and said, "Krishna, in my heart I have been keeping Your lotus form fresh with my tears. Now even my tears have gone dry. How can I now preserve Your form in my heart? My heart, which is Your gift, I am now returning to You. What else is there that I can offer at Your feet? Accept my salutations and myself." She surrendered herself to Krishna.

Radha saw this. She had thought that *nirgunopasana* was

superior to *sagunopasana*, but after seeing the total surrender of Radhika, she realised the greatness of *sagunopasana*. After this, she constantly meditated on the name and form of Krishna.

You must have heard this song of Tulsidas: “*Nava Kanja Lochana Kanja Mukha Kara Kanja Pada.*” In this song, the hands feet, face, eyes, etc., of the Lord are all compared to the lotus flower. He prays for that lotus to stay in his heart forever. Both Radha and Radhika prayed to Krishna to dwell permanently in their heart.

Such intense devotion is rare these days. Today, people merely say, “Krishna, Krishna,” as they go round or pass by a temple. Of what value is such part-time devotion? They are *bhaktas* (devotees) merely for name’s sake.

You must strive to earn the great wealth of God’s love. Only then will you enjoy the experience of unity. *Sarvata Panipadam Tath Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvata Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya Tisthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe).

Ramadas also had this experience of God’s omnipresence. Thaneesha put him in jail, but he never gave up the name of Rama. “O Rama! When all is Your form, how can I be separate from You?”

Renounce trishna (desires), attain Krishna

Devotees today have some form of divinity in their mind, but they perform rituals in a mechanical way without any consistency. All your charity and worship are of no significance to the Lord. Show your charity and wealth to the income tax department. God needs only your love. There is no tax on love. You may face any number of difficulties or hindrances. The

Lord Himself may subject you to test. You should not waver because of these. All is for your good only. Do not grieve over any loss or exult over gain. Equal-mindedness in loss and gain is true sadhana.

Some sit in *dhyana* (meditation), but their minds are in the market or in the hair dressing shop. Is this *dhyana* or *japa*? The mind should be immersed in Krishna. Instead it is filled with *trishna* (desires). What is needed is Krishna, not *trishna*. Krishna will fulfil all your *trishnas*.

Dear Devotees! Mere chanting of the Lord's name is not enough. Offer your love to God. Love is not your property. In fact, it is the property of God. Surrender to God what is His. What is the use of a long life without this offering? You have no right to offer your love to anyone other than God. When you offer all your love to God, He will look after all your needs.

There is nothing that He cannot do in this world. In city or in hamlet, in forest or in sky, on the high peak or in the deep ocean, God is everywhere. He pervades space and time. All beings are His forms. Realise this truth, transform it into practice, and enjoy the bliss. This is true devotion. Human life attains true meaning only then.

Embodiments of Love! These days, wherever we go there is unrest, ego, and conflicts. You should develop love and share it with all relatives, friends, and even enemies. Then, everything will be enveloped in love. Therefore, live in love.

3 September 1999

Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Truth emerges from Wisdom

Jiva is Siva and Siva is Jiva; one who sees the Identity between the two is the realised one.

[Sanskrit sloka]

He who has understood the truth that Siva (God) and the *Jiva* (individual) are one and the same is the true *Brahmajnani* (one who has known the Brahman). Siva and *Jiva* are not different from each other, since the same divine *Atmic* principle is present in both. One who has realised this truth is a true human being. The objective of human life is to understand this truth.

One cannot be called a human being by his physical form alone. Human life is the noblest. Man must think how to lead his life in a befitting way. Man is called *manava*, meaning *not new*. But man has another name, *Partha*, which means *Prithvi Puthra* (son of Mother Earth). All the powers that are present

in the earth are present in man also. None can visualise the powers that are latent in the earth. One can understand the presence of these powers by deep enquiry and investigation. These powers are infinite, unfathomable, and unrevealed. Man, since he is born of the earth, naturally has all these powers.

Perverted intellect ruins man

It is stated in the *Mahabharata* that the Pandavas spent twelve years in *aranyavasa* (exile) and one year in *ajnathavasa* (incognito), i.e. living amidst people without revealing their identity.

Likewise, though there are infinite powers in man, they are not revealed. These are known as *ateeta shaktis* (transcendental powers). These are psychic in nature and have been termed so by scientists. Man is thus a repository of enormous energy of various kinds, viz. light energy, electric energy, radiation energy, and above all energy of the Self (*Atmic Shakti*). But for this energy, man cannot eat, drink, move, laugh, or do anything for that matter. Man, though blessed with such powers, is forgetting the latent divinity and is leading the life of an animal. The reason for this is the perversion of *buddhi* (intellect). Our ancient epics like the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Bhagavata* give many instances to illustrate this.

Krishna went to Hastinapur as an emissary to bring about a compromise between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. Duryodhana, due to the perversion of his *buddhi*, did not pay heed to Krishna's counsel. Though he knew what *dharma* was, he did not put it into practice. What happened to him ultimately? He ruined himself.

Similar was the case with Ravana. Though he was one of great penance and wisdom, he did not pay heed to the good counsel of his wife, Mandodari, and the teachings of Narada

and other saints and sages. Ultimately, he too ruined his life.

The same can be said of Hiranyakasipu. He was a great scientist. Modern scientists could reach only the moon, but Hiranyakasipu could go even beyond the sun and the stars. Such a great scientist did not adhere to *dharma* and ultimately met his doom.

Vali, on being questioned by the sages as to why he banished his own brother, Sugriva, from the kingdom, gave a concocted version of the truth, magnifying Sugriva's mistake and concealing his own. Again, the reason was perversion of his *buddhi*.

In the *Mahabharata*, Amba put the entire blame of her predicament on Bhishma, ignoring her own folly, and developed hatred toward him. Similarly, Viswamitra developed enmity with Vasishtha for no fault of the latter.

Modern society is not able to protect dharma

Great scientists also could not comprehend the reality and understand the difference between truth and untruth due to lack of the power of discrimination. Today, modern man considers truth as untruth, *dharma* as *adharma*, and vice versa. Since ancient times, Bharat (India) has given utmost priority to *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), and *nyaya* (justice). In spite of knowing what is truth and righteousness, modern man is not adhering to them due to the perversion of his *buddhi* (intellect). Modern society is not able to protect *dharma* and control injustice.

Not merely that, man is forgetting the truth and distorting the meaning of *dharma* itself. He gives various contradictory definitions of *sathya* and *dharma*. Does the fault lie with *sathya* and *dharma*? No. The mistake lies in the manner in which the *buddhi* is utilised. That is why we pray to God to

illumine our intellect, as stated in the *Gayathri Mantra*.

Sincere prayer earns divine grace

Ganapathi is the embodiment of *buddhi* (intellect) and *jnana* (wisdom). Truth emerges out of wisdom and ultimately leads to *ananda* (bliss). This is the teaching of Ganapathi. Where there is no truth, there can be no bliss. "*Trikala badhyam sathyam* (Truth is changeless in the three periods of time)." *Dharma* is also changeless in the three periods of time.

The injunction of the *Vedas* is: *Sathyam vada, dharmam chara* (speak the truth and follow *dharma*). But nobody pays heed to this dictum. Today, people misinterpret Truth as that which is expressed, seen, heard, and experienced by the senses. Similarly, *dharma* is also misinterpreted. This is in fact *prakrita sathya* and *prakrita dharma* (worldly truth and worldly *dharma*). This is related to the outward path (*pravritti*). The inward path (*nivritti*) is related to the fundamental truth and righteousness (*sathya* and *dharma*). But today no one seems to be taking cognisance of this, let alone practicing it. *Vedokhilo dharma moolam*. (The *Veda* is verily the basis of *dharma*).

God is the embodiment of *sathya* and *dharma*. So, whatever God says is *sathya* and whatever He does is *dharma*.

It is the primary duty of man to obey the command of the Lord. Disobeying the divine command amounts to transgressing the fundamental principles of *sathya* and *dharma*.

Truth is God. Today the world is in disarray because the principles of *sathya* and *dharma* are not scrupulously followed. Man feels proud of his *medha shakti* (intelligence). Greatness does not lie in merely possessing intelligence. It has to be converted into skill. Only then will there be balance in human life.

Man can acquire wisdom only when he converts his intelli-

gence into skill. But due to the effect of *Kali* Age, man, instead of converting intelligence into skill, kills it. As a result, his *buddhi* (intellect) is perverted and there is imbalance in his life.

One should never disobey God's command

Under any circumstances, one should never disobey God's command. The consequences will be disastrous if one were to disobey the divine command.

*Is it possible, oh man, to escape
the consequences of your actions?
You may be a great scholar, worship the
family deity or even go to the forest and
Undertake severe penance;
yet you are bound to face the
Consequences of your actions.
Whether you dip the container in a small lake
or a mighty ocean, the amount of water
Collected depends on the size of the container;
you cannot expect more.
Likewise, you get what you deserve.
You may don ochre robes and
turn the rosary innumerable times;
Yet, you are bound to face the
consequences of your actions.
But, if you are the recipient of divine grace,
you can overcome the effects of any karma.*

[Telugu Song]

Sunlight enables man to perform various actions. Yet, the sun remains unaffected by what man does. It is just a witness. Likewise, God is the eternal witness. He is unaffected by what happens around. Clouds, which owe their existence to the sun, cover the sun itself. But that does not in any way diminish the brilliance of the sun. Similarly, God does not stand to lose anything if man, who owes his existence to God, derides Him. Man will certainly reap the consequences of his actions; God is not affected by them.

Just as the clouds originate from the sun, likewise, *manas* (mind), *buddhi* (intellect) and *chitta* (subconscious mind) are formed out of the *Atma*. Mind is responsible for all suffering, and even rebirth. So, mind has to be diverted toward God in order to escape from the cycle of birth and death.

One can rewrite one's destiny with divine grace

One can overcome the evil effects of one's actions by focusing one's mind on God. Mountains of sin will vanish like mist by God's grace. For every action, there is bound to be a reaction. But divine grace can provide an escape from the consequences of one's *karma*.

In fact, one can rewrite one's own destiny if one gets divine grace, as was the case with Markandeya. He was given only sixteen years of life span. But he was unaware of this until the night before he turned sixteen. That night, he found his parents full of sorrow. On asking, he was told that his end had approached, and that was the cause of their sorrow. He went to the temple of Easwara, hugged the Sivalinga, and prayed intensely. At the appointed hour, Yama (God of Death) cast his noose around the neck of young Markandeya. Since he was hugging the *Linga*, the noose fell around the *Linga* also. Easwara manifested and remonstrated Yama, "How dare you cast

the noose around Me?” He cursed Yama to death. Pleased with the devotion of Markandeya, He blessed him with the boon of immortality. This only drives home the point that through sincere prayer, you can earn divine grace, which helps you to attain everything. God is not separate from you. He is present in your body. Body is the temple of God.

Universe is divine creation

Newton wanted to know whether the creation had emerged on its own or whether an unseen force was governing it. He conducted extensive research for several years to know the truth. Ultimately, he gave up all the scientific experimentation and turned inward. Within a span of nine days, he realised that there a ‘divine hand’ was responsible for the entire creation, its sustenance, and its annihilation. Other scientists like Einstein, Schrödinger, etc., came to the same conclusion.

Many eminent modern scientists are also trying to find out the truth about the divine creative principle of the universe. They are not aware of the magnetic power and the electric power that are present in the human body, which is verily a small generator. The *jataragni* (digestive fire) is the source of heat energy in the body. Before partaking of food, you chant the *sloka* (verse):

*Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir
Brahmagnou Brahmana Hutham
Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam
Brahmakarma Samadhina.*

Immediately, you get the reply from within:

*Aham Vaishvanaro Bhoothva
Praninam Dehamasritha*

*Pranapana Samayukta
Pachamyannam Chathurvidham.*

God, who is present in you in the form of Vaishvanara, digests the four types of food that you eat. *Jataragni*, like a generator, is responsible for the electric power in the body. Human body is a conglomeration of different powers —heat, light, sound, electricity, etc. Unfortunately, such divine powers of body are wasted in pursuit of worldly comforts and luxuries.

Do not crave luxuries but bear with patience whatever comes your way, because whatever happens in life is good for you. Never be disheartened when faced with difficulties or sufferings in life. Have firm faith in the power of the *Atma*. One who recognises the power of the *Atma* will not suffer.

Never be away from God's love

The panacea for all suffering is chanting God's name. Have the firm conviction that you are God. Never be under the mistaken notion that God is the master and you are His slave. You do not have a master; you are the master. Master the mind and be a mastermind. Never forget God's name. Never be away from God's love. Never leave truth and never forget *dharma*. With one-pointed concentration contemplate on God, nothing else matters in this world.

Many are under the illusion that they have achieved something great in life by amassing wealth, but they do not realise that they have to go empty handed when they leave this world. Do not get carried away by this illusion (*bhranthi*). Do not waste your life in this illusion. You should understand the difference between Brahma (God) and *bhrama* (illusion).

The principle of unity in diversity is Brahma, and viewing multiplicity in unity is *bhrama*.

*Nations are many, but earth is one;
 Stars are many, but sky is one;
 Jewels are many, but gold is one;
 Cows are many, but milk is one.*

Controlling the mind is true sadhana

This is how you should visualise unity in diversity. Try to understand the significance of the names Ganapathi, Vinayaka, and Vigneshwara. You are Ganapathi yourself. This morning, you all heard Susheela sing a song, “*Adugaduguna gudi undhi* (there is temple at each and every step).” Our body itself is a temple of God. “*Deho devalaya proktho jeevo Deva sanathana* (body is the temple and the indweller is God).” The *jeevana-jyothi* (light of life) that is present in the body is *Paramajyoti* (the Supreme Light) itself. This light is not subject to change and cannot be extinguished.

The body is bound to perish one day or the other. The body may die, but not the mind. Such a mind has to be controlled. That is the true *sadhana* (spiritual exercise). You will not have any troubles if you offer your mind to God. Mind is very fickle. It is not steady even for a minute. So, it should be ever engaged in work. Only then can it be brought under control.

What work should you assign to the mind? Let the mind be a watchman at the gate of your nostrils. Let it observe what is going in and what is coming out. *So* is inhaled and *Ham* is exhaled. *So* symbolises that which is good (Divinity) and *Ham* stands for that which is bad (ego). Then the mind will understand that the Divinity has to be taken in and ego has to be given up. Mind is like a mad monkey. Unless it is kept busy, it will go according to its whims and fancies. The only way to keep a monkey busy is to make it go up and down a pole re-

peatedly. Likewise, the mind also has to be kept busy by contemplating on *Soham Mantra*.

Who is Ganapathi? He is the *Adhipathi* (master) of all *ganas*—five senses, five elements, and five life sheaths. The human body consists of five *koshas* (sheaths): *annamaya kosha* (food sheath), *pranamaya kosha* (life sheath), *manomaya kosha* (mind sheath), *vijnanamaya kosha* (wisdom sheath), and *anandamaya kosha* (bliss sheath). Man progresses only up to *manomaya kosha*. He is unable to go up to the sheaths of wisdom and bliss. Since Ganapathi is the master of all five *koshas*, one has to take refuge in Him in order to reach the state of bliss.

Shun bad company; seek good company

The elephant is known for its intelligence. Ganapathi is depicted as having an elephant's head since He is very intelligent. Ganapathi is also known as Vinayaka, meaning one without a nayaka (master). He is the master of *siddhi* (spiritual attainments) and *buddhi* (intellect). So, one has to pray to Vinayaka in order to acquire *siddhi* and *buddhi*. You have to make proper use of your intelligence in order to earn the grace of Vinayaka.

Shun bad company. Seek good company. Only then will your life be redeemed. Very often, I remind the students that by joining bad company, you become slaves. You should be masters, not slaves. You all know what happened to Kaikeyi on listening to the words of Manthara. No one loved Rama more than Kaikeyi. But when her intelligence was clouded, she believed the words of the wicked Manthara. To one with perverted intellect, truth appears as untruth and vice versa. Due to the effect of bad company, the mind gets polluted. So, right from the tender age, "*Tyaja durjana samsargam, bhaja sadhu*

samagamam, kuru punyamahoratram, smara nithyamanithyatham” (run away from bad company, join good company, undertake righteous actions day and night, and enquire into that which is permanent and that which is ephemeral). One should not develop unnecessary contacts. Your interaction with others should be limited to basic courtesies like, “Hello, how are you?”

Never disobey the command of God

Embodiments of Love! You are under the false impression that today is the birthday of Vinayaka. He had neither birth nor death. He has neither beginning nor end. He is the eternal witness.

This life is temporary. You should suffuse it with spirituality. All the festivals of Bharat have deep inner meaning. They are highly sacred. Festivals are not just meant for preparing delicious items and consuming them. They are meant to remind us of Divinity. On festival days you decorate your houses with buntings and green leaves, and you also wear new clothes, discarding the old ones. Likewise you should give up your old rotten habits and cultivate new and sacred ideas. You should step into a new life with sacred qualities.

Never disobey the command of God. If you do so, you will ruin yourself, like Ravana and Hiranyakasipu. They developed hatred toward God and ultimately met their doom. Never doubt the existence of God. He is everywhere. *Ek Prabhu Ke Anek Nam* (one God has many names). Never forget Him. Contemplate on Him incessantly. That is the main objective of human life.

What do you have to offer to Vinayaka on this day of Vinayaka Chaturthi? Today people spend a lot of money in offering various fruits and preparations to God. All these offer-

ings are made only as a ritual. Ultimately, people themselves consume them! No benefit accrues from making these offerings. *Patram*, *pushpam*, *phalam*, *toyam*—these are the four things that you should offer to God. Here *patram* (leaf) means body. This body may wither away at any moment. So, never develop attachment towards the body; instead offer it to God. *Pushpam* (flower) means *hridaya* (heart), the flower that will never fade. Mind can be compared to *phalam* (fruit), and *toyam* stands for tears of joy.

All these should be offered to God. This is the offering that God expects. I hope that you will put into practice what has been said and sanctify your lives. I bless you all and bring My Discourse to a close.

13 September 1999

Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Install padukas in your heart

Anapekshah Suchir Dhakshah Udhaaseeno
Gathavyathah
Sarvaarambha Parichyaagee Yomath Bhaktah
Samepriyah

Embodiments of Love! This *sloka* (verse) mentions the qualities of a true devotee as taught by Lord Krishna in the *Dwapara Yuga*. The first quality is *anapekshah* (desirelessness). A devotee should not have any desires. How is it possible for man, being endowed with body, senses, mind, and intellect, to be in a state of desirelessness? He is bound to have some desire or other. On the one hand, there are desires pertaining to the senses that confer momentary joy. On the other hand, there is a desire that transcends the senses. Today man is filled with various desires.

Then what is the way to lead a desire-free life? Lord Krishna has shown the way for this. He said, "Son, there is nothing wrong in having desires, but all of them must be

pleasing to God.” “*Sarva karma Bhagavad preetyartham* (let all your actions be pleasing to God).”

Ways to attain the state of desirelessness

You should put into practice the eternal principles based on Truth and dedicate all your activities to God. Lead your life without the feeling of ‘mine and thine’ and offer everything to God. Only then can you attain the state of desirelessness. Today, man has both worldly desires as well as desires that lead to the inward path, but the number of desires that lead to the inward path pale in comparison to the number of worldly desires in him.

The second quality is *suchi* (cleanliness). Is it *bahir suchi* (outward cleanliness) or *anthar suchi* (inner cleanliness)? One has to develop both. Physical cleanliness alone is not sufficient; inner cleanliness is essential. *Bharatiyas* (Indians) are aware of this: If *sambar* is prepared in an uncoated vessel, it gets spoilt. Likewise, if the vessel of your heart is not coated with love, all that you do becomes unsacred. Sanctify your heart by filling it with divine love. Never entertain any unsacred or wicked feelings.

The third quality of a true devotee is determination. You should be a *dhaksha* (one of determination) in order to attain divine grace. Once you have taken refuge in God, never lose faith, come what may. Do not get disheartened by trials and tribulations that come your way. Be equal-minded in times of both pleasure and pain. That is true determination.

The fourth quality is *udaaseenatha* (total detachment). You should lead a life of total detachment without entertaining the feeling of ‘I’ and ‘mine’.

The fifth quality is *gathavyathaha*. A true devotee is one who lives in the present without brooding over the past and

worrying about the future. Past is past, forget the past. Do not worry about the future for the future is uncertain. So live in the present, it is not ordinary present. It is omnipresent. The past can be compared to a tree; similarly, the future. The present is the seed. This seed is a result of the past and the basis for the future. Therefore, one should live in the present with firm determination. Only then will success be ensured. It is only a waste of time brooding over the past since it cannot be retrieved no remedial action can be initiated. Likewise, there is no point in worrying about the future since it is not in your control. So live in the present and discharge your duties with determination.

The sixth quality is *sarvaarambha parithyaagee*. One should give up all desires and ego. Ego leads to attachment, hatred, jealousy, aggrandizement, and other vices. It is ego that is responsible for the downfall of man. One with ego cannot accomplish even a small task. An egotistic person is not respected even by his near and dear ones. Ego is the worst of all the enemies of man. Develop humility in order to get rid of ego. No amount of spiritual practices will help a man of ego in attaining tranquility and bliss.

One who possesses the above mentioned qualities is a true devotee. Only such a person is near and dear to the Lord (*Yomath bhaktah samepriyaha*). You should cultivate these qualities to be a deserving recipient of God's love,

Live up to the name “manava”

All your outward actions and behavior should be a true reflection of the inward thoughts and feelings. When you say *namaskaram* (salutations), say so wholeheartedly. Do not give room for *kaaram* (bitter feelings) in your head. *Ahamkaaram* (ego) is full of '*Kaaram*'. *Ahamkaaram* leads to aggrandize-

ment, pomp, and show. Some people give wide publicity to each and every small act of theirs, be it worship or a spiritual practice. God wants only *achaar* (practice), not *prachaar* (publicity). Strive to put into practice whatever you preach and propagate. According to the *Upanishads*, the word *manava* means one with self respect. Live up to your name.

“*Anudvegakaram vakyam, sathyam priya hitham Cha Yath.*” He is a true man who speaks the truth in a palatable way. The culture of Bharat (India) says, *Sathyam vada, dharma chara* (speak the truth and follow righteousness). It also says *Sathyam Brooyath, Priyam Brooyath, Na Brooyath Sathyamapriyam* (Speak the truth, speak in a pleasing manner, do not speak the truth that is unpalatable). Man attains sanctity and fulfillment in life only when he puts these teachings into practice.

As you think so you become. If you entertain bestial thoughts, you become a beast yourself. On the other hand, divine thoughts will transform you into a divine personality. On this basis, the *Upanishads* have declared “*Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi* (the one who constantly contemplates on *Brahman* becomes *Brahman*).”

God is the only true friend

Due to effect of the *Kali* Age, there is no trace of true love in man. Human heart is polluted. People, in particular the so-called friends, pretend to love, but in reality they do not have true love in their hearts. God is the only true friend. He is always with you, in you, around you, above you, below you, protecting, guiding, and guarding you. But alas! You are distancing yourself from your true friend and reposing faith in so-called friends, who may turn into foes at any point of time. This is *bhrama* (delusion). What is the difference between

bhrama and *Brahma*? Viewing multiplicity in unity is *bhrama* and the unity in multiplicity is *Brahma*. One should visualize unity in multiplicity. The *Vedas* say,

Sahanaavavathu sahanau bhunakthu
Sahaveeryam karavaavahai
Thejasvinaavadheethamasthu maavidhvishaavahai

What does it mean? Let us grow together, move together; let us grow in intelligence, living together; let us live in harmony without any conflict. *Vedokhilo dharmamoolam*, the *Veda* is the basis for all *dharma*. Man is misusing his time and energy, disregarding the eternal teachings of the *Vedas*.

Practice is important, not publicity

Embodiments of love ! You may acquire worldly comforts and conveniences and earn worldly name and fame. But that is not all in all. All these are passing clouds. Do not get carried away by them. Follow the teachings of the *Vedas* and attain Divinity.

Practice is important, not publicity. Practice at least one of the innumerable teachings of the *Vedas* and share the bliss derived therefrom with one and all. This is your bounden duty. Human life is highly valuable. So, man should lead an ideal, noble and sacred life. “*Sathyaannaasthi paro dharmaha* (there is no other *dharma* greater than truth).” Build the mansion of your life on the foundation of truth.

The safety of the mansion depends on the strength of the foundation. Never utter a lie under any circumstances. It is an unpardonable sin to indulge in untruth. This body is gifted by God. Do not fritter away this golden opportunity by misusing it. “*Deho devaalayaproktho jeevo Deva sanathanaha* (body is the temple and the indweller is God).”

What is the difference between man and God? *Vyashti* (individual) is man and *Samashti* (collective form) is God. Man should progress from the state of *vyashti* to *Samashti*. Only then can he attain Divinity. “*Easavaasyamidam jagat* (God pervades the entire universe).” “*Easwara sarvabhoothanam* (God is present in all beings).” “*Ekam sath vipra bahudhavadanthi* (there is only one God, but the pundits call Him by different names).” In order to understand these *Vedic* dicta one needs to cultivate noble qualities.

Do not degenerate to the level of animal

It is a disgrace to lead the life of an animal, having been born as a human being.

*Aahaara nidhraa bhaya maithunaani
Saamaanya metath pashubirnaraanaam.
Jnaanam naraanaam adhikam visheshah
Jnaanena shuunyah pashubirsamaanah."*

Food, sleep, fear and procreation are common to man and animals.

Only man is endowed with wisdom; bereft of wisdom man is equal to an animal.

Animals also eat, sleep and enjoy sensual pleasures. If you do the same, how can you be called a human being? You are also an animal! The only difference lies in the number of legs, i.e. you are a *dvipaadha pashuvu* (two legged animal) and that is a *chatushpaadha pashuvu* (four legged animal). Having been born as human being, you should strive to become *Pashupathi* (God). Do not degenerate to the level of *pashu* (animal).

Divinity stands for the principle of oneness. You are getting deluded by differences in names and forms and are wast-

ing your time not making any effort to understand the principle of unity. Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted. Time once lost cannot be recovered. So never waste even a moment. Cultivate divine thoughts, undertake noble deeds and lead a sacred life. Have the welfare of society, not your self-interest, uppermost in your mind. You may have self-interest, but it should be within limit. There is no one in this world who has given up self-interest altogether. But one should not waste one's life wholly in pursuit of selfishness and self-interest

Make use of your education to serve society

Embodiments of love! There are many students, educationists, intellectuals, and scholars in this country but how many of them are working for the nation's progress? Only a few! Aurobindo Ghosh was working as a teacher in Calcutta. Once he told his students, "Children, you are very lucky to have been born in this sacred land. Youth is very precious. Make proper use of this golden age. You are born and brought up in society. You acquire all your knowledge and skills from society. Make use of your education to serve and support society. Your education is a mere waste if society does not benefit by it."

*A foolish person boasts of high education
And intelligence, yet does not know himself.
What is the use of all the education he has acquired
If man cannot give up his evil qualities?
All the worldly education will only lead him
To vain argumentation, not total wisdom.
It cannot help him to escape
From the clutches of death.
So, man should acquire that knowledge
Which will make him immortal. [Telugu Poem]*

What a shame it is if education is used solely to earn money without serving society. Today, people adopt corrupt practices and device crooked ways to earn money. Just as the earth revolves around the sun, man goes around money. Is this the purpose of human life? No. Money is not important. “Money comes and goes. Morality comes and grows.” So cultivate morality. Educate yourself to serve society and set an ideal to the rest of the world. You receive your education from society. In turn, dedicate it for the welfare of society.

God accepts anything offered with pure love

What do you have to offer God? Our ancients used to pray:

*O Lord, I offer you the heart,
which you have gifted me.
What else can I offer at your lotus feet?
Please accept my prayerful salutations:*

[Telugu Poem]

The heart that God has given you must be given back to Him as it is —pure and sacred. This is the offering that God expects. God accepts whatever you offer to Him provided you do it with pure love.

In the *Krishna Tulaabhara* episode, Rukmini could weigh Krishna with a small *tulasi* leaf because her heart was filled with love. “O Lord, if it were to be true that you are pleased with any offering made with pure love, be it a leaf (*patram*), a flower (*pushpam*), a fruit (*phalam*) or water (*toyam*), may this *tulasi* leaf balance your weight.” So saying, Rukmini placed a *tulasi* leaf in the weighing pan, which balanced Krishna's weight. Here *patram* means body, *pushpam* means heart, *phalam*, is mind, and *toyam* is tears of joy. All these should be offered to God. This is the offering that God wants from you.

You do not need to spend money or strain yourself in order to make this offering. It is rather strange that you find it difficult to make such a simple offering. You are reading many sacred texts, learning many *slokas* (verses) by heart, but what is the use? You are not able to get rid of your *shoka* (misery). The only way to overcome misery is offering yourself to God.

Criticising others is the worst of sins

Sage Valmiki, after having composed the epic *Ramayana*, convened a congregation of saints and sages and wanted to know if there was any one who would propagate the story of Rama to the people. The saints and sages expressed their inability to do so, since they lacked the physical strength on account of their advanced age.

Lava and Kusa, who were sitting at a distance and watching the proceedings, came forward and expressed their willingness to undertake the task of spreading Rama's story far and wide. They took *thambura* in one hand, wore garlands of *rudraksha* around their necks, smeared *vibhuti* on their foreheads, and went to each and every street singing the glory of Lord Rama. They sang, "Oh people, listen to the sacred story of Lord Rama. Let your life be His Story."

But modern youth feel shy to spread the message of the Lord. Not merely do they feel shy to participate in *bhajans* and to even smear *vibhuti* on their foreheads, some of them smear *vibhuti* only at home and wipe it off as soon as they step out on the street. They do not feel ashamed to do things, which they are not supposed to. Why should any one feel ashamed to participate in sacred activities and chant the divine name?

Some people feel ashamed to spread the divine glory, but do not hesitate to talk ill of others and ridicule them. They do not understand why the tongue is gifted. It is gifted to chant the

divine name.

Criticizing others is the worst of the sins. Never criticize anybody for everyone is essentially divine. You all know that in the present day politics each one accuses and abuses the other. It is nothing but the result of accrued sins from past lives.

Embodiments of love! Never indulge in slander. Sanctify your lives by undertaking sacred activities. This is the true purpose of human life. Human body is gifted to serve others. The story of Rama is suffused with great ideals and noble values. Yesterday the idols of Sita, Rama, Lakshmana, and Hanuman were installed. Everyone should follow their ideals.

Even Ravana acknowledged the nobility of Rama before he breathed his last. He gave a message to the people in his last moments, “Oh people, I lost my sons, brothers, my entire clan and kingdom as I could not control my desires. Do not become slaves to the senses, like me. Follow the ideal of Rama and sanctify your lives.”

Ramayana is replete with inner significance

Once, the mother of Lord Rama, Kausalya, the mother of Anjaneya, and the mother of Agasthya met. Kausalya questioned them as to who they were.

Anjaneya's mother introduced herself saying, “I am the mother of the one who jumped across the ocean and went to Lanka in search of Mother Sita.”

Agasthya's mother said, “I am the mother of the one who drank the entire ocean in one gulp.”

On hearing this Kausalya laughed and said to them, “Your sons could accomplish such stupendous feats only because they chanted the name of my son, Rama.” Exactly at that moment Rama entered the scene and told Kausalya, “Mother, Ha-

numan and Agasthya could accomplish those feats due to their sincerity and devotion. Hanuman is one of peace (*shaanthudu*), virtue (*gunavanthudu*), and strength (*balavanthudu*). Agasthya is no less.” So if you chant the Divine name you can achieve anything.

The epic *Ramayana* is replete with inner significance. All the ideals propagated by the *Ramayana* should be properly understood and put into practice by one and all. Only then will human life find fulfillment. The name and form of Rama is highly sacred. *Ramayathithi Ramaha*, (Rama is one who pleases everyone). So, all should emulate Him. Rama is a synonym for *Atma*. Hence the term *Atmarama*. So in essence, all are the embodiments of Rama principle.

*Sarvathah Paanipaadham That
Sarvathokshi Shiromukham
Sarvathah Shruthimalloke
Sarvamaavrithya Thishtthathi.*

Offer yourself to God; that is the goal of your life

God is all-pervasive. It is a great mistake to forget the all-pervasive God and get immersed in mundane, ephemeral pleasures. You may not get this human birth again. So work for the redemption of your life by chanting the divine name. Offer yourself to God. That is the goal of your life.

Embodiments of love!

You all have come from different places for worshipping the *padukas* and deriving the bliss therefrom. It is indeed a good act. It is not sufficient if you merely worship the *padukas*. Concentrate on them. Without concentration what is the point in worshipping *padukas*?

Here is a glass of water. Your thirst is quenched only when

you drink water. Likewise you will be blissful only when you install the *padukas* in your heart. Share the bliss with one and all.

God is the embodiment of love. So you can be a recipient of His grace only when you develop love for God.

1 October 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

Detachment, faith, and love — these are the pillars on which peace rests. Of these, faith is crucial. For without it, sadhana is an empty rite. Detachment alone can make sadhana effective, and love leads quickly to God. Faith feeds the agony of separation from God; detachment canalises it along the path of God; and love lights the way. God will grant you what you need and deserve; there is no reason to ask, no reason to grumble. Be content, be grateful whatever happens, whenever it happens. Nothing can happen against His Will.

—Baba

Follow Divine Commands

Though the Vedas were classified so that people could find them easy to study and experience, yet they were ignored.

Selfishness has become the motivating force for all activities of man today. His mind is filled with all types of desires, and violence has become the way of life. He is wasting his life, not knowing its purpose. He is straying away from the path of *dharma* (right action) and *prema* (love). Desires of man are crossing all limits and are ultimately leading him to misery. Man is in a state of confusion because he is unable to comprehend the true objective of life.

I have been giving discourses for the past sixty years, but you are not making any effort to put into practice even a few of the teachings. Students are like gold. Their hearts are suffused with sacred feelings. Their behaviour should also be in accor-

dance with their feelings. Man will be ruined if his behaviour is not on the right lines. Not only students, but teachers and administrators are also not coming up to expectations. The situation is the same in the case of *samithis* and Organisations.

No doubt, devotees have immense love for Swami, but the same love is not expressed in the form of gratitude and *sadhana* (spiritual practice). It is rather surprising, even to Me, that for the past few days I did not feel like speaking at all. Since there was no marked change in you, I thought there was no point in continuing to speak to you. Hence, I decided to confine Myself to a few words.

What do you expect Me to speak? I have already taught all that ought to be taught. There is nothing more to convey. I am pained to see that all My teachings have gone waste and all My sweet words have become tasteless to you.

Today, ego is on the rise in devotees. They are becoming more and more ostentatious. They pose as great persons before the world, thereby setting a wrong ideal to others. The knowledge acquired and the experience gained by them are not being put to any good use. They are not able to recognise that their ego will lead them to their downfall. They are not following the ideals set before them by Swami and are also not grateful for the love and grace showered on them by Me.

Understand profound truths of the Vedas

Since ancient times, the *Vedas* have been teaching profound truths. They form the basis for a peaceful and prosperous society. The term '*Veda*' refers to 'wisdom', 'discrimination', and 'being'. There are many people who chant the *Vedas* from dawn to dusk, but no one is trying to understand the utility and significance of the *Vedas*. What is the benefit derived by chanting them? Many people attend *Veda* classes to study

the *Vedas*, but they do so only for the sake of money, name and fame.

Sage Vyasa thought that it was well nigh impossible for man to study the infinite *Vedas* within his limited life-span. Therefore, he classified the *Vedas* into four broad categories: *Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sama Veda*, and *Atharvana Veda*. *Yajur Veda* was further divided into *Krishna Yajur Veda* and *Shukla Yajur Veda*. The vastness of the subject of the *Vedas* is conveyed by their several other names, such as *Sruti*, *Trayee*, *Chandas*, *Swadhyaya*, *Nigama*, *Agama*, etc.

Each name is pregnant with a deep inner significance. Each *Veda* consists of three parts: *Mantras*, *Brahmanas*, and *Upanishads*, including *Aranyakas*. The *Mantras* are the hymns in praise of gods. The *Brahmanas* deal with the performance of sacrifices—*yajnas* and the *yagas*. *Aranyakas* consist of the *Mantras* chanted and practiced by the *Vanaprasthas* in the forest.

No one is giving due importance to the Vedas

Though the *Vedas* were classified so that people could find them easy to study and experience, they were ignored. Unfortunately, no one is giving due importance to the *Vedas*, which are very sacred and are replete with profound truths. As a result, Indian culture is on the decline.

People from other countries understand the value of the *Vedas* better than the Indians. The Japanese and the Germans studied the *Atharvana Veda* deeply with the result that they could excel in the manufacture of arms and ammunition. But, unfortunately, the *Bharatiyas* (Indians) are not trying to comprehend the greatness and the grandeur of the *Vedas*. They are ruining their lives in the pursuit of materialistic desires. They undertake even spiritual practices only to fulfil their worldly

ambitions. They can nourish this sacred culture only when they develop steady faith in Divinity. They are taking to *pravritti marga* (outward path) and forgetting the *nivritti marga* (inward path).

Wrong concept of education

Modern man wants everything to be done in a trice without any hard work on his part. He is not prepared to put in any effort or bear any hardship. Today, people are not prepared to accept truth; they are carried away by untruth. This is similar to the situation wherein people refuse to take milk delivered at their doorstep but are prepared to traverse long distances to consume illicit liquor.

What is the meaning of education? Education is meant to know oneself, not to amass wealth. In spite of his education, a mean-minded person cannot give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation but not to total wisdom. If the elders themselves take to the wrong path, the young are likely to follow in their footsteps.

Modern man thinks he is highly educated, but in fact he is totally ignorant. Since he is unable to understand the significance of education, he is using it only to earn his living. He is going through various scriptures and joining various spiritual organisations but is not making any effort to put into practice even a few sacred teachings. There is no sin worse than this. It is all right if a mistake is committed unknowingly, but committing a mistake deliberately amounts to great sin. Though man is fully aware of what is good and what is bad, he is not able to practice good and give up evil. This is why he is unable to progress in the field of spirituality.

Since ancient times, *Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna*

has been associated with a profound spiritual significance. *Yajna* means sacrifice. In this *yajna*, you have to sacrifice your bad thoughts, wicked feelings, and evil tendencies and cultivate noble qualities. Before the commencement of the *yajna*, fire is produced by keeping one piece of wood over the other and churning vigorously. The piece of wood which is below can be compared to the mother and the above to the father. The resultant fire, the son, burns the parents themselves. You have to understand the mystery and inner significance of such concepts of the *Vedas*.

First deserve, then desire

Students!

Many of you are feeling bad, thinking that Swami is angry with you and is not talking to you. I do not have even a trace of anger or dislike toward the students or the elders. I consider students as My very life. In such a case, how can I be angry with them? But I do not wish to talk to anybody because I do not want My words to be devalued. I feel it is better not to speak than to speak and lose the value of My words.

There is no point in feeling bad that Swami is not talking to you. Make efforts to attain the deservedness, so that Swami would talk to you. I have taught you on innumerable occasions, but have you made any sincere attempt to practice even one of My teachings? When you do not give up evil tendencies like hatred, jealousy, and pomposity, how do you expect Swami to talk to you? Hatred is the greatest enemy of man. Ostentation gives rise to ego, which will in turn ruin humanness.

Love is the common property of one and all. You can attain happiness and peace only when you develop love. But, today, love is on the decline and hatred is on the rise. We find hatred

among the members of the same family, students of the same college and inmates of the same *ashram*.

Slander is the worst of sins

What is an *ashram*? It is a place where there is no *shrama* (hardship). But, you are making this *ashram* into a place of burden! You have no right to stay in the *ashram* if you do not obey Swami's command and understand His love and Divinity.

No benefit accrues to you if you merely stay here without putting Swami's teachings into practice. It is better that I do not speak to you if you do not practise what I say. In fact, overseas devotees have better understanding of Swami's love. They go into ecstasy if Swami talks to them even once. On the other hand, you do not understand the value of love and grace showered on you day in and day out. You merely waste your time by indulging in mean actions like slander and backbiting.

Slander is the worst of sins. Do not criticise or abuse others. The *Upanishads* declare that man is highly valuable. But he is losing his value, respect, and honour by his wrong acts. Man alone is to be blamed for this.

Here is an example. You are all worshipping Me. But, the *Atma* in Me is the same as the *Atma* in you. So, your worshipping Me amounts to the *Atma* worshipping itself. If an individual indulges in criticism, he does so because he considers himself separate from others, not understanding the oneness of the *Atma*.

The *Atma* does not criticise itself. If you want to be near and dear to Swami, develop the principle of love. All the *mantras* you chant and the worship you do will go waste if you give scope to evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, pomp, and show.

Wisdom of Gargi

Embodiments of Love! Love everybody just as you love Swami, because Swami is present in one and all. There is the same divinity present in all beings. *Easwara sarva bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings). One who realises this truth can achieve anything in life.

Once, a great *yajna* (sacrifice) was performed by king Janaka. Great scholars, both men and women like Yajnavalkya, Gargi and Narada, were present on this occasion. The king told the assembly to ask any question they wanted. Gargi enquired if she, being a woman, was permitted to ask questions. Janaka was wisdom incarnate. He said, “*Advaita darshanam jnanam* (knowledge of non-duality is true wisdom). There is no difference between man and woman in the domain of true wisdom. Hence anyone is free to ask.”

Then Gargi addressed Yajnavalkya, “You are preparing to leave with cows given to you by the king. You may do so after answering my questions. My first question is: what is the basis of all the objects in this universe?”

All the scholars present were astonished that a woman could dare to put such a bold question to Yajnavalkya. “*Akasa* (sky) is the basis for all that exists,” he replied.

She then asked, “What is that which is above the sky, pervades the earth, and extends below the earth?”

“The substance that pervades all these is *akasa* only,” replied Yajnavalkya.

In this manner, the assembly of great scholars went on discussing the ultimate source of *akasa*. It did not merely mean what was above our head. Gargi explained the uniqueness of the sound principle by defining *akasa* as *Sabda Brahman*. It was also explained that for everything in this universe *akasa*

was the basis. And Surya (the sun) was the basis for *akasa*. The source of the sun was *prakriti* (nature). In this way, Gargi participated in this discussion. All were amazed at the discrimination and wisdom of Gargi.

Worldly relationships are temporary

People generally think that Narada loves quarrel. He got up and asked Gargi, “Respected lady, what is your life’s ambition?”

“My only desire is to attain Divinity,” she replied.

“It is impossible,” replied Narada.

“Why?” asked Gargi.

Narada replied, “*Moksha* (liberation) and the attainment of Divinity are not ordained for unmarried women.”

Gargi said, “The only difference is in the body and the mind, and not in the *Atma*”

Narada said, “The moment you are married, you will attain *moksha*”

Gargi said, “That is impossible, for I have surrendered myself entirely to God already. Such being the case, do I have no possibility of attaining *moksha*?”

As this dispute was going on, Janaka intervened and said, “Mother, you can get married. What are you going to lose?”

She thought for a while and considered the contents of all the *Upanishads* and *Sastras*. She then said, “All right then, I shall have a one-day marriage.” Even Narada was perplexed as to what this one-day marriage meant. Gargi said, “A marriage is a marriage, be it for a day or a hundred years. So, I shall have a one-day marriage; who is ready to accept this?”

One of the sages, named Sringeri, agreed. *Tadeva Lagnam, Sudinam Tadeva, Tarabalam Chandrabalam Tadeva, Vidya-balam Daivabalam Tadeva* —as the *mantra* was being

chanted, and the sage tied the marital knot, Gargi immediately broke it and promptly attained liberation. Thus, Gargi attained her goal without transgressing her vows or any of the *Sastric* injunctions.

Janaka said, “Gargi, your entire life is devoted to the fulfillment of the Divine Will. Then, how can *moksha* elude you? You are destined for *moksha*. You are indeed a great scholar. Today, I shall get myself crowned by your hands.”

Gargi explained the *dharma* of the householder in the court of Janaka and said that such worldly relationships were temporary and not permanent.

Get rid of ego; cultivate humility

Countless such illustrious women were born in this sacred land of Bharat. It is unfortunate that people born in this sacred land are going to such a low state. Ego and attachment are the cause for this state of affairs. Whatever I say is for your good and not for My sake. Many of you do not realise this. Arrogance of one’s own level of knowledge is the main cause for this state of ignorance.

Educated people should have humility. Education confers humility, humility confers deservedness, deserving one obtains wealth, and when wealth is used to practice *dharma*, one attains true happiness. You can thus attain the goal of your life here and hereafter through true education.

Students! First get rid of your ego. Cultivate humility. Respect your elders. Speak sweet words. When you practice these virtues, Swami will always be with you and will always guide you. You do not know, but many marvelous things are going to happen in the near future. You will be delighted to see, hear, and experience these divine events. Do not miss this sacred opportunity that is before you. If you lose it, you will never get

it again. Once you obtain it, you will never lose it. Keep these sacred thoughts in your heart, respect your parents, please your elders, and make your life meaningful. This is My blessing to you all. With this I blessing, I bring My discourse to a close.

14 October 1999

Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

God is all-pervading, and yet, we have some scientists who assert, "We have searched all outer space, we have looked for Him on the moon; no, He is nowhere to be found. He does not exist." They do not know what to seek and where; still, they have the impudence to assert that it is not found. Is God an occupant of an identifiable body or form? Has He a habitation and dwelling that is traditionally His? God is all this and more; He is in all this and beyond. He is the inner motivator of the very scientist who "denies" Him!

—Baba

Cultivate Discipline and Love

*If money is lost, one need not be worried about it,
for one can earn it again.
If a friend is lost, one can have another.
If wife is lost, one can marry again.
If one loses one's piece of land,
one can purchase another.
All these can be regained,
But if body is lost, one cannot get it back.*

[Sanskrit sloka]

In Latin language, human body is associated with the terms 'sacredness' and 'purity'. The *Upanishads* proclaim that human life is highly respectable. Man is put to grief because he misuses his body, not knowing its value and sacredness. You can understand the significance of the human body in your daily life only when you enquire into the mystery of God's creation. Human body inhales the life supporting oxygen and

exhales the poisonous carbon dioxide. It partakes of delicious fruit (*phala*) and excretes the foul smelling fecal matter (*mala*). Likewise, man should accept that which is sacred and give up all that is unsacred. Due to the impact of *Kali* Age, he is accepting bad and giving up good. Unable to realize his innate divinity, man is taking to paths that are contradictory to the principles of *sathya* and *dharma* (truth and right action).

Time is the most important factor in human life

All flowers that blossom may not get transformed into fruits. All fruits may not become ripe. Once a fruit is ripe, it falls down immediately. Similar is the case with human life too, but man fails to understand the temporal nature of the human body. He feels proud of his education and achievements and gets deluded by the material comforts, which confer only mean and momentary pleasures. He puts his most valuable body to misuse in pursuit of worldly pleasures.

Time is the most important factor in human life. Days, months, and years are respectively like second hand, minute hand, and hour hand of a clock. All the three hands are constantly on the move. No one knows when the appointed hour arrives.

The whole world is permeated with magnetic energy. Green pasture attracts the cow. Flower attracts the honeybee. Mother attracts the child. You are unable to understand the magnitude of this attraction power and are taking it for granted. There is power of attraction between human beings, birds, animals, and even insects. The world cannot exist without magnetic power.

For a long period of time, scientists were under the mistaken notion that magnetic power is the same as atomic power. Only of late have they recognised the difference between the

two. This magnetic power is present in the human body from top to toe.

There are innumerable unseen powers present in man. They are known as transcendental powers (*atheeta shakti*). Scientists know that energy, which is infinite and unfathomable, can be neither created nor destroyed. Since time immemorial, man has been investigating the nature of this energy. They have come to the conclusion that the whole world is based on psychotronic power, which is also termed bioplasmic power. This is present in every cell and every vein of the human body. Human mind cannot comprehend the nature of this power.

This power is also called *ajnatha Sshakti*, that which is not known. All these powers are not visible to the naked eye. It was this power that enabled mother Sita to lift the mighty *Siva Dhanush* (bow of Siva) with her little finger. It was then that king Janaka decided to give his daughter in marriage to one who was equally powerful. Sage Viswamitra, who had understood the intimate relationship that exists between Divinity and transcendental power, took Lord Rama to Mithilapura and solemnised the marriage.

Whatever appears as matter also becomes energy

Very often, scientists refer to the two terms —matter and energy— but truly only energy exists. Whatever appears as matter also becomes energy in due course of time. None can describe the glory and grandeur of this transcendental power. "*Yatho vacho nivarthanthe apraapya manasa saha* (this energy is beyond the comprehension of the mind and description by words)." This transcends the powers of body, mind, and intellect. Who has created this power? Under whose control does this power lie? In whose hands does this power exist? Who can

manifest these powers and prove their existence?

Manifestation of these powers can bring about a divine transformation in the hearts of men. Swami wants that such changes should take place from now onward. It is impossible to say when, where, and how this power will manifest itself. Merely listening to the glory of this power may not evoke interest in you. You will understand only when you experience it. This is the super-human divine power. Very soon you are going to witness it.

I do not trouble anyone and none can trouble Me

You may have read the news item in a newspaper this morning that Swami is not speaking because of students. It is sheer nuisance. It was specifically mentioned, very incorrectly, that Bangalore students are responsible for Swami desisting from speaking. By publishing such a wrong news item, the image of Bangalore students has been tarnished.

No student has ever troubled Swami in any way. In fact they have been pining for Swami incessantly. The relation between me and students is heart to heart, and prompted by selfless love. Such wrong information even flashed in the internet, so much so that Goldstein, from America, being greatly agitated, contacted Prasanthi Nilayam to find out the Truth. He was very much relieved to know the truth. Do not believe in such false propaganda. I do not trouble anyone and none can trouble Me.

All our students are good. Such good students should not be put to disrepute. Unknowingly, they may commit a few mistakes, but no one has ever troubled Swami. No one should come between the noble heart of Swami and the sacred minds of the students. Some of the elders sitting in the verandah are indulging in gossip. It is finding its way into the internet. Any-

one found talking in the verandah should be sent out immediately, whosoever it may be.

All those who give misleading information about what Swami tells them in the interview room should also be thrown out. I will never call such people for interview again.

Only those who observe silence are good people. Silence fosters purity. Therefore observe silence at all times. It is a waste of time if you carry tales about others. What have you come here for? Vain gossip causes harm to many. So refrain from indulging in it.

Do not become a slave to technology

Ignorance is on the rise with the progress of science. Truly speaking, science has not matured. Man has become senseless. All the trials and tribulations faced in this world are due to the so-called development in science and technology. It is not technology but it is '*tricknology*'. Do not become a slave to such technology. Uphold truth and righteousness. Cultivate love and experience divinity.

Students! Do not harbor any undesirable thoughts. Do not get perturbed by such misinformation campaigns. Swami is always with you. He has been showering His love and grace on you. You too have immense love for Swami. Attain Swami through love. You cannot attain Swami through any other path but love.

Swami has nothing to do with internet. Not only now, even in the future also you should not indulge in such wrong activities. This 'disease' has its roots in cities and is spreading like wild fire into villages, polluting the village environment. Villages are the epitome of peace and love. Do not spoil the village atmosphere by imitating the city culture. Bliss will prevail in the world only when you develop peace and love. Do not

give scope for ill feelings and worthless talk. You can even reprimand the elders who indulge in mean talk. Tell them to behave in a manner that befits their status as elders in the society. They should prove themselves as elders in conduct and not by age. Self-respect leads to self-satisfaction, which will in turn leads to self-realisation. It is a shame that people who come here for self-realisation indulge in something contrary.

Our relationship is only heart-to-heart and love-to-love, nothing else. Swami is love personified. Swami gives importance to love and nothing else. Do not give any value to mean and meaningless talk. Past is past. From now onward, receive the divine love and divine energy emanating from Me and experience the bliss derived therefrom.

15 October 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

Human Values and Service

O Man, why do you go hither and thither in search
of God, when He is present in your *hridaya* itself?
Serve all and be a recipient of His love.
There is no greater *sadhana* than this,
No greater bliss than this.

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love! Human life is the most sacred in the entire creation of God. *Daivam maanusha rupena* (God incarnates in the form of human being). Humanness is pure, unsullied, and beyond attributes. Such a sacred human life is being polluted with evil desires and thus birth itself is polluted. *Janthoonam narajanma durlabham* (human birth is the rarest and the noblest). It was God who created everything in the universe, right from the microcosm to macrocosm. In that case, why is it that He has attached utmost importance to human birth alone? Only man has the capacity to accomplish things that no other living being can.

Why has God created man? One should delve into the inner significance of this. Man's life will find fulfillment only when he understands the purpose of human birth. Human body is given to serve God, not to meet selfish needs. *Sareera maadhyaam khalu dharma sadhanam* (the purpose of human body is to practice *dharma*). God has gifted human body to serve fellow men, but man has forgotten his primary duty of service to others.

*In childhood, man is immersed in playing and frolicking,
In youth, he succumbs to temptations of cupid.
In middle age, he spends all his time in amassing wealth.
In old age, instead of contemplating on God,
He leads a life of discontentment.
Unable to give up his bad habits,
Not having the strength and interest
To follow the path of devotion,
He gets caught up in the quagmire of action and reaction
and ultimately meets his doom. [Telugu Poem]*

This is not the way one should fritter away human life, which God has gifted with lots of love and hope. Under all circumstances, one should be ready to utilize the slightest opportunity that comes his way to serve others. Human life should be suffused with idealism, but today's man is leading the life of a beast. He does not spare a thought even for a moment to enquire what the purpose of life is.

*O man, think for a while whether
You have really attained happiness,
Forgetting God and struggling incessantly
From dawn to dusk to eke out a livelihood.
[Telugu Poem]*

For whose sake are you living? Understand this and you will know the purpose of life. Why does God incarnate? He incarnates to lead man on the right path.

Materialisation of 100-year-old gold coin

In 1899, hundred years ago, 110 carat gold was in existence. It was extremely pure and effulgent. Gradually it has lost its value and effulgence on account of its association with different metals like silver, copper, and brass. Likewise, man at the time of birth is essentially pure and sacred, but as he grows up, he loses his human values due to his excessive desires and association with kith and kin. Such is the sacredness of human birth that even Gods would salute him.

Today, human values have become extinct. Man should continue to be as pure as he was at the time of birth. (At this juncture Swami materialised a gold coin) It was minted in the year 1899. Exactly 100 years have passed since then. Just as gold has lost its purity over a period of time, man too has lost his human values. Excessive desires are responsible for the decline in human values.

Having been born as a human being, you should foster human values. This morning, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh met Swami. He too was of the opinion that the country is facing hardships due to the absence of human values. Therefore, he vowed that he would propagate the Sathya Sai Human Values in society. Each and everyone, be it a student, a devotee, or a spiritual aspirant, should practice human values and lead an ideal life.

The Bhagavad Gita reveals that the universe, which can be compared to a gigantic tree, has its origin in the seed of divinity. Different nations are like different branches of a tree. All the living creatures are like fruits borne by the tree. In every

species and every creature, there is the seed of divinity. In this context, Lord Krishna said, *Beejam maam sarva bhutaanam* (I am the seed in all the living beings). Nations may vary names and forms may be different, but the life principle remains the same.

Lord Krishna declared: “*Mamaivamso Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathanah* (all are the sparks of My Divinity).” But man is not prepared to believe this truth. Today man believes reports of events occurring in distant lands like America and Japan, though he does not see them, but he does not believe in the *Vedic* declaration that God comes down in human form. This is predominantly due to the fact that he is not treading along the path of truth. God will be pleased only when man finds fulfillment in life by practicing human values.

You reap what you sow

None can escape the consequences of their actions. O man, do not build castles in the air. It is not possible to sow a particular type of seed and reap a different fruit. You reap what you sow. At the time of birth you are born with an invisible garland, made up of the consequences of your actions, be it good or bad.

It is the duty of each and every individual to participate in social service activities, be it in the village or city. The epic *Ramayana* has stressed the need for service at the individual, family, and society levels. Do not be satisfied by merely serving your parents. Your life will be sanctified only when you serve society also. When you obey the divine command and serve Him, not only your life but also those of your parents and relations will be redeemed. Before your birth, where is the child-parent relationship; before marriage, where is the question of wife and husband relationship? All the worldly rela-

tions are like passing clouds, only God is with you always.

You will be wasting your life, if you do not dedicate yourselves to the service of mankind. Body is gifted to serve the creator and the creation. Service to man is service to God. Render service to society with the feeling that God is present in one and all.

Your education will be in vain if it is not utilized for the service of the society. O man, why do you feel proud of your education, which is but a mere waste if you do not worship God and serve society? Worldly education cannot confer divine grace unless it is dedicated for the welfare of society. The education you have received from society must be dedicated to the service of society.

Offer service and receive the love of God

True service has twin benefits: it makes you blissful and gives happiness to others. What is the use of education if it does not confer joy on others and bliss on you?

Service is the life breath of the Sathya Sai Organization. Remember the truth that you are born to serve society. Make no distinction whatsoever in rendering service. Serve your parents, brothers, friends, and even beggars alike. Divine grace will flow in abundance only when you serve with the spirit of humility and equality.

Service is the easiest path to attain divine grace. Offer service and receive the love of God. Love and service are like two wings by which man can soar to higher levels of consciousness. If you have the spirit of love and service, divine grace will follow you like a shadow wherever you may be, be it in the forest or in the sky, village or city, river or mountain cliff.

God has created man in His own image so that his conduct

should be in consonance with His command. You should not cause harm to anyone, for God exists in all. Always speak with a smile on your lips. You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.

Be proud that you are born in this sacred land

Embodiments of Love!

Understand the pristine purity of Bharat (India). The Himalayan mountains form the boundary in the northern part. *Hima* is that which is pure; *achala* is that which is steady. So, *Himachala* stands for purity and steadiness. The three rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswathi symbolise the paths of work, worship, and wisdom, respectively. The sacred scriptures like the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Upanishads* make the hearts of *Bharatiyas* (Indians) blossom forth with their teachings. *Bha* means light and effulgence. So Bharat is the country that radiates light to the rest of the world.

No country is more sacred than Bharat. Words are inadequate to describe the glory of Bharat and the fortune of those who are born in this sacred land. Having been born as *Bharatiyas*, there can be no greater misfortune than to lament that you are poor, weak, and helpless. You need not feel sorry if you have not acquired education or money. Be proud that you are born in this sacred land. To be called a *Bharatiya* is in itself a great qualification. The country is your mother; the culture, your father. You will become orphans if you forsake your motherland and its culture. He is a living corpse who does not have love for his motherland and its culture. Rama declared, *Janani janma bhoomishcha swargadapi gareeyasi* (there is no heaven greater than one's own mother and motherland).

Students! What is the use of acquiring various degrees like

BA and MBA if you lead the life of a black sheep? You are *Bharatiyas*; that is your greatest qualification. Live up to it. Who is a 'Hindu'? H stands for Humility, I for Individuality, N for Nationality, D for Divinity and U for Unity. He is a true Hindu who is endowed with these five sacred qualities. It is rather surprising to Me that people, having been born in this sacred land, crave to go abroad in search of greener pastures. One should serve one's own motherland.

Do no forget the sacred Indian culture

Once there was a *Vedic* scholar who was hesitant to send his son abroad, fearing that he might forsake Indian culture and take to Western culture. On the insistence of his son, he reluctantly agreed to send him abroad only on the condition that he would not give up the study of the *Vedas*. He extracted a promise from his son that he would continue the study of the *Vedas* and would contemplate on God always. But the son failed to keep up his word. Once he reached abroad, he forgot all the *Vedas* he studied and got absorbed in western culture. He would always lie to his father whenever called, saying that he was thinking of God and studying the *Vedas*. Four years passed, but he was in no mood to return home. On several occasions, the father asked him to come back, but the son did not pay heed. The father, as a last resort, sent a telegram that his mother was seriously ill. Immediately, the son rushed home and was received at the airport by his father, who took him to the temple of the Goddess *en route* home, to offer their obeisance. The father told the son to offer salutations to the Goddess, but the son did not know what it meant as he had forgotten Indian culture altogether. As they entered the temple, the son greeted the Goddess, "Hello madam, how are you?" The father became furious with his son and asked him to get out.

This is how people change their lifestyle once they go abroad, forgetting the sacred *Bharatiya* culture.

For the past 60 years, the overseas devotees have been requesting Swami to come to their respective countries. On many occasions, they brought special planes. Even now they have chalked out a program for Swami to make a world tour. But I have no such desires. That which is not present in Bharat is not present anywhere else.

What is there to see in a foreign land! Instead, try to have the vision of your own Self. Stop questioning others, “who are you?” Ask yourself, “who am I?” You will certainly get the right answer.

Today many students are going abroad to amass riches. Even some of the parents are encouraging their children to go abroad. I do not say that you should not go abroad. If you want to see foreign lands, you can always do so. But wherever you are, uphold your culture. You should crave divine love, not money.

Embodiments of Divine Love! Students Participate in service activities and give joy to your fellowmen. This is the essence of Indian culture. Keeping this sacred culture in view, serve your motherland. Do not give scope for mean desires. If you lead the sacred life of a true *Bharatiya*, you can redeem not only your life but also the lives of your kith and kin. Fill your heart with pure feelings and try to experience the ultimate bliss, *Brahmananda*. Tomorrow I shall teach you more about *Brahmananda*.

16 October 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

Let life be fruitful and meaningful

*Brahmanandam Paramasukhadam
Kevalam Jnanarnurthim
Dvandvaatheetham Gaganasadrusam
Tathwamasyaadhi Lakshyam
Ekam Nithyam Vimalam Achalam
Sarvadhee Saakshibhutam
Bhaavaatheetham Trigunarahitham Sadgurum*

Embodiments of Love!

Man should cultivate noble qualities in order to understand the secrets and the inner meanings of the *Vedas*. The terms used in the *Vedas* transcend the barriers of time and space.

Consider the word *Brahmanandam*. It means eternal bliss. Such a word cannot be understood by comparison with the joy derived from materialistic pleasures (*lokaananda*). *Brahma* is derived from the root word *brihat*, meaning vastness. *Brah-*

manandam is that which is immutable. It is the true and infinite bliss. It can also be termed as *Advaitananda*, meaning the bliss that results from the experience of oneness. It can also be described as *Nirgunaananda* and *Niraakaarananda* (bliss that transcends form and attributes).

Paramasukhadam means supreme happiness. It has nothing to do with the worldly happiness and sensual pleasures. It is identical with the experience of the eternal bliss.

Kevalam means that which transcends the limitations of time, space, and circumstances.

Jnanamurthim means one of wisdom. Here, *jnana* refers to experience of oneness. It transcends body, mind, and intellect. *Advaita darshanam jnanam* (experience of non-duality is true wisdom). How can man comprehend this incomparable wisdom? The *Vedas* contain many such words suffused with sacred inner meaning. Only Divinity, which is attributeless, ancient, eternal, ever new, pure, and unsullied, can explain the inner meanings of the *Vedic* principles.

Dvandvaatheetham refers to that which transcends all dualities such as happiness and sorrow, good and bad, merit and sin, etc.

Trigunarahitham refers to that which transcends the three attributes: *sathwa* (serenity, purity), *rajas* (passion), and *thamas* (dullness, lethargy). Attributes are associated with form. So, the formless One has no attributes. The *Vedas* contain four *Mahavaakyaas*: *Prajnanam Brahma* (knowledge is *Brahman*), *Ayatma Brahma* (This *Atma* is *Brahman*), *Tath Thwam Asi* (That Thou Art) and *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am *Brahman*). The attributeless principle transcends even these four declarations.

Ekam nithyam refers to that which is eternal and without a second. The *Vedas* proclaim *Ekam eva adviteeyam Brahma*

(Divinity is one without a second). *Om ithyekaaksharam Brahma* (the single syllable *Om* is *Brahman*).

Vimalam achalam refers to that which is pure and steady. In this universe, the celestial bodies such as the sun, the moon, and the planets are constantly on the move. Modern students are aware of this —the cinema reel moves rapidly at the rate of 16 films per second, but the rate at which mind moves cannot be estimated. Such a wavering mind cannot comprehend

Divinity, which is steady, changeless, and attributeless, is the embodiment of supreme bliss and happiness. That is the reason the ancient sages and seers used to pray, “Salutations to the One who is the embodiment of supreme happiness.” The happiness related to the body and mind is no happiness at all. Inward (*nivritti*) happiness is true happiness.

Only Divinity can confer the eternal bliss

It is extremely difficult to understand the divine principle. Faith is very essential to experience divinity. Where there is faith, there is love. Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is truth. Where there is truth, there is Divinity. Where there is Divinity, there is bliss. So, only Divinity can confer the eternal bliss.

Worldly happiness is momentary. In this context, Adi Sankara said, *Maa kuru dhana jana yauvana garyam, harathi nimeshaath kaalah sarvam* (do not be proud of youth, money, and progeny. They are but momentary). Worldly happiness is delusive and is related to the five elements and five senses. It corresponds to the outward (*pravritti*) path.

Human body is made up of five sheaths: *annamaya*, *pranamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijnanamaya*, and *anandamaya koshas*. This body is *annamaya kosha* (food sheath). It is the *pranamaya kosha* (life sheath) that makes the body move. Be-

yond the *pranamaya kosha*, there exists *manomaya kosha* (mind sheath).

Man is able to investigate only these three sheaths; he is not able to comprehend *vijnanamaya* (wisdom sheath) and *anandamaya koshas* (bliss sheath), the reason being that man is bound by the senses.

The senses cannot understand ultimate Truth

It is said, *buddhi graahyam atheendriyam*, the senses cannot understand the ultimate Truth. However intelligent one may be, one cannot understand the Truth unless one treads along the inward path. The same body exists in all three states: waking, dream, and deep sleep, but what you see in one state cannot be seen in the other, because they correspond to the outward path. You have to give up the outward path and take to inward path to understand the Truth.

When this body was seven years old, dreadful and contagious diseases like cholera and plague were rampant in this tiny hamlet of Puttaparthi. Fear-stricken, the parents would not allow their children to go out of the house. But the children, out of their love for Me, would come to Me without even telling their parents. All those children were of the age group of six to eight.

One day, nearly 12 boys gathered around Me and said in an anxious tone “Raju, we came to know that cholera and plague are rampant in our village. It seems they are dangerous and fatal. What would be our fate?”

I told them, “The body has to perish one day or the other, whatever may be the precautions you take. So, do not be afraid of death. Contemplate on God and take care that the diseases do not afflict you.”

The boys asked Me as which form of God they should

contemplate on. They were all very innocent. In those days this was a very small village with a population of 106. They had no idea as to which form of God they should worship.

How Swami drove away the diseases

I told them to light a lamp, place it in the bazaar at 6 o'clock in the evening, and do *bhajans*. They did not know what *bhajans* to sing. Then I composed a few *bhajans* for them. I told them, "We need not search for God outside. He is within us. Let us go around the village chanting the name of Ranga, donning ochre robes and anklets, playing the cymbals in our hands, and getting rid of the evil qualities of anger and desire."

In those days, after 5 o'clock in the evening, no one dared to go beyond the Sathyamma temple, because they considered it to be far off from the village and believed that the area beyond the temple limits was haunted.

I infused confidence in them, saying there are no ghosts or devils and advised them to drive away the diseases of cholera and plague by chanting the name of God. We wore anklets and walked up to the riverbed of Chithravathi playing the cymbals and singing *bhajans*. It was the divine name that eradicated diseases of cholera and plague for good within a short span of three days.

The parents brought the children to Me and expressed their gratitude for having saved them from the epidemic. They said, "Raju, we are indebted to You for having instilled courage and confidence in our children. We don't want them to attend school, instead they will come to You. Kindly impart the education necessary for their welfare."

Everyday at 6 o'clock in the evening, they would assemble at My residence, after having their dinner, for tuition. They used to address Me as "tuition master". Their parents wanted

to offer 3 *paise* per month as *guru dakshina*, which I flatly refused. The children used to come to Me every evening to learn numeric tables and alphabets. Taking this as a pretext, I used to impart value-oriented education also. I used to advise them to keep away from bad company and not to indulge in criticism and slander. Cultivate good habits and good qualities. Respect your parents and obey their commands. Since then, there was marked improvement in their behavior and outlook.

Swami's skills in composing bhajans

On moonlit nights, we used to go to the Chithravathi River at 6 o'clock in the evening and return only at 11 in the night. Few elders also would accompany us. They used to pass time by playing games like *kabaddi*, but the children were not interested in joining them. In spite of My repeated entreaties, they would not participate in any of these pastimes. They were more interested in *bhajans* and being around Me. They would request Me to lead *bhajans*. Thus we used to spend our time in Chithravathi singing *bhajans*.

The children used to plead with Me to compose new *bhajans* and tunes. They used to extol My composing capabilities. I used to ask them to express their desires, if any, but not praise Me.

One day a pharmacist by name Kotte Subbanna came to Puttaparthi from Kamalapuram. He had heard a great deal about My composing capabilities and had come to request Me to write a song that would serve as an advertisement for his new medicine. He came to Subbamma and enquired about Me. She told him, "I know Raju very well. He is the only good boy in the entire village. He is one of good character, behavior and conduct. Not merely that, He imparts good teachings to others."

One day, Subbamma invited Kotte Subbanna for lunch. During the lunch, he expressed doubts regarding My composing skills. He said it was difficult for him to believe that a tiny tot like Me could write good poetry that would sell his new medicine in the market. Consequently, I sent him away saying, better that he goes to some person whose composing skills he had faith in.

I had immense love for the children. Keshanna, Ranganna, Subbanna, and Ramanna were among the children whom I used to take to the riverbed every evening. Words are inadequate to describe their innocence, purity and love for Me. A seven year-old boy used to request Me to lie down for a while keeping My head on his lap saying, I looked very tired and needed some rest. Seeing this other children also wanted to have the privilege of keeping My head on their laps.

Then they thought of a plan so that all would get an equal chance. It was decided that each boy would take turns to keep My head on his lap for a count of one to fifty. They missed no opportunity to serve Me and I used to satisfy all of them.

Swami writes a poem for advertising medicine

One day, Kotte Subbanna came to Me again and said, “Raju, all these children are ready to obey your command. They all sing well and have sweet voice. Please write a few songs to advertise my new medicine and ask these children to go around the village singing them. I am prepared to pay remuneration for this.”

I told him, “I do not like this business of give and take. These children also do not approve of this. Anyway tell Me exactly what your medicine is. I will compose a song accordingly.”

He explained that the name of the medicine was *Bala*

Bhaskara and that it could cure many types of ailments. I composed a beautiful song in Telugu on the efficacy of the medicine:

*O children, come here, a new medicine,
Bala Bhaskara, has arrived in the market.
It is a wonderful remedy for various ailments like
Stomach ache, indigestion, malnutrition,
and swelling of legs and hands.
It is available in the shop of Kotte Subbanna.
It is a very good tonic
prepared by Pandit Sri Gopalacharya.*

Kotte Subbanna was very much pleased with the poem and got it written in big sheets of paper for advertisement. As his luck would have it, I was taken to Kamalapuram for studying 5th and 6th classes. Kotte Subbanna made maximum use of My stay in Kamalapuram for the advertisement of his medicines.

Anjenya stops Swami's pradakshina of the temple

Right from early days I have been a source of inspiration for the young children. I would exhort them to desist from hurting others and discharge their duties sincerely. During the month of *Magha*, I used to take the children to the temple of Anjaneya at 4 o'clock in the morning. Some of the children were so young that they would not get up at that early hour. So, I would carry them to the nearby pond, give them a bath, and take them to the temple. I would sit at the temple, while the children would do *pradakshina* (circumambulation).

One day they insisted that I too should join them in circumambulating the temple. I finally yielded to their pressure and started circumambulating the temple. Believe it or not,

Anjaneya himself came and stopped Me from going round the temple saying, “O Lord! It is I who should circumambulate you. You should not do this.” But the children mistook Anjaneya for an ordinary monkey. I told them that Anjaneya himself came and would not allow Me to circumambulate the temple.

After this incident, there was a great transformation in the hearts of the children. They went around the village telling people what they witnessed at the Anjaneya temple. This news reached Karnam Subbamma also.

Next day, she invited Me to her house saying, “Raju, today I have prepared *dosas*, you should come and partake of them.” In those days food items like *idli* and *dosas* were considered to be rich man’s food. I told Subbamma that it is not My nature to eat alone leaving so many other children. Then Subbama prepared *dosas* for all the children.

The need for sathwic food

The villagers had lot of reverence for Me. It is because of Sathya Sai Baba that the people of Puttaparthi started thinking of God for the first time in their lives. It gradually spread to the other villages, too. I used to exhort the villagers to refrain from partaking of non-vegetarian food, consuming liquor, and smoking. I used to stress on the need for *sathwic* food.

During the festival of *Ekadasi*, it was the practice to hold bullock cart races on the riverbed of Chithravathi. They used to whip the bullocks to make them run faster. I would tell the children to insist upon their fathers to stop whipping the bullocks. Not only now, even in those days I taught the principle of nonviolence.

Cockfights were quite common in villages those days. They used to tie small knives to the legs of cocks and make

them fight with each other till one of them died. In the process, the other cock would get injured badly. I told them that one should have competition in doing good deeds, not in such cruel acts.

One who always does good will never be put to disrepute

One day the father of this body, Pedda Venkama Raju, chided Me for interfering in the affairs of the village. He said that the elders knew better and I should not cross My limits. I told him that I could not tolerate killing or ill-treating animals.

Since he could not convince Me, he directed the mother of this body to advise Me. At the time of serving food, she would tell Me, “Sathya, you should not do things that would displease your father. If you do not listen to him, you will earn a bad name in the village.”

I argued with her saying I was doing only good and was not bothered about what others said. I emphasized that one who always does good will never be put to disrepute. Kondama Raju, the grandfather of this physical body, also supported My argument. He called the villagers and told them that what I was doing was good for the village. He too advised them to refrain from violence and gambling. He cautioned them that lack of unity would lead to unrest in the village. Because of this kind of teachings, some people developed hatred toward Me.

I had to go to Bukkapatnam by 7 a.m. to attend the school. Teachers were very affectionate toward Me. Every teacher would first ask as he entered the classroom, “Has Raju come?”

Do you realize what I was like in those days? Ours was a poor family. Like children of these days, I did not have dozens of sets of dresses. I just had one pair of shirt and shorts. As soon as I returned from school I would take off My clothes,

wash them and put them up to dry and wear a towel round My waist. This way I would make-do with one pair of dress for a whole year.

Peace is My nature; love is My very nature

When questions were put to Me at school, I would always answer well. Most other students were not good at answering questions. My fellow classmates were quite grown up —in fact, some of them were almost 25 years of age and most of them would be wearing *dhotis*. I was the youngest in the class.

One day, when I answered a question well, Mahboob Khan asked Me to slap the other dull students. I would have to climb on to the desk to reach their cheeks. I used to touch them gently on their cheeks.

The teacher then chided Me, “Have I asked you to apply turmeric on their faces? I will show how!” Saying this, he gave a few hard slaps.

As I was returning to Puttaparthi, some of the students threw Me down on the sands of the river and dragged me along by my legs. They tore off My shirt and threw Me into the slush. All through this torture I remained calm. Peace is My nature. Love is My very nature. Peace is the form of Swami. Bliss is My resolve.

After reaching the Hanuman temple I washed My clothes and put them on again. Students may well imagine My state then. If there is a tear in My shirt, there was not even a safety pin available to hold the cloth together. Nor had I any money to buy it. I had no desire to request anyone also. I do not ask for anything from anybody. This resolve I have been upholding from that day to this day.

I went to Sathyamma temple and took out a thorn from a cactus and used it as a pin to mend the tear on my shirt. If one

remains steadfast in his true resolve, anything can be achieved.

Once, Subbamma told Me, “Raju, you are becoming weak. Eat well and grow strong.” My friends would bring everything prepared in their house for Me. But I used to tell them, “See, in your houses meat or fish is cooked and eaten. Please don't bring anything from such houses.”

This way, I brought down non-vegetarianism in Puttaparthi. In the same manner I had prevented cruelty to animals in the form of cockfights and cart races and also prevented the gambling habit.

We protect truth and truth protects us

Once, some people inimical to Me set fire to the room I was sleeping in. Some 10 children of the age of 6-9 years were sleeping outside in the verandah. The miscreants had locked My room from outside and set fire to the roof. The children were shouting loudly, “Raju! Raju!”

I peeped out through the small window smilingly and said, “Don't be afraid. *Dharma eva hato hanti, dharmo rakshati rakshitah* (Righteousness, when destroyed, destroys; righteousness when protected, protects).” We protect truth and truth protects us. Have firm faith in this precept.

The children closed their eyes and chanted “Raju! Raju!” as if it were a *mantra*. Since the roof was made of hay, there was a big conflagration. Suddenly there was a cloudburst, and the fire was totally put out. The downpour was just over that small hut and nowhere else.

The joy of the children was indescribable. “Raju, Raju... What a great miracle?” They were shouting, “We cannot live without you.”

I called them in and gave them some guavas and bananas. They asked Me, wherefrom I got these fruits. I told then, “Why

do you bother? Eat what is given.” Whether it is a mansion or a wayside shelter what does it matter, it is enough if you get sleep. Likewise, it is enough if your stomach is full.

Subbamma’s love for Swami

Subbamma came to know of the episode next day. Subbamma was a great soul. Swami was her very life. She set afoot a detailed search to find the culprits. They were caught. She ordered that they should be banished from the village. The entire property of the village belonged to her. She was very wealthy. All lands belonged to her. So she ordered them to get out of her lands.

Then I caught hold of her hands. I told her, “Please don't harm them because of Me. Knowingly or unknowingly, they have committed a mistake. Please forgive them. Please don't drive them away.”

When she told them this, all those children came to Swami and carried Him over their shoulders. Subbamma, Ramanna, etc. were very proud people. They carried Me on their shoulders saying, “You must have been some great person in your earlier birth. Otherwise you cannot have such nobleness in you. Because of you, gradually this village is going to attain great fame”

Subbamma said, “Don't mistake Him for a small boy. His power is like a lightning strike, how can you understand His true nature?” From that day, she did not allow Me to go out of her house. I stayed in her house and went to school from there itself. She was a great lady. She was sixty years old then. She was always looking for Me, asking, “Is Raju there? Is Raju there?” She would sleep only after seeing Me safe. She was trying to protect Me from the wicked people in the village.

Attempt on Swami's life by poisoning food

One day, a *brahmin* lady came. She requested Subbamma to send Raju to her house for taking snacks in her house. Subbamma was not very happy at the proposition. She was suspicious and thought that there was some evil intention behind the invitation. She refused and told Me, "Raju don't go anywhere without my consent."

"Subbamma! Why do you want to thwart her desire?"

She replied, "There is some wicked purpose behind her invitation."

But I persisted and said, "I must fulfil her request."

I went there. She had made some *vadas*. They were poisoned. I ate them. Within five minutes My entire blood stream had turned blue. Subbamma came to know of this and came running looking for Me. When she found Me, I told her, "Don't worry, what they wanted, they have done. I can look after Myself." I asked Subbamma to give Me a tumbler of water with her own hands. As soon as I took that water, the blueness vanished.

Subbamma's anger had reached its limits. She said, "Such women will ruin the reputation of Puttaparthi. There is no room for such people in this village. Only righteous and good natured people should live here."

She called the mothers of Swami's companions and told them, "These children are not yours. They are all mine. They should be with Raju all the time. They should spend every moment of their life with Raju."

Till recently they were alive. You all may know Bukkapatnam Sathyanarayana, he was one of them and is still with us here. He was My classmate in the 6th class. All these children would come to Swami. It is hard to describe their unsullied af-

fection, devotion and attachment to Swami. The *Kali Yuga* has poisoned the minds of children.

Those days, when Swami stretched Himself to sleep, there was competition between them to take His head on their laps. They would say, “Raju, since you slept on my lap, there is no pain or distress in my body and there is some kind of joy filling me.” I wonder if the children of today will have the same sentiments.

I ask for nothing; I only give and give

Children's minds are now filled with unrighteous feelings. *Yad bhavam tad bhavati* (as the state of mind, so is the state of person). Children of those days were very pure and innocent. Swami resolved then to spread these qualities to the villagers for their own good. Mere *bhajan* or chanting “Rama, Govinda” is not great.

Cultivate good habits. One should develop exemplary qualities and earn a good name. Swami is happy when students acquire the reputation of good character. The children's behavior should be good right from the start. That is why I say, “Start early, drive slowly and reach safely.” If you develop sacred habits from early age you grow into an exemplary human.

Even today, those who were with Me are there as shining examples in the villages. When Swami is returning from Bangalore, all along the way they offer their salutations, saying “Swami! Swami!” with great joy. Those who have followed Me by car know how these people bring pot-fulls of water and wash the roads. They say, “Swami, you have brought water to us. We have to offer it back to You only.”

If I just ask them, “how are you?” they are transported with bliss. It is for this purpose of transformation that I have not accumulated any money, not a *paisa*. I have no property worth

even a *paisa*. My entire wealth is My students. I ask for nothing. I only give and give. There is no limit to Swami's giving. The devotees must be made happy by giving something. Swami's sole concern is the welfare of His devotees. No one needs worry about My welfare. My welfare is in My hands. Therefore, if one leads his life without departing from Truth and Righteousness, life will be fruitful and meaningful.

17 October 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

Calming the mental agitation that surges like waves, leveling the swirls and whirls of likes, dislikes, love, hate, sorrow, joy, hope, and despair, santhi (peace) is earned and maintained without disturbance. Santhi is of the nature of the Atman. The Atman is imperishable. It does not die, like the body and mind. It is universal, it is subtle, and its very nature is knowledge. So, santhi also partakes of these characteristics.

—Baba

Devotion — the supreme yagna

*Like a stream of water that flows down from the hills,
Courage emerges from the heart of a person who
trusts in God
O man, how do you expect to attain Divinity without
understanding and experiencing the principle of
love,
Which is the very form of God?*

[Telugu Poem]

Since time immemorial, in this sacred land of Bharat (India), people experienced bliss in following the *Vedic* traditions and performing rituals and sacrifices. In the *Vedic* tradition, four types of worship have been prescribed. They are: *Sathyavathi*, *Angavathi*, *Anyavathi* and *Nidhaanavathi*.

Sathyavathi proclaims that Divinity pervades the entire cosmos, just as sweetness is present in every drop of syrup and butter in every drop of milk. The sages of yore had the vision

of Divinity in all the beings and in all the forms. Just as the screen is the basis for the pictures projected on it, Divinity is the fundamental basis for the entire creation but is itself unnoticed. The screen permeates all the pictures projected on it; likewise, Divinity pervades the entire creation.

God is the embodiment of truth

Hence the *Sathyavathi* mode of worship is based on the omnipresence of Divinity. It demonstrates unity in diversity. It echoes the *Vedic* dictum: *Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanthi* (God is one, but scholars refer to Him by many names).

God is the embodiment of truth. That is why the ancient *rishis* (sages) extolled him as *Sathya Swarupa. Trikalabadyam Sathyam* (Truth is changeless in all the three periods of time). Such truth shines forth in everybody as love. When you fill your heart with love, you will become love personified.

Angavathi refers to the worship of the five elements—earth, water, fire, air, and ether—considering them as manifestations of the Divine. The earth bears the burden of mighty mountains, vast oceans, dense forests, villages, towns, and cities. Likewise, the remaining four elements are also responsible for the sustenance of creation. The *Bharatiyas* (Indians) extol earth as *Bhudevi* (mother earth), water as *Gangadevi* (goddess of water), fire as *Agnideva* (god of fire), and air as *Vayudeva* (god of wind) and offer their salutations to them.

Anyavathi refers to picturing the many faceted Divinity in various names and forms and worshipping them. For example Siva is described as *Pinakapani* (wielder of the bow *Pinaka*) and Rama is described as *Kodandapani* (wielder of the bow *Kondanda*).

Nidhanavathi represents the nine paths of devotion, namely *sravanam* (listening), *kirtanam* (singing), *vishnusmaranam*

(contemplating on the Lord), *padasevanam* (service to the Lotus Feet), *vandanam* (salutation), *archanam* (worship), *dasyam* (to be a servant of the Lord), *sneham* (friendship), and *Atmanivedanam* (Self surrender). The ancient sages and seers attained supreme bliss by following these nine paths of devotion.

Only through total love can one please the Divine

Once upon a time in Italy, there lived a person by name Anthony. He used to earn his livelihood by making violins, but being a perfectionist as he was, he used to take one full year to make a violin. His friends chided him saying, “O mad man, how do you expect to eke out your livelihood if you spend a whole year to make one violin?”

Anthony replied, “God is the embodiment of perfection. Whatever He does is absolutely perfect. He will be pleased only when we discharge our duty in the most perfect manner. All my work will be a utter waste, if God is not satisfied.”

In this context, the *Vedas* declare:

Poornamadah Poornamidam
Poornaath Poomamudachyathe
Poornasya Poornamaadaaya
Poornameva Vasishyathe

The perfect whole is the basis. All that is here is the perfect whole. The whole emanates from the whole. When the whole is separated from the whole the perfect wholeness remains perfect as wholeness.

Only through total love can one please Divinity. Perfection arises out of love. There is nothing greater than love. No benefit accrues from chanting various names of the Lord without the spring of love in the heart. It is enough even if one name is

chanted wholeheartedly and with a feeling of love. All your work must be totally dedicated to God. It should be done with total love and pure heart. This is the essence of *Sathyavathi* mode of worship.

God values quality, not quantity

Anthony's violins were very famous and highly valuable. The reason is that he used to make them with sacred feelings and total devotion. He never felt that he was wasting his time. He always had the feeling that he was sanctifying his time by doing his work perfectly and thus pleasing God.

You should follow the ideal of Anthony. It is quality that God values, not quantity. You may perform *narayana seva* (feeding the poor) on a large scale, but without purity of heart, you cannot please God. God will be pleased even with a morsel of food offered with sacred feelings. All that you do with purity of heart will find fulfillment. Do your work properly and perfectly, no matter even if more time is spent in the process. But do not be in haste and do a halfhearted work.

Since ancient times various types of *yagnas* (sacrifices) have been performed in this sacred land of Bharat. *Yagno vai Vishnuhu* (*yagna* is the very form of Vishnu). Some people are under the mistaken notion that they can please God by offering highly valuable items. What one has to offer God is the pure heart. *Yad bhavam tad bhavati* (as the feeling, so is the result). If you are aspiring for good results, offer only good feelings to God. There should be perfect harmony in your thought, word, and deed. *Manasyekam vachasyekam karmanyekarn mahatmanam* (he is a noble soul whose thought, word, and deed are in perfect harmony). *Adveshta sarva bhootanam* (Do not hate anybody).

On November 24, 1926, Aurobindo broke his prolonged

silence only to declare that God had incarnated the previous day. After making this significant statement, he continued with his vow of silence. Divinity can be recognized only by the pure hearted.

God is the Veda Purusha

Once, during the performance of a *yagna* (sacrifice), an individual criticized the *Vedic* priests saying that they were wasting the valuable ghee by pouring it into the sacrificial fire. A *Vedic* scholar by name Aamnaya Vachaspathi gave a fitting reply thus, “You do not call it a waste if a farmer sows four bags of paddy in his field because after a few months he will reap 40 bags of rice. Similar is the case with *yagna* too. The sacred smoke arising from the sacrificial fire, fully charged with the divine name and the sacred *Vedic mantras*, purifies the pollution in the atmosphere. A program that is broadcast by the Delhi Radio Station can be heard throughout the country. The presence of electric waves in the atmosphere is responsible for this. Likewise, the *Vedic mantras* chanted by the priests will spread all over.”

The purpose of the *Veda Purusha Sapthaha Yagna* is to attain truth. God is the *Veda Purusha*. This *yagna* is performed for seven days. Seven is an auspicious number, for it corresponds to the number of *rishis* (*saptha rishis*), oceans (*saptha samudras*), colors (*saptha varnas*) and sounds (*saptha swaras*).

Valmiki, before he became a great sage, was known as Ratnakara. He was a hunter and used to rob the wayfarers of their belongings. One day, he came across the *saptha rishis*, who took pity on him and wanted to light the lamp of wisdom in him. They urged him to give up his wicked actions. Ratnakara said he could not do so, since it was the only way to feed his wife and children. Then the *saptha rishis* asked him to find

out from his wife and children whether they were prepared to share the sin he committed for their sake. Ratnakara went home and asked his wife and children, “Are you prepared to share my sin just as you share my booty every day?” They replied in the negative. His wife said that he was responsible for the merit or sin he committed.

This incident opened his eyes. He went back to the *saptha rishis*, fell at their feet, and prayed for guidance. They told him to contemplate on Lord Rama and chant His incessantly. Ratnakara did accordingly, and consequently, his face shone with the divine effulgence of Lord Rama. Your thoughts play a vital role in shaping your personality.

God’s grace will certainly alleviate your suffering

Embodiments of Love! One who thinks of God constantly will never be put to hardships. You may argue that you continue to suffer though you think of God all the time. How can you say that thinking of God has not helped you at all? It certainly would have mitigated your suffering without your knowledge. God's grace will certainly alleviate your suffering. By chanting of the divine name, even mountains of sin will vanish like mist into thin air. *Sarvada Sarvakaleshu Sarvathra Harichinthanam*, you should think of God at all places, at all times, and under all circumstances with pure love and total faith. Your prayers will be answered only when there is sincerity in you.

When I returned to Puttaparthi from Uravakonda, two persons, Subbaiah Shetty and Kodanda Shetty, came from Anantapur. One of them was finding it difficult to get an alliance for his daughter. He said, “Sathya Sai Baba, I will believe that you are God only if I can find a suitable alliance for my daughter soon. I will build *chitikelamedu* (‘snapping mansion’) for You

if my daughter gets married within this month.” Everyone was curious to know as to what that would be.

His daughter got married within the same month. He came to the Old *Mandir* (temple) with a plate containing a coconut and some flowers. He said, “Swami, you fulfilled my desire. Now I have to keep up my word. Please permit me to build a *chitikelameda* for you.” Many others were watching with curiosity. Even Subbamma came there thinking that he was going to give a big mansion for Swami. I very well knew what he was up to. He gave *Aarati* and asked, “Swami, will you permit me to build *chitikelameda* now?”

In order to amuse the onlookers, “I said OK, go ahead.”

He started snapping his fingers around Me, saying, “This is the first wall, this is the second wall, this is the roof,” so on and so forth. In the end he said, “this is God,” fell at My feet, and broke the coconut. Likewise, some people resort to mean strategies and try to cheat even God! They certainly have to face the consequences of their actions.

The creation of God is most sacred and wonderful

God neither favors nor hates anybody. Whatever one experiences is the result of one’s own actions. In this context, one devotee prayed to God thus, “O God, you appeared as Yama to Kamsa, who had developed hatred toward You. On the other hand, you appeared as Lord Narayana to Prahlada, who had immense faith in You, whereas you appeared as God of Death to Hiranyakasipu, who opposed you. To Vibhishana, who believed in you, you appeared as Rama. But to Ravana, who defied you, you became Yama.”

So, Yama and Rama are one and the same. Depending on the feelings, one saw Him as Rama, etc. Purandaradasa once said, “Who planted the tree on the mountain top and watered

it? Who gave the red beak to the green parrot? Who gave the wonderful colors to the feathers of the peacock and to the flowers of the entire world? Everything is God's creation." You may make a bunch of plastic grapes and plastic lotuses, but will any honeybee go near them? No. But they swarm around the natural lotus created by God and suck nectar from it. The creation of God is most sacred and wonderful. None can comprehend the mystery of God. Divine Will can accomplish anything and everything.

Time is the cause for birth and death

Each *Vedic mantra* chanted during the *yagna* (sacrifice) has a deep inner meaning associated with it. Each *mantra* is dedicated to a particular deity. Any letter with the address properly mentioned on it can reach the neighboring street or a far away place. The *mantras* are like the addresses of the deities. When they are chanted with proper intonations, they will yield the desired results.

Time is God. That is why God is extolled as *Kalaya Namah, Kala Kalaya Namah, Kalatheethaya Namah...* Time is the cause for birth and death. None can conquer time except those who acquire divine grace. Here is a small example. Sage Mrukandu had a son by name Markandeya, who was given only 16 years of life span, but he was unaware of this. One night he found his parents full of sorrow. On enquiry, they revealed that his end had approached, and that was the cause of their sorrow. Hearing this, he went to the temple of Easwara, hugged the Siva Linga, and started chanting *Om Namah Sivaya* wholeheartedly.

At the appointed hour, Yama (God of Death) cast his noose around the neck of young Markandeya. Since Markandeya was hugging the *Linga*, the noose fell around the *Linga* also. Eas-

wara manifested there and remonstrated Yama, “How dare you cast the noose around Me?” He burnt Yama to ashes. Pleased with the devotion of Markandeya, he blessed him with the boon of immortality.

In fact, it was Easwara who had stipulated 16 years of life span for Markandeya. But on account of Markandeya’s intense devotion and total surrender Easwara, had to change His Will. There is none greater than a true devotee in this world.

God’s heart can be melted only through love

Once, Lord Vishnu asked Narada which among the five elements was the greatest. Narada replied earth is the greatest.

Vishnu remarked, “Three-fourth of the earth is enveloped with water. In such a case, which among the two is greater?” Narada agreed that water was great.

Vishnu said, “But the sage Agastya drank up the ocean in a single gulp. So, is Agastya greater or water?” Narada replied, “You are right my Lord, Agastya is greater than water.”

Vishnu asked again, “But this Agastya is a tiny star in the sky (*akasa*). Now is this star greater or the sky?” Narada replied, “It is the sky that is greater.”

The Lord agreed and said, “Your understanding is correct. The sky indeed is greater. In His incarnation as Vamana, the Lord asked for three steps from king Bali. And in the course of taking the gift of three steps, Vamana assumed the form of Thrivikrama and covered the entire earth in one step, and the space from the earth to the sky in second, and there was no room for the third step. King Bali had to offer his head for the third step. So, now, is God great or the sky?” Narada replied, “Swami, when the mere foot of the Lord covers the entire sky, how much greater His full form would be? God indeed is greater.”

“God, who envelops the entire cosmos, dwells in the heart of His *bhakta* (devotee). So now, is the heart of the devotee greater or God?” asked Vishnu. Narada replied, “Indeed, the devotee is greater than God.”

God is *Bhakta Paradheena*, He is the servant of devotees. There is none superior to a devotee in this world. God’s heart can be melted only through love. So, develop total love. This is not the worldly love that exists between parents and children, husband and wife, friends, and relatives. Worldly love is tainted by selfishness, but divine love is absolutely selfless. Your life will be sanctified only when you attain divine love.

Take refuge in the Lord’s Feet

Hurry up, hurry up, listen to the
clarion call of Sai filled with nectarine love,
Beckoning you to come near Him and
exhorting you to attain Divinity.
No need to undertake *yoga*
or any spiritual *sadhana*.
Hurry up, hurry up, hearken to
the loving word of Sai.

[Telugu Song]

God is asking you to come near, but you are drifting away from Him. You might have seen in Tirupati —one hand of Lord Venkateswara is raised in *Abhaya Hastha* (blessing pose) and the other points to His feet. What does it mean? Take refuge in the Lord’s Feet and you shall be protected. Surrender to Him; He will make you fearless. Others pervert the meaning and say, “Hey! You want to go up or fall into the pit (*adhogathi*).”

Laying the foundation for the Music University

As you are all aware, this morning Swami laid the foundation stone for the Music University. Not only music, lyrics, and dance, even the traditional folk arts like *Hari Kathas* (musical exposition of the epics and the *Puranas*) and village dramas will be taught here. Apart from Carnatic and Hindustani music, all types of music in the world will blossom here. This University will be inaugurated next October. Whatever we undertake will be completed in a few months. You need not wait years for its completion.

This University will be built spending crores of rupees, and it will be a synthesis of ancient and modern art forms. Many renowned artistes will come here. A musicologist of world-wide reputation, Indira Chakravathi, will be the Vice Chancellor of this university. She has the experience of working in various music colleges all over the world. At present she is living in the city of Banaras. She will come here.

You all know that Ravi Shankar's elder brother (Late) Uday Shankar was a great dancer. His wife wants to donate all his instruments and equipment to our Institute of fine arts. Some of the equipment in this lot is not to be found anywhere else in the world.

The plans for the buildings are prepared. This building complex is going to be in the shape of several musical instruments such as the *mrudangam*, the *tanpura*, a conch in the middle, and a sitar. The mere sight of the building from outside would convey to the onlooker that it is a center of musical excellence. Similar marvels are going to happen in Prasanthi Nilayam.

Just think. Puttaparthi, a mere hamlet of a population of 106 people, has already grown to the size of a city housing

several lakhs of people. Not only that, just wait and see, in a very short while, Puttaparthi is going to be a landmark on the map of the world.

As our C. Srinivas has said, the architectural features of our Hospital have found the pride of place in the American manual of architectural features for medical institutions. Let alone America, Puttaparthi is going to be a name to be reckoned with in every major developed country in the world such as Japan, Germany, Italy, and France. Everywhere world maps are going to mark Puttaparthi as an important location. The students of Puttaparthi should realize their good fortune. Then only their life will acquire its real meaning and significance.

Students! Your holidays are commencing from tomorrow. You can go home to your parents and spend your time in a proper way and come back after acquiring your parents' approbation.

19 October 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

Equip yourselves with a clear eye through detachment and love; sharpen your sense of discrimination so that it has no prejudice or predilection. Then, you can see God in you, around you, in all that you know and feel.

—Baba

Youth should transform the world

*One who practices and propagates ideals
such as goodness, morality, and truth
Is a youth in the strict sense of the term.
In fact, only such people are
your best friends and My best friends too.*

[Poem in Telugu]

Embodiments of Love! Goodness means good behaviour, good conduct, good discipline, and good character. Truth, righteousness, peace, love and nonviolence are verily the five life principles (*pancha pranas*) of man.

Human life is a journey from 'I' to 'We'. This journey is subtle and the goal is very near, but man takes many births to reach the destination. Why should he take such a long time, undergoing hardships, to attain the goal, which is so near?

Modern youth are making every effort to know all that is happening in the world but are not making any effort to understand the fundamental truth of human life. No benefit accrues from acquiring such information, which does not lead you to the goal of life. There are thousands of intellectuals, scholars, and eminent educationists in the world today. But all the worldly knowledge and skills will be a mere waste if one does not know oneself. The primary duty of man is to understand who he really is.

*In this world, if money is lost,
one need not be worried about it,
for one can earn it again.
If a friend is lost, one can have another.
If wife is lost, one may get married again.
If one loses one's piece of land,
one can purchase another.
All these can be acquired again.
But the body once lost is lost forever.*

[Sanskrit sloka]

Faith in God is very essential for man

Man has achieved everything in life but has lost human values, which amounts to losing his five life principles. As a result, he has become a living corpse. Faith in God is very essential for man. You may question who God is and where God is. Truth is God. Truth is one and the same for everyone, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, language, nationality and ideology.

Sathyannasti paro dharma (there is no greater *dharma* than adherence to truth). This fundamental Truth is God. Likewise, Love is God. So, live in love. True love is related to the heart,

not to the body. Divine Love is “heart to heart, not body to body”. Body is like a water bubble, mind is like a mad monkey. Don’t follow the body, don’t follow the mind. Follow the conscience. Only then can you experience the Truth.

Service will lean you to devotion

Your men and women! Your life is a long journey, and your desires are the luggage. “Less luggage, more comfort makes travel a pleasure.” So, reduce your desires.

Human birth is gifted to serve others, not just to eat, drink, sleep, and make merry. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Man’s foremost duty is to serve his fellowmen and make them happy. Your life will be redeemed only when you involve yourself in the service of society. The highest *sadhana* (spiritual practise) is to transform love into service. Service will lead you to devotion.

The Kerala boy who spoke earlier mentioned various diseases that affect the body. There are many instances in history wherein even mighty kings had to leave their mortal coil in spite of having access to the best medical facilities and the best doctors. Doctors by themselves cannot cure diseases. Divine grace is essential. There is no point in safeguarding your body if you do not uphold morality. For this, lead a life of truth and love. Modern youth do have love, but their love is artificial. It is limited up to saying “hello, hello,” and is in fact hollow within. So, their life has become artificial like a drama.

Man can rise to the level of the Divine only through the path of service. When man is not able to understand humanness, how can he understand Divinity? First, know thyself. Human life is noble, since it is essentially divine. In fact, man and God are not two different entities; they are one and the same. “*Ekam sath viprah babudha vadanti* (truth is one, but

scholars refer to it by many names).” Your life will be redeemed once you understand this truth.

The divine power latent in man is not found in any other being. Since man is unable to understand his own divine nature, he is undertaking various spiritual practices such as penance, meditation, and *yoga*. Spiritual practices bereft of love are a mere waste of time. Love is most important in life. Whatever you may say with love, it is bound to be true.

Any work you undertake with love is *dharma*. So, in the first instance, develop love. Lust, greed, hatred, jealousy, anger, and pride are animal qualities. These qualities are the result of the impurities in the food man partakes of. These are of man’s own making. Man is forgetting his divine nature due to the effect of these evil qualities.

The words *seva* and *prema* possess infinite power

Man should make proper use of his *mathi* (intellect), *gathi* (destination), *stithi* (situation), and *sampathi* (wealth). Wealth here does not mean worldly treasures. It refers to the power of the senses. This power should be utilised for service of society.

*Neither by penance nor by undertaking
pilgrimages nor by going through sacred texts
nor by Japa can one cross the ocean of Samsara.
Only through service of the noble can one redeem oneself.*
[Sanskrit verse]

The words *seva* and *prema* may be very small, consisting of only two syllables, but they possess infinite power.

Embodiments of Love! Enquire and understand who you really are. Know yourself and you will know all. Since many of you are newcomers, you have to understand simple things to begin with. When you say, “This is my handkerchief,” it

means the handkerchief is different from you. Similarly, when you say, "This is my body, my mind, and my intellect," it means you are different from all these. Then the question naturally arises, "Who are you?" Enquire into this. Body, mind and intellect are mere instruments. Identifying yourself with these instruments is absurd.

You are the master. Master the mind and be a mastermind. Never be a slave to your body, mind, and senses. In fact, they should be under your control; you should not be controlled by them.

One of the speakers quoted Swami, "My life is My message." She also referred to the statement, "Your life is My message." You should understand the meaning of these statements clearly. Saying that your life is Swami's message and indulging in wicked activities and unrighteous deeds is treacherous. That constitutes "your" message, not My message. You can declare that your life is Swami's message only when you take to the path of truth and righteousness, install peace and love in your heart, and uphold nonviolence.

No one has the right to judge others

All that you see outside is a reflection of the inner being. Good and bad do not exist outside; they are mere reflections of what is within you. No one has the right to judge others. Give up all that is bad in you and you will find goodness all around. As the colour of the glasses you put on, so is the colour of the world you visualise. The defect lies in your vision, not in the creation.

Heart is the dwelling place of God. So, only noble feelings should emerge out of it. If there are any evil qualities like lust, greed, and anger in it, then it ceases to be a human heart. It is verily the heart of an animal. If your conduct is devoid of hu-

manness, then you are not a human being. Act in a manner that befits your human birth. When you are angry, remind yourself, "I am not a dog, I am man." When your mind wavers, tell yourself repeatedly, "I am not a monkey, I am man." Patiently think about your real nature.

Never act in haste. Haste makes waste. Waste makes worry. So, do not be in a hurry. Take time and think calmly. All these evil qualities can be eliminated by developing good thoughts and feelings. The remedy for all your mental ailments lies within you.

Undertake Service with Love

Only young men and women are capable of eradicating the evils prevailing in society. If we have virtuous youth, all ills of society can be removed. Today, the whole world is embroiled in wicked thoughts, wicked company, and evil acts. Excessive desires are the main cause for the suffering of man. Keep a check on your desires.

As a student, discharge your duties diligently. Study well and obtain good marks. Respect your parents and serve them. Keep in mind the welfare of the society and nation at large. Earn a good name in society.

Do not feel proud of your education. Your education is a mere waste if it is not utilised for the welfare of society. The education you have received from society must be dedicated to it by way of service. The essence of education does not lie in merely acquiring degrees, securing good jobs, and amassing wealth. Service is the hallmark of the educated one. Morality is most essential for human life. No doubt money is essential, but it should be under certain limits. Excessive money makes many wrongs. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows.

Students! Young men and women! First and foremost, make efforts to understand your true nature. The difference between God and man is very subtle. As long as you do not understand the Truth, you remain a human being. Once you recognise it, you are God.

Service is the best way to understand your innate divinity. Service should be for self-satisfaction, not for name and fame. Experience the bliss that you derive from selfless service. Share it with others. Before serving others, serve yourself by making your mind broad and pure. Get rid of the narrow feeling of 'I' and 'mine' and extend your love to one and all. Love is the binding force that brings together the entire world as one family. I wish that you develop love and live like brothers and sisters.

This body has been engaged in service right from birth. You should also spend your life in serving others. This is My message. I practice whatever I preach. I love all and serve all and exhort you to do the same. You are not able to understand My love as your feelings are narrow. That is your mistake, not Mine. Today, conflicts are on the rise as there is no proper understanding and adjustment among people. Adjustment will be possible only when there is proper understanding.

Develop love and uphold truth

Embodiments of Love! Only love has been constantly with you right from birth. It is love that remains with you all the time, not your relatives or friends. This love is God. Enjoy the bliss of love and share it with others. Absence of love is the root cause for all the unrest in the world.

Develop love and uphold truth. Truth does not mean describing what you have seen, heard or done, as it is. Truth is that which is changeless in all the three periods of time. The

Vedas call this permanent truth *Rutham*.

Just as you change your dress, you have to change your body one day or the other. That is why it is said, “Death is the dress of life.” Therefore, you should have no fear of death. Life is not permanent. It is like a passing cloud. As long as there is life in the body, use it for the service of others. Engage yourself in service till your last breath. Service to man is service to God. Have control over your senses, because loss of sense control engenders demonic qualities in man. Service without sense control is an exercise in futility.

Cultivate noble thoughts

All of you have gathered here without being extended any invitation. It is your love for Bhagavan and Bhagavan’s love for you that has brought you here. If there is love in your heart, you will never be put to any hardship whatsoever. Your love should be extended to one and all; it should not be limited to your family and friends alone.

Today, we do not have ideal parents. There are no ideal teachers either. We do not have ideal friends and relatives too. How can then we find fault with the youth? First of all, the parents should be good. The teachers should also do their job of teaching in right earnest. Good company is very important. Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are. As is your company, so you become. How can one be good if one is in the company of bad people always?

Embodiments of Love! You are all virtuous and noble. Make every effort to enhance this goodness. Make the best use of your stay here. Run away from bad company and bad feelings. Cultivate noble thoughts and noble qualities. Develop the *Atmic* relationship with all, since all are your brothers and sisters. Lord Krishna said in the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Mamaivamso*

Jeevaloke Jeevabhuta Sanathana (the eternal *Atma* in all beings is a part of My Being). The sun is one but it has many reflections. All that you find in this world is the reflection, reaction, and resound. Do not get carried away by them. Aspire to attain the reality. In order to experience the reality, give up body attachment and try to understand the divinity within.

Help ever, hurt never

Divinity is latent in everyone, but you are not making any effort to realise it because you are deeply engrossed in worldly matters. You are the embodiment of pure, unsullied, true, and eternal *Atma*. Experience this reality. Discharge your duties keeping this truth in view. Help ever, Hurt never. This is the essence of the *Vedas* and sacred texts such as the Bible, the *Bhagavad Gita*, and the *Quran*. All these holy texts speak of the same fundamental truth.

It is a mistake to entertain differences based on religion. There is only one religion, the religion of love. There is only one caste, the caste of humanity. There is only one language, the language of the heart. Travel from 'I' to 'We' through the path of service. I will tell you how to go about doing it in due course of time.

There are millions of people in this world, but only you, the fortunate few, have got the golden opportunity of coming here. Make the best use of this opportunity and share this joy with everybody. Serve the whole world. Understand the truth that you are born to serve society. It is not government service. It is the service of mankind.

Do not lead a selfish life amassing wealth. Do not be satisfied by filling your own belly; understand that there are millions in the world, who are hungry and suffering. Your life will be sanctified only when you help the poor, the sick, and the

down-trodden. That is true spirituality. Spirituality is a way of life. It is not something separate from life. That should be your way of life. In order to acquire a worldly degree, you need to study various subjects. But in spirituality there is only one subject and that is love. Undertake service activities in a spirit of love.

Being young, you may have a few doubts. I will clarify all of them. Do not give scope for hatred, jealousy, and ostentation. Be a humble devotee and render humble service. That is the true human quality.

18 November 1999

Inauguration, Sri Sathya Sai Second World Youth Conference
Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Santhi (peace) is full of spiritual feeling and wisdom that is the natural accompaniment of bliss. Genuine santhi is won only by control of the senses. Then, it can be called prasanthi. The experience of that stage is as a stream of peace.

—Baba

Importance of mother's grace

*More fragrant than the sweet-smelling flowers
like the Jasmine and the Champak,
Softer than cheese and butter,
More beautiful than the eye of the peacock,
More pleasant than the moonlight
Is the love of the mother.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love! This world, with its movable and immovable objects, is nothing but the Cosmic Dance of Siva (*Siva Thandava*). This blissful *Siva Thandava* is full of awe and wonder and is beyond human comprehension. The dualities of night and day, pleasure and pain, birth and death are endless. Just as birth and death are natural, so also is the existence of *dharma* and *adharma* (righteousness and unrighteous-

ness). When *dharma* is on the rise, *adharma* is on the decline, and vice versa. Men and women are responsible for the rise or decline of *dharma* and *adharma*. Man, unable to realise the divinity within, is under the delusion that divinity is different from him.

Principle of Siva-Shakti

Sumathi could even stop the sun from rising to save the life of her husband. Savitri could bring her dead husband back to life. Wherefrom did they derive their strength? It was the power of their devotion and chastity. When man worships Divinity with devotion and earnestness, the divine qualities — *sathyam*, *sivam*, *sundaram* (truth, goodness, beauty) manifest in him. This resplendently shining divine power is latent in man. When Kamsa tried to kill his own sister Devaki, her husband Vasudeva came to her rescue. It was possible because of his innate divine powers. You need not make any special efforts to acquire divine powers. They are immanent in you. They will manifest only when you contemplate on God, forgetting yourself.

Man, forgetting his own divine nature, thinks that God is separate from him and undertakes various spiritual practices to attain Him. People adore Him by different names such as Rama, Krishna, Jesus, and Allah. But there is only one fundamental power, which is the very form of *Siva-Shakti*. This principle of *Siva-Shakti* is all-pervasive. This world has a very significant name, Bhavan-Sankara. *Bhavani* means *sraddha* (steadfast devotion) and *sankara* means *viswas* (faith). It is to say that the world is based on the twin principles of *sraddha* and *viswas*. *Bhavani* and *Sankara* are inseparable, interdependent, and all-pervasive. So, the whole world is the form of *ardhanareswara* (androgynous). It is on this basis that the

terms *Srimati* and *Sri* are used to address women and men, respectively. *Srimati* denotes *Bhavani* and *Sri* symbolises *Sankara*.

Whatever may be the name and form you worship, you need to have steadfast devotion and faith. Without these two, you cannot achieve anything in life. *Sraddhavan labhate jnanam* (only the one with steadfast devotion attains wisdom). It is only through faith that one can realise the divinity within. Divinity in man is the combination of *Bhavani* and *Sankara*.

God is the witness to all that you do

The whole world is a combination of *ichcha shakti* (will power), *kriya shakti* (power of action), and *jnana shakti* (power of wisdom). *Ichcha shakti* is related to the mind, *kriya shakti* to the body, and *jnana shakti* to the *Atma*. That is why it is said that you are not one person, but three: the one you think you are (physical body), the one others think you are (mental body), and the one you really are (principle of the *Atma*). You are essentially divine, but you are unable to understand this. The Vedas declare: *Sarvata pani padam tat sarvathokshi siromukham, sarvata srutimalloke sarvamavritya thishthati* (with His hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth, and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe). God is the witness to all that you do. You may hoodwink anybody, but not God because He is always in you and with you.

Without the grace of *Bhavani-Sankara*, all your efforts will be futile. Names and forms are not important because they are subject to change. Body is like a water bubble, mind is like a mad monkey. You cannot rely on them. But there is something within, which is true and eternal. That is divinity. In order to manifest this latent divinity, you need to develop devotion, which in turn strengthens your faith. Tree becomes bigger and

stronger as the roots go deeper. Likewise, faith becomes stronger as the devotion increases. No name and no form can ever help you if *viswas* (faith) and *sraddha* (steadfast devotion) are lacking in you.

There is infinite divine power latent in everybody. If you can manifest it, you can even stop the sun from rising, as Sumathi did, and you can even bring the dead back to life, as Savitri could do. When you manifest divine power, you become God.

God will give you whatever you deserve

The *Atma* is all-pervasive. In order to experience the *Atma*, you need to have steadfast devotion and faith. Today people pray, *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (may all the people of the world be happy)! It is possible only when *sraddha* and *viswas* are fostered.

Joys and sorrows are like passing clouds. They come and go. It is only the morality that comes and grows. So, develop morality. Do not aspire for wealth, position, and power. God will give you whatever you deserve. Develop love for God. That is the highest *sadhana* (spiritual practice).

Today, people undertake various spiritual practices to attain God. But all these confer only mental satisfaction. Sage Narada propagated the nine paths of devotion: *sravanam* (listening), *kirtanam* (singing), *Vishnusmaranam* (contemplating on God), *Padasevanam* (serving His Lotus Feet), *vandanam* (salutation), *archanam* (worship), *dasyam* (servitude), *sneham* (friendship), and *Atmanivedanam* (self-surrender). These practices cannot confer everlasting joy. Have unflinching faith that the universe is the very form of God (*Viswam Vishnuswarupam*). Vishnu is the cause and the Viswam is the effect. These two are inseparable.

The *Vedas* declare: *Acharam Chamevacha* (though immobile, He is apparently mobile). Here is an illustration. In the dream state, you may visit various places and experience happiness or sorrow, but in reality your body remains steady on the bed—immobile.

So, all that you see and experience in this world is but a dream. Only the *Atma* is true and eternal. The *Atma* is *sthiram* (permanent) and the world is *charam* (changing). Human life is the union of *sthiram* and *charam*.

Janthunam narajanma durlabham (human birth is the rarest among all beings). All beings are not fortunate to get human birth. All human beings do not experience Divinity. Some people undertake spiritual practices like idol worship to attain Divinity. Gradually one should turn one's vision inward and experience the oneness of the *Atma*.

Experience the endless bliss of the Atma

It is not all that important how much you love God; what is more important is how much God loves you. God is the embodiment of *Sat Chit Ananda*. *Sat* means that which is eternal. *Chit* is total awareness. When water and sugar are mixed with each other, you get syrup. Likewise, the combination of *Sat* and *Chit* results in *Ananda* (bliss) The *Ananda* that you experience out of worldly pleasures is momentary.

You will attain true and everlasting bliss, only when you turn your vision inward and experience the *Atma*. It has no form, but is full of bliss.

Embodiments of Love! You should experience the endless bliss of the *Atma*.

*At the time of birth, man does not have
Any garland of precious jewels around his neck,*

*But definitely he has a heavy garland—
A garland made up of the consequences of
Past deeds, be they good or bad.*

[Telugu Poe]

Adore the mother as God

The *Vedas* declare: *Mathru Devo bhava, pithru Devo bhava* (revere the mother and father as God). Once Ashok Singhal, General Secretary of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, came to Me with the plea, “Kindly let us know the birthplace of Rama so that we can construct a temple there.”

I replied, “The true birthplace of Rama is the womb of Kausalya.” Mother’s womb is the birthplace of one and all, be it a commoner or the *Avatar* Himself. Therefore, adore the mother as God. Uphold her name and respect her.

Today is 19 November. It is celebrated as Ladies Day to remind you of the importance of the mother. You should conduct yourself according to the wishes of your mother. Do not disobey her. Chaitanya, the great devotee of Lord Krishna, married Lakshmi on the insistence of his mother, though he was not in favour of marriage. But as fate would have it, Lakshmi passed away soon after the marriage.

His mother, Sachidevi, felt very sad for having got him married against his wishes. Chaitanya told her, “This is what happens when one goes against the dictates of one’s conscience.” So, if you feel what you are doing is correct, then try to convince your mother, but never hurt her feelings.

You may be under the mistaken notion that women are weak in body and mind. But, in fact, they are stronger than men.

In the epic *Mahabharata*, there is a story of a queen, Pramilā, who wanted to marry Arjuna. But Arjuna was reluctant to

marry her. Pramila sent her commander-in-chief Malayavathi to capture Arjuna. Malayavathi waged a fierce battle against Arjuna, ultimately captured him, and brought him to the presence of Pramila. She requested him to marry her, but Arjuna refused to marry even if it were to cost his life. Pramila was a great devotee of Lord Krishna, and so was Arjuna. Both of them prayed fervently.

Krishna, being the director of the cosmic drama, had his own master plan. He appeared there, called Pramila and Arjuna to his side, brought their hands together, chanted the *mantras*, and solemnised their marriage.

God can do anything and everything

God can do anything and everything. He can transform earth into sky and sky into earth. But man lacks devotion and faith in God. He has faith in worldly matters, not in spirituality. There is nothing superior to *bhakti* (devotion). In the word *bhakti*, the letter *bha* stands for lustre and luminosity, and *kti* denotes that which attracts. From *bhakti*, you get *shakti* (power) for the body, mind, and spirit. Through this *bhakti* and *shakti*, you get immersed in *rakti* (attachment) toward God and develop *virakti* (detachment) from the world. Then God confers on you *bhukti* (food) and also *mukti* (liberation). Thus, man has to travel from *bhakti* to *mukti*.

As I told you yesterday, human life is a journey from 'I' to 'We'. In order to go to Tirupati, Varanasi, Gaya, and Prayag, you may have to take great pains and travel long distances. But the journey from 'I' to 'We' is very short in the sense that you have to detach yourself from the body and develop attachment towards the Self. For this, mother's grace is very essential.

God comes whenever the need arises

When Abhimanyu was in the womb of his mother Subhadra, Arjuna used to tell her many stories. One day, Arjuna was explaining to her the intricacies and nuances involved in entering *Padmavyuha* (a military formation in the shape of a lotus). Before he could explain to her how to come out of the *Padmavyuha*, Lord Krishna, the supreme director of the cosmic drama, entered the scene. God comes whenever the need arises and plays His role appropriately.

Krishna asked Arjuna, “What a mistake you are committing! It is not Subhadra, but it is the child in her womb who has been listening to you all the while. Where is the necessity for you to teach the child about *Padmavyuha*?” He took Arjuna away with him.

Later on, in the Kurukshetra war, Abhimanyu lost his life in *Padmavyuha*, since he did not know how to come out of it. Why did Krishna do this? It is because Abhimanyu had to attain *Veera Swarga* (heaven of the heroes). In fact, when the Kauravas challenged Abhimanyu to enter *Padmavyuha*, he came to his mother Subhadra and sought her permission and blessings. Subhadra tried her best to dissuade him from going to the battlefield. She said, “My dear son, it is not an ordinary task to enter *Padmavyuha* and come out of it. Moreover, your wife is in the family way, and your uncle Krishna and father Arjuna are not here. So, give up the idea of going to the battlefield.”

But Abhimanyu did not pay heed to her advice. He said “Mother, I am a *kshatriya* (warrior) by birth. There is no greater insult for a *kshatriya* than to shy away from the challenge posed by the enemies. In fact, you should encourage me and enthuse me to fight and annihilate the enemies. It is not

proper on your part to discourage me from going to the war.”

Abhimanyu knew what he was doing was correct, but he did not understand his mother’s love. He lost his life because he went to the battlefield against the wishes of his mother.

Divine Grace and human effort

There is nothing greater than mother’s love. Mother’s words are always sweet. At times she may use harsh words, but they are meant only to correct you, not to hurt you. There may be a wicked son, but there can never be a wicked mother in this world. Ladies Day is celebrated only to make you understand the value of mother’s love and her concern for you. Among the mother, the father, the teacher and God, the mother is given the topmost priority.

Modern youth do not care for the mother. They think they are highly educated and that the mother does not know anything. It is a great mistake to think so. Never look down upon the mother. Even the mother should not compel her children to accede to her wishes. Through love and sincerity she should put the children on the proper path. She should aspire that her children be good, they need not be great.

Rama was good, whereas Ravana was great. Rama put into practice whatever he had studied and thus earned a good name. But Ravana was immersed in ignorance, because he did not practice all that he had studied. As a result, he did not earn a good name. Man needs to have fear of sin and love for God to earn a good name. Since man lacks fear of sin and love for God, humanness is on the decline. This is the cause of restlessness in the world today.

Embodiments of Love! God is *Ganalola* and *Ganapriya* (one who is attracted by singing). Poems and prayers do not attract God as much as songs sung with devotion do. All of

you have listened to the melodious singing of M.S. Subbulakshmi. She has earned the title *Gana Kokila*. I have also seen her play the role of Meera, when she was very young.

Many artistes have earned name and fame in dance. Uday Shankar was such a great dancer that one could hardly see his two feet on the ground while he danced. His wife, daughter-in-law, and other disciples have come here and will be staging a dance programme tomorrow.

These fine arts cannot be mastered by practice alone; Divine grace is also very essential. Negative and positive both are essential for the current to flow. Likewise, human effort and Divine grace should come together before success is achieved.

Never give scope for anger and ego

Students! Young men and women! God responds according to your feelings. So, do not entertain negative thoughts. Only a peacock comes out of peahen's egg, even if it were to be hatched by a hen. A diamond does not lose its value or brilliance even if it falls into dung. Likewise, good people will always earn a good name wherever they are. Ego, hatred, and anger are the worst enemies of man. You may show a little anger to somebody in order to put him on the right path, but never hate anybody. Never give scope for anger and ego.

I am showing you by My example all that I preach. Some people feel that Swami does not talk to them because Swami hates them or is angry with them. It is nothing but their imagination and guilty conscience. I do not hate anyone. In order to put you on the right path, sometimes I may pretend to be angry with you. But in reality, I have no anger or hatred toward anybody.

Some people do *grama seva* (service in the villages) with the expectation that I should fulfil their desires. Is that enough

to please Me? Give up all desires and cleanse your heart. Then I will grant you all that you require without your asking for it. How can you expect positive results without giving up negative thoughts? Fill your heart with positive thoughts. Fill it with love. Then all your thoughts, words, and deeds will be suffused with love.

All are the children of viswa matha

Embodiments of Love! Never forget the love of your mother, and under all circumstances make her happy. I am pleased with you only when you make your mother happy. As Uma Bharati pointed out, make efforts to understand the oneness of all. If you think that you are separate from others, then there will be scope for hatred. Realise that you and I are one. Bodies may be different, but you are bound by the same love principle.

Just as your mother loves you, you should love everybody. All are the children of *Viswa Matha* (universal mother). All are brothers and sisters. You should not have any differences whatsoever. The sun is one and the same for all the worlds. Just as the sun is reflected in a water tank, in a river, in an ocean, likewise the same Divinity is reflected in the hearts of one and all.

Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti (truth is one, but scholars refer to it by different names). It is not correct to say that you like only Rama or Krishna or Siva or Sai Baba. There is only one God, and He is omnipresent. Do not hate other religions. A Hindu should become a better Hindu, a Christian a better Christian, and a Muslim a better Muslim. The one without love can be called neither Muslim nor Hindu nor Christian nor Sikh. In fact, he is verily a demon on this earth. Only those without love give scope to differences based on religion. You

will find the unity of all religions only when you fill your heart with love.

The culture of Bharat (India) has given utmost importance to the mother. One refers to one's country as motherland, not fatherland. Lord Rama declared: "*Janani janma bhoomishcha swargadapi gareeyasi* (mother and the motherland are greater than even heaven)." Country is the mother and the culture is the father. Never forget your country and its culture.

Since ancient times, the culture of Bharat has been propagating the message of peace and love with the prayer, *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy)! You have to uphold this sacred culture.

You may worship God in any name and form you like, but understand the truth that God is One and One only.

19 November 1999
Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Seek God within

There is no teacher greater than the Conscience.
There is no preceptor greater than time.
The world verily is the greatest text.
God is the only true friend.

[Telugu Poem]

Young men and women, future citizens of the world! The future of the world, good or bad, depends on your conduct. The country will be safe, secure, peaceful, and prosperous only when your conduct is good. What the world needs today is not affluence and material comforts but men and women of noble character. The country is bound to disintegrate if the behavior of the young men and women is not on the right lines.

A true human being is one who adheres to *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness) and *thyaga* (sacrifice). Truth is *neethi* (morality), righteousness is *reethi* (procedure), and sacrifice is

khyathi (fame). All these three constitute *manava jathi* (human race). Human race has originated from Truth.

The entire creation has originated from Truth and ultimately merges in Truth.

*There is no place where truth does not exist.
Recognize this pure and unsullied truth.*

[Telugu Poem]

To uphold morality, adhere to truth

It is based on this that the ancient sages and seers said *Sathyam bruyath, priyam bruyath, na bruyath sathyamapriyam* (Speak truth, speak pleasingly, do not speak truth that is unpalatable). *Sathyam bruyath* refers to moral value. *Manava jathi* (human race) cannot survive without *neethi* (morality).

Today the whole world is engulfed in troubles and turmoil on account of injustice, falsehood, and unrighteousness. Only young men and women are capable of restoring the declining human values. Only when man upholds morality can there be equality, fraternity, and freedom in society.

To uphold morality, one should adhere to truth. That is why it is said, *sathyam bruyath*. This is the primary duty of man. The second one, *priyam bruyath* (speak pleasingly) refers to *dharmic* value. It is based on this that the *Bhagavad Gita* says, *Anudvegakaram vakyam sathyam priya hitham cha yath* (speak truth in a pleasing and wholesome manner. Your speech should not excite others impulses and emotions).

The third one, *na bruyath sathyamapriyam* (do not speak truth that is unpalatable) refers to spiritual value. One has to adhere to these principles to progress on the spiritual path.

Embodiments of Love!

The *Himachala* (the Himalayan mountains) forms the

boundary for India on the northern part. What is the inner meaning of *Himachala*? *Hima* means ice, which stands for purity and peace. *Achala* means that which is steady. So, *himachala* signifies purity, peace, and steadiness. The perennial rivers Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswathi symbolise the continuous blood circulation in the human body.

Be proud to be a Bharatiya

The great epics of this land, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, and the *Bhagavata*, bring out the quintessence of human nature. One can be called a *Bharatiya* (Indian) in the true sense of the term only when one puts into practice the ideals that Bharat stands for.

In the word Bharat, *bha* refers to *bhava* (feeling), *ra* refers to *raga* (tune), and *ta* connotes *tala* (rhythm). *Bharatiyas* are those who worship God, harmonising the three: *bhava*, *raga*, and *tala*. *Bha* also stands for effulgence. So, *Bharatiyas* are those who are in pursuit of divine effulgence.

Take pride in the fact that you are a *Bharatiya*. There is no greater qualification than this. Bharat is the country that propagates spiritual knowledge to the rest of the world and wishes the welfare of the entire world — *Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu* (may the whole world be happy)!

You are all one, irrespective of the countries you belong to. Bulbs may vary, but the current is the same. Likewise, countries, bodies, and feelings may vary, but the principle of *Atma* is one and the same in all. Therefore, give up all differences based on caste, religion, and nationality and spread the message of unity. Nations are many, but earth is one. Jewels are many, but gold is one. Stars are many, but sky is one. Cows are many, but milk is one. Bodies are many, but breath is one. You can experience bliss only when you render service keeping in

mind the unity of all beings.

You are born in love, brought up in love, and merge in love. The five elements (*pancha bhutas*) are the embodiment of selflessness. The sun sustains the creation by giving light and life. Trees accept poisonous carbon dioxide and give back life-supporting oxygen. Mother earth teaches a lesson in patience and sacrifice. All these elements help mankind without any expectation of reward. There is no greater example of selfless love than nature. It is a shame that man, having been born and brought up in nature, does not imbibe the ideals demonstrated by nature and leads a life of selfishness and self-interest. Youth should resolve to eliminate selfishness and self-interest with no traces whatsoever.

One who is not a sevaka cannot become a nayaka

Jesus declared, “All are one my dear son, be alike to everyone.” All are born of the same mother earth, breathe in the same air and drink the same water. In such a case, why should there be differences at all? Eschew all differences and live in unity. Recognize the unity in diversity and act accordingly.

You may go to villages, serve the needy and undertake various rural development programs. By doing so, you are not doing any great service. In fact, all this is your duty. You are born to serve. So, spend your life in serving others. Do not crave power and position.

One who is not a *sevaka* (humble worker) cannot become a *nayaka* (leader). In fact, a true *sevaka* alone is a true *nayaka*. People are under the mistaken notion that *japa*, *tapa* and *dhyana* (soft repetition of the name, penance, meditation) constitute spiritual practice. They do meditation without knowing what it is! They feel that they are meditating on God not knowing who God really is! They chant Rama, Krishna, Jesus,

Allah, and Zoroaster as Gods and meditate on them not realizing the fact that all are embodiments of God. They mistake concentration for meditation. Concentration is associated with the senses, whereas meditation is beyond senses.

Meditation should not be confined to a particular time and place. It is a way of life. Whatever is done with the spirit of love is meditation. Sitting in meditation for hours together without expressing love for fellow beings is no meditation at all. True spiritual practice lies in joining hands with rest of the community and working for the progress of society as a whole.

Heart bereft of love is like a barren land

Love is God, live in love. Heart bereft of love is like a barren land. All activities should be suffused with love. Just as it is impossible for a newborn babe to attend degree classes, so also it is not possible to attain the supreme state of love instantly. One has to gradually progress by undertaking spiritual practices. It is imperative to undertake these practices —*pravritti*— until one turns one's vision inward —*nivritti*. Perform all activities with a spiritual outlook.

There is no greater spiritual practice than adhering to the principles of truth and love. Truth and love are synonyms for God. Without these two, there is no point in undertaking spiritual practices.

Young men and women! Consider love and sacrifice as your very life breath. Control your senses. Sense control is essential for the success of any spiritual practice. Humanity can rise to Divinity through sense control.

Anger is the quality of a dog. Monkey is known for its wavering nature. When you are angry, remind yourself, “I am not a dog, I am a man.” Similarly, when your mind wavers, tell yourself repeatedly, “I am not a monkey, I am a man.”

Sathya, dharma, santhi, prema, and ahimsa are the true human values. These values are the five life principles of man — *prana, apana, vyana, udana, and samana*. Losing any one of these values amounts to losing life itself. Each value cannot exist without the other. Today man has become a living corpse since he has lost all these values. Develop faith in these values, uphold them, and experience the bliss derived therefrom.

Where there is faith, there is love,
 Where there is love, there is peace,
 Where there is peace, there is truth,
 Where there is truth, there is God,
 Where there is God, there is bliss.

Today, every man aspires to be blissful. For that, faith is essential. Bliss cannot be attained easily. Bliss is *Brahman*, which is steady, pure, eternal, and beyond dualities. Man cannot attain this supreme bliss without giving up the evil qualities. Heart is the altar of God. Do not pollute it with evil thoughts and feelings.

Do not lead a life of selfishness

Self effort is very essential to achieve success in any human endeavor. Even small activities like picking up a flower or plucking a fruit from a tree requires the cooperation and effort of various limbs of the body — eyes, hands, legs, etc. *Sareera madhyam khalu dharma sadhanam*, body is gifted to undertake righteous actions and set an ideal to society, not for sleeping, eating, drinking, and making merry. God has gifted man with all the powers, but man is unable to realize his innate potential.

Whenever you take up any activity, keep in mind the welfare of others too. Do not lead a life of selfishness. Think in terms of collective benefit, not individual benefit alone. Often,

spiritual practices like *japa* and *dhyana* are done with a selfish motive. Instead, it is better to chant the Lord's name and serve society. This will confer benefit on the individual and society at large. This constitutes real *sadhana*. Whomsoever you serve, serve with a feeling that you are serving God.

The sight of a dead body, a sick person, an old decrepit person, was enough for Buddha to get transformed and attain *Nirvana* (liberation) because his heart was filled with compassion. Though you come across innumerable dead bodies, old persons, and sick individuals, it is a pity there is no transformation in you whatsoever. Unfortunately, your heart has become as hard as a stone ± indifferent to the sufferings of others. To attain *Nirvana*, identify yourself with others and make efforts to alleviate their suffering.

Bend the body, mend the senses, end the mind

As the Vice Chancellor mentioned in his speech: "Bend the body, mend the senses, end the mind." Mind will be non-existent when the senses are controlled. Mind can be annihilated when noble thoughts are entertained. Today the world is in disarray because the thoughts of man are going astray.

*O man, enquire, what great happiness
You have acquired by forgetting God and
Spending all your education and energy
Limitlessly in eking out a livelihood
Right from dawn to dusk.*

[Telugu Poem]

Whatever you do is God's work. For example, the process of inhaling and exhaling is in itself a spiritual practice. The process of inhaling is associated with the sound *So* (that); and exhaling, with the sound *Ham* (I). *Soham* means 'I am that'

(God). *So* symbolizes Divinity, and *aham* signifies *ahamkara* (ego). So, *Soham* drives home the lesson that you should take in only *phala*, that which is good, and eject *mala*, that which is filthy.

This process of inhaling and exhaling repeats itself 21,600 times a day. It means your inner voice is reminding you 21,600 times a day that you are God. Unfortunately, you are not receptive to this message. It is to understand this reality God has gifted you with this body. Do not limit God to your shrine. God is your life breath.

Establish direct contact with God

Just as hands, eyes, ears, nose, etc. are limbs of the body, likewise, human beings are limbs of society. Society is a limb of nature, and nature is a limb of God. Therefore, you can infer that there is an intimate relationship between individual and God.

When inanimate objects like telephones are connected, should there not be a connection between human being and God? The former relationship is artificial in nature, whereas the latter is heart to heart.

There are two types of telephone calls: one, which can be answered by anybody (number call), and the other, which needs to be answered by a specific person (Particular person - PP call) for whom the call is intended. Similarly, your contacts should be directly with God, like the personal call, and not with all and sundry like the number call. If you have the sincere feeling that you want God, then God Himself will come and talk to you. You cannot expect God to respond when you make a "number call". Number call corresponds to negative thoughts. So, give up negative thoughts and develop positive feelings.

Body, mind, senses, and intellect are all negative in nature. Only the conscience is positive. Just as the mike is useless without the current, so also are the body, mind, senses, and intellect without the conscience.

The conscience that exists in everyone is one and the same, just as the current that flows through different bulbs is the same. All are one, be alike to everyone. So, do not hate, harm, or criticize anybody. He is a noble one who conducts himself without hurting others and himself not being troubled in the process. True spiritual *sadhana* (spiritual exercise) lies in considering every work as God's work, not in doing *japa* or *dhyana*.

You may hoodwink anyone, but not God

God is all-pervasive. It is based on this that the *Veda* declares, *Sarvatah Pani Padam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Srutimalloke Sarvamavriya Thishtathi* (with His hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth, and ears pervading everything, God permeates the entire universe). You may hoodwink anyone, but not God. He is always watching you. He is the eternal witness. He is present in you, just as the power of vision resides in your eye. Not even a blade of grass can move without His Will.

It is foolishness to get carried away by the sense of doership. So, do not feel proud of your achievements. Develop the sacred feeling that God is the doer and the enjoyer too.

Consider everything as God's Will. Whatever happens to you, be it profit or loss, pain or pleasure, have the resolute faith that it is good for you. When a person suffering from malaria consults a doctor, he will be given the bitter quinine medicine. Unless he takes the bitter medicine, he cannot be cured of the fever. Likewise, have the firm conviction that difficulties and

suffering are the ways and means by which God purifies you. There is a reason behind whatever God does. Without understanding the principle of cause and effect, people blame God for their suffering. Understand the truth that you yourself are responsible for the pain or pleasure that befalls you.

Do not feel sad if someone were to criticize you, because criticizing others amounts to criticizing oneself, since the same *Atma* exists in all. Identify yourself with the *Atma*, not the body, which is like a water bubble. If someone were to beat you, do not retaliate. The same principle of *Atma* exists in both. God is the one who beats and also the one who gets beaten. The entire creation is a mono-action play of God. So, do not hate anybody. Love all.

All that I say is for your own good and to make you aware of Divinity. All My teachings and actions carry a profound inner meaning. Our college students have white dress as their uniform. What is its inner significance? White color symbolizes purity. Similarly, when you see someone in ochre robes, it reminds you of renunciation. This is to convey the message that you should be pure and free from all attachments. Only then you can attain the Divine.

Desires are the luggage in the journey of life

As youngsters, you have too many desires, which cause physical as well as mental strain. Desires are the luggage in the journey of life. "Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure." Your destination is the abode of supreme peace, i.e. liberation. Why do you trouble yourself with 'heavy luggage,' when you are going to the abode of supreme peace?

Be satisfied with the minimum requirement of food, clothing and shelter. *Bhikshanam deharakshartham vasathram sheetha nivaranam* (food is meant to sustain your body and

clothing to protect you from cold). The modern youth are fascinated by fashion dresses and cloth themselves gaudily. Youngsters, especially women, should not indulge in dressing fads. The dress you wear should be good and sober. Do not imitate the cinema culture. Imitation is animal nature and creation is Divine.

True yoga lies in unifying your love with the Divine

Control of desires leads to sense control, which in turn leads to Divinity. Sage Patanjali said, “*Yogaha chitta vritti ni-rodaha*,” controlling the vagaries of the mind is *yoga* and allowing the senses to have their own way is *roga* (disease). Today’s man has become a *rogi* (diseased one) because of lack of sense control. One should become a *yogi*, not a *rogi*.

Yoga is attained not by *bhoga* (worldly pleasures), but by *thyaga* (sacrifice). Once you attain *yoga*, you will never be afflicted with *roga*. *Yoga* does not mean leading the life of a recluse in a forest. Some people mistake physical exercises like sitting cross-legged, standing on one leg etc., for *yoga*. True *yoga* lies in unifying your love with the Divine.

God does not want anything from you. He never insists on your doing meditation or *yoga*. He only wants you to fill your hearts with principles of love and sacrifice. If you obey His commands with sincerity and devotion, He will take care of all your needs without your asking. The lives of Sabari and the bird Jatayu bear ample testimony to this truth.

O mind, do not ask for anything.

Ask, and it shall be delayed.

Do not ask, and it shall be granted soon.

Did He not shower His grace on Sabari, who never asked?

Did He not perform the last rites of Jatayu and grant him liberation, without his asking?

So you do not need to ask God for anything. If you have purity of heart, He will Himself take care of you, just like a mother who attends to the needs of the child without its asking. Be like a child, and the Divine Mother will take care of you. That is total surrender. Leave everything to the Will of the Mother. Do not ask for petty things lest you should lose Her proximity. The one who asks for food will be directed to the kitchen, but the mother will feed the child herself who cannot ask. Only those with ego and those immersed in worldly life ask. But the one, who surrenders himself to the Will of the Divine Mother like a child, will lead a peaceful life.

Whatever you do, do it as an offering to God

You would have observed a dancer making rapid movements with her hands and legs while dancing but attention is always focused on the rhythm. Likewise, your mind should always be fixed on God while discharging your duties.

You might have heard the story of Rani Jhansi Lakshmibhai. She had a small child. When she was left with no other choice but to go to the battlefield, she tied the child to her back, took a sword, and waged a fierce battle with her enemies, riding on horseback. But all the while, what was uppermost in her mind was the well being of her child. Similarly, you must necessarily discharge your worldly duties, but at the same time your mind should always be focused on God. This is the meaning of the maxim, “Hands in the society, head in the forest.” You do not need to undertake any specific spiritual *sadhana*. Whatever you do, do it as an offering to God.

Do not waste food, money, time, and energy

In order to have sacred thoughts, give up vices like consumption of non-vegetarian food, smoking, and drinking intoxicants. Do not waste food, money, time, and energy. Eat as much as you can, but do not waste, because millions are suffering for want of food.

You all know what a miserable condition that the people of Orissa are in after a severe cyclone devastated the state! In some places, people are scrambling even for a morsel of food. You may not know the value of food, but they know it very well. So do not waste food. Food is God.

Similarly, do not waste money. Some students waste a lot of money eating in hotels, in playing cards and gambling. Misuse of money is evil. Do your work yourself. Do not depend on others. Whenever you find time, wash your clothes yourself. Why do you give your clothes to a washer man when you can wash them yourself? You have no right to waste your father's money.

Time is God. That is why God is extolled as *Kalaya Namaha*, *Kala Kalaya Namaha*, *Kala Darpa Damanaya Namaha*, *Kalatheethaya Namaha*, etc. Time wasted is life wasted. Do not waste time in the pursuit of worldly pleasures. Instead taste Divinity by chanting His name.

Do not waste energy! Energy is God. Today, students are wasting a lot of energy through unsacred vision, bad thoughts, bad hearing, and excessive talk. Our body can be compared to a radio. When the radio is turned on continuously, the cells get discharged quickly. Likewise, if you indulge in excessive talk, you will be losing a lot of energy. That is why the ancient sages and seers used to observe silence. So, conserve energy by observing silence at least one day in a week. I often tell the

students, talk less and work more. Only then the latent energy develops. This was the sole aim of sages and seers in undertaking various spiritual practices. Once the latent energy develops, your memory power as well as the power of concentration will increase.

Some students are not able to perform well in examinations because they are not able to concentrate even for a moment. They are constantly engaged in listening to radio news, cricket commentary, etc. with the textbook in their hand! With such distractions, how can they concentrate and retain their memory?

In olden days education was imparted to students in the *gurukulas*. Students had to rely entirely on their memory power and concentration to acquire knowledge, since there were no papers, pens, pencils, etc. to jot down what the teachers would teach. Their learning consisted of merely listening to the teachers, yet they could acquire high education. Though the modern students have access to papers, pens, etc., they fail to excel in studies because they lack concentration and memory power.

You are not a computer; you are a composer

Young men and women! You become divine once you safeguard your physical, mental, and spiritual powers. Let your body be engaged in good actions, mind entertain noble thoughts, and intellect merge in the Divine. Body, mind, and intellect are merely instruments. Understand the principle that makes instruments function.

The modern system of education has become computer-oriented. There is craze for computers everywhere. You are not a computer. You are a composer. After all, what does the computer do? It does whatever you program it to do. It cannot function on its own accord. God-gifted brain is the real com-

puter. Make proper use of it. Unfortunately, modern man depends excessively on the machine to the exclusion of the God-gifted brain. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that people depend on calculators even for simple arithmetic calculations.

You should be self-reliant. Receive help from God only, none else. His work is only to help others. Emulate Him. Help ever, hurt never. Sage Vyasa said, *Paropakarah punyaya papaya parapeedanam* (helping others is merit, harming others is sin). This is the essence of all sacred texts.

Do not give scope for misunderstandings and quarrels amongst yourselves. Unity is the greatest strength. Therefore, work in unison. “Where there is unity, there is purity. Where there is purity, there is Divinity.”

If you have purity of heart, God will certainly fulfil your wishes. For example, if you are in need of a pen, pray to God earnestly. Pen will definitely appear in your pocket. There is nothing that you cannot accomplish with purity of heart. It is impossible to understand God. When you are unable to know your true Self, how can you know God? The other day, Uma Bharati mentioned that people come here to know God. It is a misconception. You do not need to come here to know God. First try to know yourself. None can ever comprehend Me.

Ashram education inculcates all noble values in man

Character is of paramount importance for the spiritual growth of an individual. Sage Kanva established a *gurukula* in order to impart teachings to the inmates of the *ashram*. Sakuntala was one such inmate, who grew up under the loving care of sage Kanva. One day, king Dushyantha happened to visit Kanva’s *ashram*. There he met Sakuntala and married her. Bharata was born to the couple. Having been born and brought

up in a palace, King Dushyantha was inclined toward worldly pleasures. On the other hand, his son Bharata, who was born and brought up in Kanva *Ashram*, was a repository of moral, spiritual, and ethical values. *Ashram* education inculcates all noble values in man.

Bharata became a paragon of all virtues because he received ideal education right from his childhood. On the other hand, Dushyantha had worldly and material wealth. He was a mighty emperor. What was the use of all that he possessed when he lacked character? This clearly demonstrates the difference between urban education and *ashram* education. Urban education is associated with *shrama* (hardship), whereas *ashram* education is without any *shrama* (*a-shrama*).

Your character depends on environment around you

There is nothing wrong in enrolling as students of colleges in towns, provided one keeps in mind the purpose of education. One should not develop unnecessary contacts and get distracted from the designated path. Your character depends on the environment around you. In olden times, people felt:

*If wealth is lost, nothing is lost,
If health is lost, something is lost,
If character is lost, everything is lost*

On the contrary, modern youth feels that if wealth is lost, everything is lost and if *character* is lost, nothing is lost.

I think I am troubling you by talking too much. I can speak to you for any length of time, but I never indulge in unnecessary talk. Remember that you are the future torchbearers of Sri Sathya Sai Organizations. The elders of the organization today may be aged and have their own constraints. Youth have to take the initiative to lead the organization from the front. Each

state organization should have its own youth leader to take up major responsibilities. Ensure that you keep yourself distant from politics. Work for the welfare and progress of society. That is the greatest *sadhana*.

There is only one Guru, and He is God

Let your behavior be exemplary wherever you are. As long as you are in Prasanthi Nilayam, you lead a disciplined life. Continue to do the same even after you leave the place. Be always immersed in the Divine, not in deep wine. Only those who are immersed in the Divine are dear to Me and are My dear friends. If you want to be dear friends of Swami, conduct yourself in the divine manner. In such a case, you do not need to come here; I will come to you wherever you are. I will come there, wherever you stay. I am with you, in you, around you and behind you. I am not separate from you. I and you are one.

Vahe Guru means there is only one *guru* and He is God. He is the goal. Do not go hither and thither from one *guru* to another. Under all circumstances, hold on to God steadfastly. *Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu Guru Devo Maheswarah ...* God is your true *Guru*. You can call Him by any name.

In the word *Guru*, *gu* stands for *Gunatheetha* (attributeless) and *ru* for *Ruparahita* (formless). So *Guru* is formless and beyond attributes. So, God is your true *Guru*.

Having come here spending lot of money and energy, put into practice whatever you have learnt here. Once you return to your places, share the experiences and joy with your fellow youth. Only then will the purpose of attending the conference be served. Serve your fellow beings and sanctify your lives.

*Neither by penance nor by pilgrimages
Nor by going through sacred texts*

*Can one cross the ocean of Samsara.
Only through service can one redeem oneself.*
[Sanskrit sloka]

Serve, without any expectation of reward. That is *nishkama yoga*. No benefit accrues to you if you expect reward for the service rendered in various villages. Do not boast that you have served in many villages. Work silently; definitely, God will shower His grace on you. I am very happy that you bore many inconveniences here with love and patience after having traveled long distances. You might not have had the food of your choice here. Never mind, what is important is good head, which will lead to God. You should eat to live, not live to eat.

Embodiments of love! Hoping that you will lead a happy and ideal life, I bless you all and bring My Discourse to a close.

21 November 1999
Prasanthi Nilayam

There may be gold, silver, copper, iron filings, diamonds, rubies, silks, and other things of value spread out on a flat surface. But a magnet pays no attention to all the riches; it selects only the iron filings. It is the same with devotees. God does not select on the basis of wealth. He looks to the purity of the heart.

—Baba

True education liberates

*One may master all forms of knowledge,
One may vanquish one's adversaries in debate,
One may fight with valor and courage in the battlefield,
One may be an emperor reigning over vast kingdoms,
One may offer cows and gold as acts of charity,
One may count the countless stars in the sky,
One may tell the names of innumerable living creatures
on the earth,
One may be an expert in eight forms of yoga,
One may reach even the moon;
But can anyone control the body, mind, and senses?
Turn the vision inward
And achieve the supreme state of equanimity of the mind.*
[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love — students, boys, and girls! You can call yourself a student only when you know the significance of

education. Education does not mean mere acquisition of bookish knowledge. Many are experts in bookish knowledge. Many have become educational wizards and scholars. What is the service these intellectuals are doing to the world? Having been born and brought up in society, having acquired their knowledge from society, what have they done for society? What is the use of their scholarship and education if they do not show their gratitude to society?

Education is for serving society

Sri Aurobindo once told the students of Calcutta University, "Students! Why do you acquire this knowledge? Is your learning only for your selfish ends? You have acquired all these skills expense of society. If you do not repay your debt to your community by using your talent for society, it is better you burn your books."

Today, science has achieved great advancement. Many scientific and technological disciplines are taught to students. Is this knowledge imparted by society for the benefit of society or for the name and fame of the students? Having become great intellectuals, is there any genuine transformation in them?

Churchill once said, "Man has conquered all, but he has not conquered himself." Scientific education of today teaches one everything about the external world, leaving out the knowledge of the Self. The entire effort of man is now concentrated on knowing everything about the external world. All this is mere material and physical knowledge. The learned man today knows all about the external world but nothing about his own reality.

True relationship is that which you establish with your inner self. Everyone asks the question, "Who are you?" But nobody seems to be interested in putting the question to himself,

“Who am I?” The answer to the first question is related to the physical aspect of your personality, while the second relates to the spiritual aspect

Human excellence will blossom only when the relationship and balance between the physical and the spiritual aspects is intimately established. Physical knowledge is negative, while spiritual knowledge is positive. Humanness blossoms when the positive is blended with the negative. The purpose of education is to produce this happy blend of the physical and spiritual knowledge and help human excellence to blossom. Thus, the aim of education is total development of man.

Man should be transformed to become compassionate. Of what use is education that does not melt the heart of the student to the plight of others? Modern secular education is making man hard-hearted. Just as you try hard to sharpen your intellect, you should broaden your heart also. If this fact is not realized, of what use is your intelligence and learning? With proper education, both the mind and heart should be transformed.

Ancient education system

In this sacred land of Bharat, great sages have been making many changes and modifications in the education system since ancient times. Before the coming of foreigners, there were very few educational institutions in this country. Each of them specialized in one branch of knowledge or the other and helped the students to achieve excellence in that branch.

Kasi (Benaras) University specialized in the study of grammar. *Alankara Sastra* (rhetoric) was the specialty in Kashmir University. Ujjaini University specialized in mathematics. Similarly, there was a small town known as Navadvipa

where *nyaya* (logic) was the specialty. Amaravati, the capital of the kingdom of Bharata (brother of Rama), specialized, apart from other sciences, in *ayurveda* (medicine). *Ayurveda* was a specialty in the Takshashila (Taxila) University also. One of the most famous universities of ancient India was Nalanda, which specialized in grammar, *nyaya*, medicine, and *yoga sastra*. Valabhi, Mithila, and Vikramasila were other well-known universities of ancient India.

In all these universities, apart from the specific disciplines, general ethics and proper moral conduct in life were essential part of the curriculum.

Learning professional skills is essential

Sathya (truth) and *dharma* (righteousness) were the guiding principles for all students. Besides, vocational training for various trades like carpentry, pottery, blacksmithy, etc. was given so that the pupils may be trained for life and may become capable of earning their livelihood in a righteous way.

What is the point in learning subjects that are not useful in daily life? Learning professional skills is therefore essential. Fine arts like music, dance, and drama were also taught in these universities. Amaravati University included in its curriculum all these subjects and their branches. Careful investigation indicates that there were only nine or ten such universities in those days.

Today, there are hundreds of universities. But what is the knowledge that is being imparted in all these institutions? What service do they render to society? What evidence is there that they serve the interests of society? With the growth of modern scientific and technological studies, the true aim of education, i.e. knowledge of the Self, has declined.

Vidya is termed Education. What is the root meaning of

Education? The word is derived from the Latin root *educare*. What does it mean? It means to bring out what is inside. What has to be brought out?

Two types of knowledge

Every form of knowledge and capacity is latent in man. He is endowed with all types of potentialities — physical, mental, spiritual, and ethical. The true aim of education is to make explicit the innate powers of man. These are of two types. One relates to the knowledge of external things, and the organ that manifests this power is the head (brain). The organ that enables one to bring out the inner knowledge is the heart. The former relates to physical existence while the latter to higher learning or living in its true sense. Life will become ideal only when both these types of knowledge are made to manifest in harmony.

The knowledge emanating from the head, viz. reading, writing, etc., helps you to earn a living. All this is mere bookish knowledge. From *pusthaka* (books), it enters the *masthaka* (head). It is only superficial knowledge, that which has gone into books from someone's head and back into another's head from the books (from *masthaka* to *pusthaka* and *pusthaka* to *masthaka*).

Apart from this bookish knowledge, one must have general knowledge. Besides, one must attain knowledge of discrimination, which helps one to discriminate between good and bad and right and wrong. But above all, one should attain practical knowledge, which comes only after getting the knowledge of discrimination.

Due to his obsession with external knowledge, man today is immersed in self-interest and forgets his responsibilities to

society. When you engage yourselves in the welfare of society, your welfare is automatically ensured.

There are hundreds of thousand wealthy and learned persons in the world. But they are all engaged in selfish activities. Do you find anyone who has put the interests of society above self-interest? In fact, they confer prestigious awards and honors on those persons who are engaged in selfish pursuits and seek their own advancement. It is apparent that they do not know the real meaning of education.

Persons with numerous degrees are thought to be highly educated. Such proliferation of degrees is mere quantitative attainment. But what we need is quality. One teaspoonful of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk.

In ancient times, each student was himself a scholar

That is why in olden days, each university specialized in one area of knowledge and imparted the knowledge of the highest quality to its students. The university in Kasi (Benaras) specialized in grammar in all its manifold aspects so that the acquired knowledge could become useful and practical in day-to-day life. The *Amarakosa* — probably first of existing lexicons in Sanskrit— was a subject of study and even through this study of grammar the teachers of those days were preparing their students for *Amaratva* (immortality). In these universities, each student was himself a great scholar.

Who were the teachers? Often, the resident preceptor was himself the faculty and indeed the Vice Chancellor. The whole process of education was carried out independently, without any interference or control by any government or other agency. Saraswathi, the goddess of learning, was honored and given complete freedom. The students received her boundless grace

to attain high standards of excellence.

Generally, the teachers did not take any salaries for teaching, nor did the students pay any fees. There was no fixed timetable for the teaching; the preceptor taught as and when he was so inclined, as the spirit moved him. He might wake up a student at night and impart knowledge. Irrespective of his own convenience, he would clarify the doubts of his students.

And where were all these instructions carried on? The classes were held in natural environment on the banks of holy rivers, under shady trees, or in temple verandahs in a pure and sacred atmosphere.

Wavering mind is the cause for short memory

Today's education requires huge edifices. An enormous number and variety of equipments and implements are necessary, and huge effort, physical and monetary, is required for these. There were no such requirements of equipments or grand buildings those days. Even in the famous universities like Ujjaini and Takshashila, there were no large buildings or edifices like those of today.

There is no comparison between the teachers and students of those days and those of present times. Today, there are textbooks galore and numerous 'notes' thereon, but there are few that study. In the days of yore, there was no paper or ink. Teaching was carried out by oral communication from the teacher. The students were so receptive that they absorbed all instructions and retained them in their memory. Words emanating from the heart of the preceptor were imprinted on the hearts of the students.

Students today cannot remember what they have studied just an hour earlier. Why are the students of today so short of

memory? The students today have a wavering mind, which is the cause of their short memory and poor retentive power.

Education in those days included the techniques of controlling the mind. Only when the mind is under control is it possible to absorb and retain the subject of study. That is why it is said, *Manah eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayo* (the mind is responsible for both the bondage and liberation of man).

Education should develop sacred qualities

This eternal truth has been forgotten today. The practice of compassion and love is absent in daily life. Without these eternal values, of what use is your education? It is therefore necessary to include these ancient values in our modern education system.

There is no harm in acquiring modern education and skills, but the blossoming of your heart is the fundamental education. A noble heart and a broad mind are your basic requirements; do not stray into narrow-mindedness. You should expand your love. If you narrow it down to yourself, then it will become contraction love. Instead you should have expansion love. This is the principle taught by our ancient culture. Forgetting this valuable ancient tradition of Bharat, you are engaged in acquiring physical and material education.

What are going to achieve? You have to manifest all those ancient values in your life. These values are not something that can be acquired from outside; they are all in you. Your effort should be to make them manifest.

Modern scientists have dug deep into the earth and made explicit several potent capacities that are resident inside the earth. By such indiscriminate acts, they are disturbing the balance of the earth and exposing the world to great danger. This

imbalance has grown to such an extent that it can threaten the very existence of the world.

Today we almost worship science and technology. What is this science and technology that you are so proud about? All this knowledge is already within you. Proper enquiry and discrimination will reveal all these truths to you.

Any student of elementary chemistry will say that water is formed by combining two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen. You even know how to synthesize them. But are you making enough effort to see that water is evenly distributed to all the members of the society?

The welfare of society should be constantly in your view. If all your knowledge and skill is employed for purely selfish purposes, what is the use?

Ignorance is very close to knowledge

In Mumbai, some people are spending crores of rupees to convert sea water into potable water. Crores are being wasted in such futile efforts. By such methods, you may get a glass of drinking water at a cost of about five thousand rupees. This country is served by sacred rivers like the Ganga and the Yamuna. What is needed is to pump up and distribute this water to the people who require it. This will require only a fraction of the cost of converting seawater into potable water. This kind of effort at technology is like buying peanuts for a quarter of a rupee and paying half a rupee to carry it to your house. Such learning is not knowledge. It is sheer ignorance.

Ignorance is very close to knowledge, just as darkness is under a source of light. You imagine that technical knowledge has made rapid strides. You also believe that science has made great progress. But the fact is that side by side with the growth

of physical knowledge, ignorance has also grown enormously. You are totally unmindful of this ignorance, and are continually spending four times the money and effort for fulfilling each one of your needs. This is the reason for Bharat's visible poverty.

Along with intellectual acumen, you must have the right virtues. Good behavior, good intellect, commitment to truth, devotion, discipline, sense of duty — these are the six aims of education. Who is teaching all these today?

We find that students are heroes in bookish knowledge and zeroes in practice. This is not true education. You have to become heroes in practice as well. You are writing a large number of good books and giving discourses to spread the message of love and service. It is not enough if these are propagated; you should put into practice what you learn. Only then will you be blissful.

Education must lead to experiencing bliss

Embodiments of Love — Students, boys and girls!

Modern education does not fulfil the aim of life. You gather graduate and postgraduate degrees, but these are mere burdens on your minds. What comfort do you derive from these degrees? Nothing whatsoever! Penniless, illiterate persons go to sleep without a care in the world. But educated persons with many degrees to their credit, acquired at great cost, wander about hunting for a job, almost facing starvation.

Education is not solely for the purpose of earning a living. It must lead you to experience bliss. Of what use are the job and the wealth if there is no happiness? Man is in constant search for wealth. Just as the earth revolves round the sun, man is going round money. Even a beggar can get money. Is that sort of income worth acquiring?

Virtue is the wealth that you should go after. In the absence of virtue, wealth merely makes you bloat with pride and ostentation, destroys your humanness, and eclipses your human values. Studying to get a degree, getting a job, running a family — all these are worldly activities, emanating from the head.

What should a learned person bring out? He should manifest the qualities of compassion, love, forbearance, peace, kindness, etc., which come from the heart. But, today, there is no compassion, there is only fashion. It is very important to have compassion. You should respect and love all your fellowmen and serve your parents. Parents undergo many privations and difficulties to give you the facilities for acquiring good education.

Respect your parents

You know how difficult it is to get good education these days. It is only in our university that you have the privilege of free education. Anywhere outside, it costs ten to twenty thousand rupees to put a child in the First Standard. For graduate courses, you know what the monthly expense is. Who bears this cost? Is it not your parents? Out of love for you, with your welfare, progress, and future prosperity in mind, they undergo many difficulties, wearing themselves out day after day so that you may achieve academic success. You are just not mindful of all this.

Today, you are a student. Tomorrow, you may be a parent. Unless you respect your parents today, your children will not respect you tomorrow. If you respect your friends and fellow students, they will also respect you.

*What will happen to you
when you become a decrepit old man,
when your body becomes weak,
legs stagger and vision fails, and
You are no better than a leather puppet and
are an object of ridicule for the world?*

[Telugu Poem]

It is imperative that you imbibe divine qualities. You should grow up as an intelligent, sensible, and compassionate person with human qualities. Otherwise, you cannot achieve the purpose of human life. Instead, if you join evil company and take to all sorts of vices, you will dissipate all your acquired good education in worthless ways. Seek good company. *Tyaja durjana samsargam, bhaja sadhu samagamam, kuru punyam ahoratram* (abandon bad company, seek the company of good people, perform good actions day and night). This is the proper way. By evil association you also become evil. That is why it is said, "Tell me your company and I shall tell you what you are."

Make friends after proper enquiry. You must love all. Do not hate anybody. But you must keep in your heart good people only. Similarly, mere bookish learning is fruitless unless it is put to practical use.

Craftsmen like carpenters, potters, and blacksmiths were able to lead successful life in olden days. Today there is no connection between institutional education and practical vocation. Take the simple matter of washing clothes. Why can't you wash your own clothes? Such savings can be put to more sacred purposes like helping a needy person. Money should not be wasted.

Tread the path of purity, humility, divinity and set an ex-

ample to the world. When people extol you as a student of Sathya Sai Institutions by your exemplary conduct, how much good reputation is earned not only by you but also by your Alma Mater! Be sure to uphold your own dignity and respect. Only then can your parent institution have a good reputation. Otherwise, it will become a case of empty pocket, bare face, and shaven head! (A Telugu saying signifying total ruin.)

Keep your parents and family happy

Never mind whether your stomach is full or empty, but keep your parents and family happy. Speak gently and properly with them. That is why I say, “You cannot always oblige, but you can always speak obligingly.”

Nowadays, it is difficult to make out whether a student is talking to his own parents or strangers, because his manner of talking to parents is so reprehensible. If the father is not highly educated and approaches his son with an enquiry, “My boy, what are you doing?” mostly he is shrugged off with “Go away, don’t bother me.” Instead of this, if you speak sweetly with humility, “Father, I am trying for a job,” how pleased he will be! If you can’t please your own parents, how on earth will you please society?

What was the nature of convocation in olden days? After completing their studies, the pupils made appropriate offerings to the preceptor and prayed for his parting advice. Then, the preceptor used to advise them, “My children, now you are ready to go back to your families. Support your parents, get married and lead a righteous life.”

What is the state of affairs today? When children get back home from the educational institutions, they do not treat their parents properly. But the parents still take care of their children, putting up with all their misbehavior. Modern students do

not have even an iota of our culture. What a sacred tradition it is! *Loka samasta sukhino bhavantu* (May the entire world enjoy bliss) is the prayer that our culture enjoins us to utter each day.

Understand the significance of ancient culture

There was an old man who followed his rituals strictly and performed his prayers (*Sandhya Vandanam*) in the prescribed manner early in the morning and at sunset. He had a grandson who used to sit in the verandah doing his day's homework, dipping his pen in the inkbottle every time he wrote a few lines. As he was busy with his study, his grandfather came out and sat on a little stool and started chanting the *mantras*, "*Ke-savaya Namah, Madhavaya Namah, Govindaya Namah,*" etc. Taking water from a little vessel, he sipped half a spoonful at a time with each *mantra* as per the ritual.

The modern lad stopped his study and started watching his grandfather. He started thinking, what a foolish thing his grandfather was doing! If he wanted to drink water why did he not drink it all in one gulp straight from the vessel? He stopped his work and asked his grandfather, "Grandfather, why are you drinking water sip by sip? Why don't you drink it in one gulp from the vessel if you are thirsty?"

The old man was an intelligent person and knew the modern mind. He said, "My boy, you do your work in your way, I shall do mine in my way."

But modern lads have the habit of arguing with elders. So, the boy questioned his grandfather again.

When pestered further by his grandson, the old man shot back, "You simpleton, you dip your pen in the ink bottle every time you write a few words; why don't you just pour the bottle of ink over the paper and be done with it?"

Then the boy realized his mistake of arguing with his grandfather.

The grandfather continued, “Dear boy, you have to dip the pen in ink to write every word. Only then will it be neat. When I chant a *mantra* and take water, it reaches the particular deity whose name is chanted. When you write a letter and write address correctly on the cover, it will reach the right person. Similarly, the *mantras* are addressed to the respective deities. If you don't understand, you should keep quiet.”

Instruction was given in an informal and interesting way in those days. Today's students neither know their own job nor understand the work of others. This kind of general knowledge has to be acquired by direct experience, not from any institutional study. Hence, try seriously to understand the significance of your ancient culture.

Never forget your cultural values

What are present-day scientists and technologists are doing? Have they any idea? They assert that all that is on the earth is for the use and exploitation by man. Indiscriminate mining of all kinds of minerals and ores is carried on for so-called benefit of mankind. The earth is spherical. Systematic removal of material from one side causes imbalance as the other side becomes heavy. It is divine dispensation that maintains balance. This balance should not be disturbed. The loss of balance is the cause of earthquakes and other natural disasters.

Man is not only causing imbalance on the earth, he is polluting the oceans with industrial and urban waste. Water pollution has reached a stage where people are forced to drink polluted water.

Science helps you to develop and sharpen your intellect. There are many scientists; many of you are also students of

science. You must know that knowledge that comes from within is at the top level. At the second level is skill; at the third is balance; and at the fourth is insight. Swami tells you to convert your knowledge into skill, not to kill it. When knowledge is killed, imbalance ensues. Why is there such loss of balance in the world today? This is because you have killed your God-given knowledge instead of turning it into skill.

Past, present, and future

Students!

Past is past. Forget the past. Do not worry over the future, since it is uncertain. Live in the present. The present is not just ordinary present, it is omnipresent. The future is the consequence of the present. The present is the consequence of the past. The tree of the past gives the seed of the present, which grows into the tree of the future.

Between the tree of the past and the tree of the future, the present is the seed, which is of utmost significance. It gets sustenance from *neethi* (morality). Without *neethi*, *manava jathi* (the human race) is bound to be ruined, and even its existence is impossible. *Manava jathi* (human race) is a balanced blend of truth, morality, and sacrifice. But we are failing to recognize the sacredness of human nature. Amongst all beings, birth as a human being is the rarest (*Jantunam narajanma durlabham*). Loss of this humanness in man is the cause of chaotic conditions in the world.

I said the other day, “*Sathyam bruyat, priyam bruyat, na bruyat sathyamapriyam* (speak the truth, speak sweetly, do not speak unpalatable truth).” This mode of living is true sacrifice. Who can assert that he is treading strictly this path?

Some people make fun of the *Brahmins* when they chant

mantras. Each *mantra* is potent, and all our ancient traditions are meaningful. A small example. There is a wedding going on. These days you have elaborately decorated *pandals* or *shamianas*. Those days they had no such elaborate external decoration. Just four posts were put up, covered over for shade with green leaves and branches, and the people used to sit under the shade to carry out the rituals.

Even now, on holy days, we hang mango leaves on our doors and gates. It is not merely a sign of auspiciousness; it provides healthy environment too. The sudden influx of a large number of guests causes an increase in carbon dioxide. The green leaves help in reducing the carbon dioxide level and increase the oxygen in the place. Some people may ask why we should have green leaves; will plastic leaves not be better? Can the plastic leaves and flowers absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen?

Atma Tattwa was the basis of ancient education system

Dear Students! You should try to understand the inner significance of your cultural heritage. Swami never says you should not have modern education. Why would Swami make such an inhibition? All that is said is that along with this worldly study, pursue also an enquiry into the principle of your Self (*Atma Tattwa*). This was the basis of the ancient education system.

You know, Krishna and Kuchela were taught in the forest. The friendship developed during that study was long lasting. Today there is no true friendship. If you have money in your pocket, there will be many who will be hailing you, “hello, hello.” If there is no money, then “hello” becomes “hollow”, and all friends desert you. Is this friendship?

True friendship is like a single life embodied in two bodies.

Your effort should be to acquire friendship like this. While making friends, do not hate anybody. Do not harm anybody. Bhagavan wants that you should all acquire education of this kind, with broad-mindedness and purity, and become a model for humanity. This is My benediction for you.

Television is the disease of modern times

Dear Students! As long as you are here, you are safe and secure. When you get back to your homes, you are assailed by various distractions like television, video, cinema, etc. All these pollute your hearts.

The programs on the television are very attractive, but you must realize that they are shown to you not for your gain but for the gain of sponsors and advertisers. Watch only such programs that are related to education, or those dedicated to moral values. TV has, in fact, become a disease of modern times. So, it is not TV but TB (tuberculosis). If there are no moral thoughts in you, what will happen when such programs are watched?

If you have leisure, take a walk. Don't sit in front of a TV set. You become so addicted that when someone intervenes, you lose your temper. Even the sound from the kitchen disturbs you, where your mother is busy making dinner for you. Why don't you get up to help her and make her happy? This is the main principle of our culture: Help ever, Hurt never.

Acquire big degrees, achieve fame. No harm. Go abroad, earn money and reputation; nothing wrong in that. But never forget your own culture. Don't criticize the cultures of others. Wherever you are, make your life an ideal for others. Speak pleasantly. Do good deeds. Then you will be a good person.

Goodness versus greatness

Do not strive to acquire the status of a great man. Always strive to become a good man. Great men may do many evil deeds, but the acts of a good man stand out as ideals for others always. Ravana was a great man. Rama is the example par excellence of a good man. Both had mastered the same studies: but how different were their natures! Ravana, though endowed with extraordinary learning, was himself destroyed and was the cause of the destruction of his entire clan, because of one bad quality of desire. Hiranyakasipu, the master of all the five elements, was ruined by his evil quality of anger. Duryodhana was ruined by greed. He refused to give even five villages to the Pandavas.

All these persons not only destroyed themselves, they were the cause of the utter destruction of their entire clans. Even one evil trait is enough to cause ruin. Then imagine how much worse a fate one will be faced with if one has all six evil qualities of lust, anger, greed, pride, envy, and hatred!

When you see an evil person, you will become aware of your own bad qualities. When you see a good man, your own goodness will come to your mind. Thus, your good or bad qualities have intimate common relationship with others. All men are bound together by their innate common qualities. It is necessary to unify all humanity. When such unity is achieved, then the divinity immanent in human beings will manifest.

Do not make friends indiscriminately. Always enquire into the good and evil in your fellowmen and then choose your company. While helping, you need not discriminate. Help anybody in need. Earn a good name for your institution by your reputation as a good person. That alone will make Bhagavan happy.

Keep God in your heart and serve society

There are no fees for the various facilities in the Sathya Sai institutions. You have complete peace in the absence of all fees. In other places, there are fees of many kinds. Paying out fees here, fees there, fees for this and fees for that, where is the room for peace? You only go to pieces.

Lead a peaceful life. Be good. Be a model for society. This is the gift of Bhagavan to all of you today. Do not forget God. God is your very life. Keep God in your heart and serve the society. You are bound to succeed in all your endeavors. Bhagavan wishes all of you to lead lives full of bliss.

Today, Dr. Goldstein is the Chief Guest. Since he is a familiar figure here, do not take him for granted. He is no ordinary person. He does not lack wealth. Nor is he short of academic distinctions. He is quite well known. He is the Chairman of the American Medical Council. Very few here have all the qualities that he has.

It is not for any of the material things like wealth, fame or health that he comes here. It is for the sake of the bliss he experiences here that he comes so frequently. When Bhagavan asked him, Goldstein replied that he found bliss here in Prasanthi Nilayam that was not there in America. You know he is a rich man. If he wanted his son to be married in grand style, he could have done it in America. His son was to be married to the daughter of a well-known film star who is also a rich person. But Goldstein does not bother about grandness and greatness, he is concerned only with goodness. The film star brought her daughter and Goldstein his son, and the marriage was performed in that little interview room of Bhagavan. The couple is happily living together.

His second son insisted that Swami perform his marriage,

too. For many years, Bhagavan delayed the decision. Finally, Swami asked Dr. Goldstein to bring his son here. Swami found a suitable bride for him from an ideal and well-to-do family. The marriage was again performed here.

In olden days, girls used to cry a lot while leaving their parents' homes after the marriage. Unlike modern girls, this girl also cried for Swami while departing from here, I told her not to cry and to come again with a child.

Both the sons of Goldstein are very good. Their goodness is in fact a consequence of their association with the Sai Organization. Their wives are also very good.

Goldstein does everything according to the commands of Bhagavan. He is in charge of the Sai Organizations of several countries, including that of America. He is a good, devoted, and disciplined worker. As a loyal member of the Sai Organization, he has the three sacred qualities: duty, discipline, and devotion.

Emulate him and follow these three qualities and become ideal models in your lives. Earn a good name. Make your parents happy; do not neglect them under any circumstances. If you disobey your parents, remember you may face the same fate when you become parents. Be good, see good, and do good. This is the way to God.

22 November 1999

XVIII Convocation of SSSIHL
Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Complete surrender confers Bliss

Embodiments of Love!

The *Vedas*, the very source of all spiritual principles, have been enlightening the whole world from ancient days from this holy land of Bharat (India). They are the very forms of God. Divinity pervades everything, living and non-living. *Anoraneeyan Mahatomaheeyan* — from the microcosm to the macrocosm, the entire universe is pervaded by Divinity. This *viswa* (cosmos) is the form of Divinity. From dawn to dusk, you experience this form of the Divine, and yet you fail to realise this fact.

All that your eyes see are forms of the Divine. All the sounds you hear are similarly pervaded by Divinity. Even the thoughts in your mind are forms of the Divine. The bliss that emanates from the heart is also divine. When everything that is seen, heard, experienced, and enjoyed is divine, how foolish it is to search for God elsewhere!

You are seeing God in the form of the world every moment. Since you lack divine feelings, you see God as the world

instead of seeing the world as God. Once you understand that *Viswam Vishnu Swarupam* (the universe is the form of Vishnu), you will certainly be able to see the world as God. *Yad bhavam tad bhavathi* (as the feelings, so is the result).

Do not limit God to a particular name and form

Divinity pervades the entire cosmos. Do not have the feeling that God is present at one place and not at another. He is everywhere. Wherever you search for Him, you will find Him there. But you should give up worldly feelings and fill your vision with divine feelings. Only then can you understand and experience the *Vedic* dictum, “*Sarvam Vishnumayam jagat* (the whole world is pervaded by God).”

Do not limit God to a particular name and form. He exists in all beings and in all forms as *Atmic* Principle. In fact, it is the power of the Divine that makes you see, hear, talk, experience, and enjoy. In that case, you may ask whether difficulties, worries, and misfortunes are also divine! Yes indeed! They too are forms of the Divine. Here is a small example.

Lord Narayana protected Prahlada, who constantly chanted His name and contemplated on Him. But he became the Lord of Death for Hiranyakasipu, who had no God consciousness and led a worldly life. So, both God and Yama (Lord of Death) are one and the same. He acts according to the feelings of the individual.

Even the most evil of men have some good in them. This goodness is the aspect of Divinity in them. The *Upanishads* say, *Easwara sarva bhuthanam* (God is the indweller of all beings), *Isavasyam idam jagat* (God pervades the whole world). Do not be misled by various terms like *Atma*, Brahman, Easwara, Vishnu, etc. These are all different names of one and the same Divinity.

The term *Bhagavan* stands for Divinity. What is the inner meaning of this word? The syllable *bha* stands for effulgence, *ga* stands for one who gives, and *van* means one who is capable. So, *Bhagavan* means the one who is capable of spreading light and effulgence to the world.

This Divinity is latent in you. The principle of *Atma* is one and the same in all, be it a *yogi* (renunciant), a *bhogi* (pleasure seeker), a *jogi* (itinerant renunciant), or a *vairagi* (dispassionate one). It is present in theists and also in atheists. Forgetting this all-pervasive Divinity, you undertake various spiritual practices, limiting Divinity to a particular name of your individual preference. Spiritual practices should confer the awareness that Divinity is all-pervasive. Just as fire is needed till the rice is cooked, so also spiritual practices are needed till you realise the innate Divinity.

Contemplate always on Divine Name

Even if you sow seeds, you cannot expect the crop if there is no rain. Even when there is rain, you cannot expect the crop if you do not sow seeds. Likewise, both human effort and divine grace are needed to achieve success in any endeavour.

Though butter is present in milk, one cannot see it unless one makes it into curd and churns it. Likewise, though Divinity is all-pervasive, one cannot experience it unless one makes appropriate efforts. Human effort can be compared to the process of churning. Once the butter is separated from the curd by churning, it will not get mixed with it again. If you partake of the churned butter, your entire being experiences it. Likewise, you will become one with Divinity once you experience it.

Before partaking of food, you offer it to God by chanting the following *sloka* (verse) from the *Bhagavad Gita*:

*Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir
Brahmagnou Brahmana Hutham
Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam
Brahmakarma Samadhina.*

Where is Brahman? He is very much present in you. That is why you get the reply immediately from within:

*Aham Vaishvanaro Bhuthva
Praninam Dehamasritha
Pranapana Samayukta
Pachamyannam Chathurvidham.*

God is present in you in the form of Vaishvanara. He digests the food that you partake of and distributes the essence to all parts of the body. God, who is present within, is called Vaishvanara, and the all-pervasive Divinity is known as Vishnu.

God is not separate from you; He is in you

Devotees attribute different names and forms to God on the basis of their feelings. But God is one. Worship Him with the feeling that He is not separate from you. He is in you. He is the embodiment of love. He will manifest from within only when you develop pure and selfless love.

Spiritual practices done without the principle of love are useless. Some people sit for hours together in meditation but are unable to experience Divinity because their mind is unsteady. Instead of wasting time in this manner, it is better to do some useful work. God is the embodiment of time. So, do not waste time. “*Sarvada Sarvakaleshu Sarvathra Harichinthanam* (think of God at all places, at all times, under all circum-

stances.)” Pure and selfless love is the only way to attain Divinity. Fulfillment of worldly desires will confer only temporary happiness. So, put a check on your desires. Your goal is permanent and eternal bliss. It is within you and can be attained only through love.

Every cell in your body contains the details of your whole being. In fact, every cell in your body holds your whole form. There are billions of cells in your body. While your form is immanent in each cell and in each limb in the microcosm, your body is your own macrocosmic form. In the same manner, each one of you is the cosmic divine form (*Viswa Virat Swarupa*). You must make efforts to fully appreciate this reality.

The name leads you to the form

You go to a village to see your friend, but you do not know his address. How can you expect to meet him unless you know his correct address? Here is another example: Many people have gathered here now. You want to meet a particular boy. You say that he is wearing a bush coat and pants and has got a good hairstyle. But this information is not sufficient to trace the boy, because there may be many boys in this crowd who fit this description. Instead if you announce his name, say Ramakrishna, from the stage, immediately he will get up from the crowd. It is the name that leads you to the form.

That is why the ancient sages and seers started *Namachin-thana* (continuous contemplation on the Divine Name) to have the vision of God. They undertook various spiritual practices with total devotion and earnestness. Do not dismiss this effort as meaningless.

The other day, I spoke about Bhavani Sankara. Bhavani symbolises *sraddha* (steadfast devotion), and *sankara* stands for *viswas* (faith). You can achieve anything in life if you have

steadfast devotion and faith. Since this world is the very form of Bhavani-Sankara, it is called *ardhanareeswara swarupa* (androgynous). It is on this basis that we use *Srimati* to address women and *Sri* to address men. The ancient sages and seers said, “Sradhdhavan labhate jnanam (only the devout can attain wisdom.)” You should consider *viswasa* (faith) as your *swasa* (life breath).

God has many names and forms. Sambhartha and Bhartha are two of these names of God. *Sambhartha* is one who creates everything taking nature (*prakriti*) as the means, and *Bhartha* is one who sustains and protects the creation. Telugu-speaking people use this word *Bhartha* for husband, but actually *Bhartha* means master, sustainer and protector.

Body is gifted to make proper use of time

People waste their time and do not make any effort to know Divinity. Out of twenty-four hours in a day, you should allot six hours for personal work, six hours for social service, six hours for sleeping, and the remaining six hours for spiritual practices like *japa*, *dhyana*, and *yoga*. Some people say they do not have time to think of God, but they waste hours together in mundane matters. Life becomes meaningless if you do not think of God.

The body is gifted to make proper use of time. Body will be sanctified only when it is used for sacred activities. You should understand the relationship between *kaya* (body), *kala* (time), and *karthavya* (responsibility). Do not waste even a single moment.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to contemplate on the Divine Mother day in and day out. Before going to bed, he would feel sad thinking that another day had passed without the vision of the Divine Mother. He used to think, “Perhaps my heart

hasn't become ripe to deserve divine grace. What is the use of eating an unripe fruit? I shall ripen my heart and offer it to the Mother." That is the true spiritual practice in its subtle essence.

No one can question the powers of God

There is no constraint of time, place, distance, or complexity to the actions of God. No creature can impose limitations or constraints on God. God is utterly selfless. All His actions are sacred, whether they seem pleasant or unpleasant to you. Students are sometimes confused. They feel that if Swami is God, will He do this or that? How can you decide what God should do? No one has the authority to question the powers of God. He alone decides whether to reward, punish, protect, or destroy anything.

*Yada Yada Hi Dharmasya
Glanir Bhavati Bharata,
Abhyutthanamadharma
Tadatmanam Srujamyaham.*

God incarnates from age to age, whenever righteousness is on the decline. *Sathya* (truth) has to be upheld and *asathya* (untruth) is to be destroyed. *Dharma* is to be protected, and *adharma* is to be destroyed.

How do we expound the unity principle (*advaita*)? There are three forms of this principle of oneness: unity of substance, unity of matter, and unity of action. This piece of cloth is a single entity. There is yarn in it. The yarn is made of cotton. When the yarn is woven, you get a piece of cloth. If you shred the cloth, the yarn and cotton fall apart. When such a combination of matter in different forms is made, a simple object is produced. This is one kind of unity—material unity.

While the names and forms are different, the elements (*pancha bhutas*) of all bodies are the same. All are suffused with the same five sensory perceptions (*sabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa, and gandha*) and the same five life principles (*prana, apana, vyana, udana, and samana*). No matter where you are, your body is composed of the five elements only. There is no sixth element anywhere.

*This body is a heap of filth, full of diseases,
continually changing.
How can it cross the ocean of samsara?
Oh mind! For certain, this body is transient.
Keep your mind firmly on the Feet of the Lord
and surrender to Him.*

[Telugu Poem]

When the five elements disintegrate, the body loses its identity. Once the life goes out, the body is fit only for burial or cremation, as the elements fall apart into their original form. Therefore, before the body perishes, make all effort to experience the Divinity within. It is only through body that one can experience Divinity. So, body has to be properly taken care of.

The body is *karmakshetra* (field of activities) and the heart is *dharmakshetra* (field of righteousness). When Divinity is enshrined in the heart, it forms *Brahmakshetra* (field of Brahman). So, to understand the pure *Brahmakshetra*, it is necessary for you to purify your *dharmakshetra*, that is, your heart.

Karmakshetra and *dharmakshetra* are in the same body. That is why the *Bhagavad Gita* begins, “*Dharmakshetre Kurukshetre...*” All thoughts arising in the mind also pertain to *karmakshetra* (*kurukshetra*). Thus, *karma* and *dharma* are performed in the same field of the body, which comprises *dharmakshetra* and *karmakshetra*. Divinity intervenes and sepa-

rates *dharmakshetra* from *karmakshetra* (*kurukshetra*). A man of discernment is able to make this discrimination between *dharma* and *karma*.

In this world, there is nothing easier than attaining God. You face hardships and feel dejected because you do not understand this truth. Last night, you would have seen the drama staged by the students, wherein a businessman weeps for not being able to get a business license from the government authority. Instead of shedding tears for such mundane things, why don't you pine for the vision of God?

Sacrifice leads to Ananda

Once, Vivekananda asked Ramakrishna Paramahansa whether he had seen God. Ramakrishna Paramahansa emphatically replied, "Yes, I have seen God. I have seen Him just as I am seeing you and you are seeing me."

"Then why I don't see Him?" asked Vivekananda.

Ramakrishna gave an appropriate answer, "You weep for your family, you suffer for your business and wealth, but do you ever weep or yearn for a vision of God? Do that and you will certainly see God! All the time I am pining only for the vision of God. Therefore, God is visible to me at all times in every human being."

The purpose of our birth should be achieved by the sacrifice of everything. Therefore, the *Vedas* say, *Na karmana, na prajaya, dhanena thyagenaikena amrutatwamanu* (sacrifice alone ensures immortality).

In the process of breathing, we inhale and exhale. If we do not exhale, the lungs will not be able to function properly. We eat food. If we do not excrete, our stomach becomes upset. Similarly, in our circulatory system, blood is traversing an enormous distance each day. If it is blocked a little at any lo-

cation in this journey, a clot develops. The flow of blood works for the removal of all kinds of toxic wastes produced in the body and helps in the ejection of the same. Without the evacuation of unhealthy substances from the body, good health is not possible.

Thus, in sacrifice also there is satisfaction. In fact, there is *ananda* (bliss) in sacrifice. The practical man of today questions the usefulness of sacrifice. Man is so selfish that he refuses to give even a handful of food to a starving beggar. How much joy is experienced when one is able to satisfy the hunger of a hungry person! Would you not feel joy when some starving people are fed? In human society, narrow-minded selfishness is rampant.

Even human life has little value in today's society

Once, in Mumbai, Indulal Shah, Dr. Keki, and Swami were going from Dharmakshetra to the city. As a beggar approached, Indulal Shah gave him a two-rupee note. The beggar threw back the note, saying that it would not fetch even a loaf of bread. This is the state of our society today. Money has lost its value. Why money alone, even human life has very little value in today's society. People struggle hard to amass wealth, comfort, and happiness, even risking their own life. When somebody dies in an accident or calamity, the government gives a few thousand rupees as compensation for the life lost. Is human life worth a few rupees only? Has it become that cheap? No, human life is worth a lot more. When the body is dead, the life principle is not altogether lost.

People look for short cuts in everything, even in spirituality. But, surprisingly, spirituality does have a short cut. There is no need to wander here and there. God is residing in your heart. Turn your vision inward. You can see God instantly.

This is the easiest path. Have full faith that Divinity resides in you.

If you keep reminding yourself constantly that you are a part of Divinity, you are bound to become Divine yourself. On the other hand, if you harbour the feeling that you are something apart from the Divine, you shall remain far from Divinity always. There is no need for you to give up your vocation. Keep doing your function in society, but always remember that you are essentially Divine.

God Himself intervenes when His devotees are in distress in the performance of their functions in society. You all know the story of Gora Kumbhar and Kabir. When they were confronted with impossible tasks, God helped them in person; He completed their task of making pots or weaving cloth.

God is capable of taking any form that He Wills. Hence, He is known as the *Virat Swarupa*. The *Purusha Sukta* (in the *Rig Veda*) says, *Sahasra Seerasha Purusha, Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad ...* while describing the *Virat Swarupa*. The *Virat Purusha* has innumerable limbs.

Cultivate your faith and make it firm

Become worthy of His love. You can achieve everything. This is possible only through *nishkama prema* (selfless love). By cultivating such selfless love, you become Divine yourself. And this Divinity is non-dual. Hence, it is said, “*Advaita darshanam jnanam* (perception of non-dual Divinity is true wisdom).”

Cultivate your faith and make it firm. There should be no ups and downs in this faith. If you allow such vacillations, you are likely to lose whatever faith you have. A firm faith results in your attaining *Brahmananda* (divine bliss). The happiness experienced with the body is human (*dehananda*). The joy felt

in the mind is *chitthananda* (mental pleasure). *Chitthananda* is much greater than the bodily happiness (*dehananda*). When the mind is transcended, the joy experienced is *Chidananda*, which is immeasurably greater than the joy of the mind. You are needlessly losing your opportunity of attaining this level of bliss. Step by step, you have to rise through these levels of happiness until you attain *Brahmananda*. In this way, you merge your personal bliss into the universal bliss of *Brahmananda*, which is eternal.

Surrender you heart to God

One has to experience this bliss, which is none other than *Satchidananda*. *Sath* is being, which is eternal. *Chit* is total knowledge, i.e. omniscience. When these two are united, total joy, i.e. *Satchidananda*, is realised. Since *sath*, *chit*, and *ananda* are present in each individual, it is said that God is present in everyone in the form of *Satchidananda*. Therefore, you need not perform any *sadhana*, and if you are following some such practice, there is no need for you to abandon it. But in any event, surrender your heart to God. This is called *saranagati* (surrender).

Once, Lakshmana told Rama that all his wealth, family, possessions, and his very body was for the service of Rama. Rama said, "I do not need all this. What use have I for all these? Just purify your thoughts, words, and deeds and your heart. With that, you will experience heaven itself."

Happiness is heaven itself. Happiness is obtained by the control of the senses. So, you can attain heaven by controlling your senses. Many people say that they experience the very heaven in Prasanthi Nilayam. How long will this happiness last? This will vanish the moment you leave this place. True heaven is inside you. This again is described as immortality.

What is meant by immortality? The body is mortal, but the life principle is imperishable. If you have to attain this level of immortality, extend total love to God. This should be unconditional love. There should be no conditions to love.

It is like going to a goldsmith with a piece of gold and asking him to make some jewelry of the design of your liking. Your business is only to leave the gold with him with the condition that the weight and design should be to your specification. You have no business interfering in the manner in which he converts your lump of gold into the piece of jewel you want. If you start stipulating that he should not burn it in fire, or beat it with a hammer, how can you get the ornament that you ordered?

In the same way, if you surrender your heart to God with conditions and reservations, how can you attain the bliss that you seek? Once complete surrender is effected, God will grant you the bliss you deserve. What He does with it in the meanwhile is His business. Love full of conditions will only result in very sad state of your body and mind.

Therefore, pray to God with unconditional surrender. When all that you possess — your body, your mind, your intellect — are His gifts, where is the need for your laying conditions?

Divinity is within your reach

Be fearless. Lead your life without fear disturbing it. Do not be guided by the opinions and advice of others around you into actions not in line with your conscience. There are a few who piously place the mark of *vibhuti* on their forehead while at home but wipe it off the moment they step out. Some are even ashamed to say that they are coming to Prasanthi Nilayam and tell their friends that they are going to Anantapur. Why

should you worry about their opinion? Is it something wrong to come here? There are so many wrong things that people do without any fear, then why are you afraid of saying that you are going to see God? One should never be afraid of expressing one's faith in God. Be courageous and bold. These days, people are afraid of performing their cultural and spiritual practices as also good deeds.

Be fearless and seek the company of good people

Give up fear and live in bliss. Involvement in worldly life engenders a sense of fear in you, and you forget your spiritual way of living. The bliss that is experienced when you are with God is beyond words; it is unimaginable. Words and thoughts return in utter futility, unable to describe this experience. It is this type of divinely bliss in which you should lead your life. That is how a human being should live.

Having been born as a human being, do not waste your life living like an animal. Eating, drinking, procreation, sleep, etc. are common to men and animals.

What distinguishes man from other living beings? Man is the only living being endowed with wisdom. A man without wisdom is no better than an animal. From living at a human level, one should aspire to reach the divine level. Of the several levels of living, the lowest level is the demonic, then the animal, higher than this is human, and ultimately the divine. When such a divine life is within your reach and sight, why should you fear? Be fearless and seek the company of good people; bad company can lead you astray.

Three main principles are expounded in spirituality. These are:

1. Don't put all your faith in your body, for you do not

- know what will happen at any moment of time.
2. Don't put your faith in the world.
 3. Never abandon your faith in God.

Once you are fully aware of these three principles, you can achieve anything.

Swami's message for you today is that Swami is you and you are Swami. In fact Swami is not separate from you.

Who invited you here? You have all come here out of love for Swami. Out of this love alone, so many thousands have assembled here. Here is Bhagavan, ready to be taken away by you. Carry Him away with you as you like.

Those who love Bhagavan wholeheartedly, to them He belongs wholly. All that Bhagavan asks of you is your wholehearted, unconditional love. Recognise this truth and lead your life filled with love. Take this as Swami's gift to you. Do not hate anybody. Hating anybody is no different from hating God Himself. Surrender your whole being to God. Experience unalloyed divine bliss.

Never forget God

Students! Pursue your study diligently. Obtain good position in your examination. Get good jobs in your appropriate chosen fields and serve your motherland. Swami has no desire to stop anybody from working in any profession or getting married or going abroad for study or work. Go wherever you please. Do whatever job that is your lot, but never forget God. Anything you do with God in your heart is pleasing to Me. Forgetting God is no different from forgetting yourself.

One who is wandering in search of God is a fool. Is there anyone in the world who will go about searching for himself? If you go to somebody and ask, where am I, you will be

promptly put in a mental asylum. Since you are Divinity itself and Divinity is your own self, where is the need for any search? Search for God is an expression invented by fake scholars. There is no need for such an expression. You can search for the things of the world, but do not go in search of God, for He is everywhere. If you have this faith, you cannot help seeing Him and for certain you will enjoy bliss. Strengthen your faith.

23 November 1999
Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Man himself is God; all matter, even in the moon, is suffused with the divine Presence. To search for God with the instruments in the laboratory is like trying to cure pain in the stomach by pouring drops into the eye! There is a technique and a special instrument for that purpose, which the past masters in that science have developed and spoken about.

—Baba

Divine love is true religion

*At the time of birth all human beings are
pure and unspoiled.*

*It is only the environment and company
that pollutes the human mind.*

Follow the dictates of your conscience.

Love and equality are the birthrights of man.

[Telugu Poem]

At the time of birth, the human heart is pure, selfless and steady. But with the passage of time, man loses his purity on account of his association with various individuals.

The environment and company are mainly responsible for the good or bad in man. A piece of paper does not have any smell of its own. But if the same paper is used to pack *pakodas* or dry fish or jasmine flowers, it produces the smell associated

with them. That is why it is said, “Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are.” As your company, so you become. So, you should always join good company. You can attain exalted position only when he joins good company. Man is good by birth, but ruins himself because of bad company. Today man is not making any enquiry as to what is good and what is bad. Such an enquiry is very essential before making friendship with others. Adi Sankara declares:

*Sathsangathve Nissangathvam,
Nissangathve Nirmohathvam,
Nirmohathve Nischala Tathvam
Nischalatathve Jeevanmukti*

By good company, attain detachment.
By detachment, get rid of delusion.
By freedom from delusion, attain equanimity.
By equanimity, attain liberation.

Bad company is the root cause of man’s downfall

Satsang (good company) helps you to attain sense control. *Sath* is that which is permanent and eternal. In this world, everything is transitory. Only Divinity is permanent. Your feelings will become noble and pure only when you associate yourself with Divinity. First and foremost recognise the fact that bad company is the root cause for man’s downfall.

Man wants to accomplish many things in life but is inhibited by the sense of fear lurking in his mind. It is only association with God that will make man fearless. Every flower that blossoms will not grow into a fruit. Every fruit that the tree bears will not become ripe. But every ripened fruit is bound to fall down from the tree. The same thing can be said of human life. Man develops desires and indulges in undesirable prac-

tices which will ultimately lead to his downfall.

Man has invented various wonderful gadgets, which can even take him to the moon, but the most wonderful and mysterious of all machines is the human body itself, which is God's creation. God has created this machine not merely for eating, drinking, and making merry. All these are common to animals also. This being the case, what is so unique about human birth?

*Deho Devalaya Prokto,
Jeevo Deva Sanathana*

Body is the temple and the Indweller is God.

You may own a car, but it will be of use to you only if you know driving. Otherwise, it may expose yourself to great danger. Likewise, you should know how to make proper use of your body

Today, man is deceived by attachment. He is unable to realize the sacredness of human body. He is indulging in worldly pleasures just as birds and animals do. Human body is gifted to experience divine love, not to indulge in mean acts. Truth, righteousness, peace, and love are divine qualities. Birds and beasts have only love, but not the remaining three. Only one having all four qualities is a true human being. Man should make proper use of the body. Only then will his life find fulfillment.

Perform activities without expecting reward

Embodiments of Love! Of all the gifts of God, Time and Love are the most precious. Man has to make proper use of time in order to experience Divine love. But today, man is wasting three-fourths of his time in mundane pursuits, whether he is *brahmachari* (student), *grihastha* (householder) *vana-*

prastha (recluse), or *sanyasi* (renunciant). Then how can he expect to have noble thoughts? He is unable to undertake any sacred activity because his mind is clouded with ego.

The *Bhagavad Gita* declares, “*Karmanyevadhikarasthe ma phaleshu kadachana* (man has a right over action, but not on the result.)” So perform all your activities without expecting any reward. Do not waste your time worrying over the fruits of your actions. This is what is meant by saying, “duty is God.” Divinity will manifest once you perform your duty with sincerity.

Serve with the feeling that you are serving God

It is a mistake to consider yourself a devotee if you undertake service activities expecting something in return. You have to render service with the feeling that God is present in all. Realize the truth, “*Isavasyam, idam jagat* (God pervades the entire universe).” You may say that you have done rural service or served flood victims. But these cannot be termed service in its true sense if you have the feeling that you served others. Serve with the feeling that you are serving God, for God is omnipresent.

Consider, for example, the sacred epic *Bhagavatam*, which speaks of the intense love and devotion of *gopikas* (cowherd maids) for Krishna. *Bhagavatam chadivithe bagavatam* in Telugu means, “If we study *Bhagavatam*, we shall become good.” That is to say, *Bhagavatam* confers goodness on all. It contains the essence of all *Vedas*. The five letters *bha*, *ga*, *va*, *ta*, and *mu*, stand for *bhakti* (devotion), *jnana* (wisdom), *vairagya* (renunciation), *thapas* (penance), and *mukti* (liberation) respectively.

Be one with the Lord, like gopikas

This sacred epic, *Bhagavatam*, describes at length the *gopikas* (cowherd maids) yearning for Krishna when He left Gokul for Mathura, where He was actively involved in running the kingdom. The *gopikas* were unable to bear the pangs of separation from their dear Lord and were anxiously waiting His return. The entire Gokul bore the look of a barren land. There was no dearth of food and comforts in Gokul; yet, the *gopikas* did not enjoy any of them because they thought life was not worth living without Krishna, whom they considered as their very life breath. They lost their health and happiness because they were unable to bear the pangs of separation.

Krishna, being aware of the *gopikas* plight, summoned His friend Uddhava and asked him to proceed to Gokul to console the *Gopikas* and pass on His message to them. Uddhava was a great philosopher and a *jnani* (one of wisdom). He knew that Krishna was omnipresent. As per Krishna's command, He went to Gokul and conveyed Krishna's message to the *gopikas* and *gopalas*. He told them that they should not limit Krishna to a small physical frame thinking that He was present only in Mathura. He tried to explain to the *gopikas* that Krishna is God Himself and that He is omnipresent. He advised them that since Krishna was present everywhere, there was no need for them to feel sorry that He was away.

Since the *gopikas* had totally surrendered themselves to Krishna, they would not look at or talk to a stranger. So, they took a *bhramara* (bee) as an intermediary and talked to Uddhava through the bee. Having been used to worship Krishna's beautiful form, they could not readily think of Krishna as a formless entity. Making fun of Uddhava's preachings, they asked, "Do you practice what you preach?"

You are enjoying the proximity to our Lord Krishna but are telling us to experience His attributeless and formless aspect. We don't want your preaching or philosophy. We are not interested in your formless, attributeless God. Bring our dear Krishna to us." They said, "Krishna has stolen our hearts. We have only one mind, and that has gone with Him to Mathura, we do not have another mind to listen to what you are preaching."

One-pointed devotion of gopikas

The declaration of the *gopikas* that they had only one mind made Uddhava recognize their one-pointed devotion. He realised that the pure, unsullied, and eternal divine principle can be attained only through fixing the mind on God.

The *gopikas* lamented their separation from Krishna, "We want to see nothing but Krishna's beautiful form, hear nothing, but the melodious music of His flute, and experience nothing but His Divine Love. We have cried for Krishna so much that our eyes are swollen and there is not a drop of tear left in them. How can the ship of your message sail in the barren lands of our hearts! So, take your ship and go back to the place you came from. We are not interested in the formless aspect of Divinity. We want to see the enchanting form of our Lord."

Hearing the words of the *gopikas*, Uddhava realised that all his *jnana* (wisdom) was worthless. He considered himself to be totally ignorant since he had underestimated the love and devotion of the *gopikas* for Krishna.

He stopped preaching and tried to hand over a piece of paper to the *gopikas*, saying that it contained Krishna's message for them. He wanted them to read it. They refused to accept the letter, saying that they could not read it as they had no knowledge of *akshara* (alphabet). But their minds were merged in

the *Akshara Swarupa* (immortal form) of Lord Krishna. Uddhava was a bit angry with the *gopikas*, thinking that they had no respect for even Krishna's message.

Then one of the *gopikas* started explaining, "There is no point in accepting Krishna's letter since we, being illiterate, cannot read it. There may be one or two amongst us who can read. But we are afraid that our tears may drop on the letter and wash out the words written on it. There is another reason. Our whole body is heated up on account of separation from Krishna. So, it is possible that the letter may get burnt to ashes if our hands were to touch it. You are unable to understand our plight."

They sent a message to Krishna, addressing the bee,

*O bee, why don't you go back and tell Krishna
That He should look at us at least once?
Can you not tell Krishna to illumine
Our dark hearts with His resplendent form?
Our life has become like a dried tree.
Please tell Krishna that
He should look at us at least once.
Can you not tell Krishna to illumine
Our dark hearts with His resplendent form?
Our life has become like a dried tree.
Please tell Krishna to put some life into it.*

[Telugu song]

Radhika prayed,

*O Krishna, we are anyway going to die
Because of separation from you.
Please allow us to be with you
At least in Your next incarnation.*

*If you take the form of a tree,
 Allow us to be creepers that twine around You.
 If you stand like Meru mountain,
 Let us be like a stream flowing from it.
 If you become the mighty ocean,
 Let us become the rivers ready to merge in it .*

[Telugu Poem]

Thus, the *gopikas* always craved the Divine proximity. That is the sign of true devotion. Truth philosophy consists of establishing a relationship between the individual and God. The *gopikas* never gave scope for narrow individual feelings. They aspired for the intimate relationship with God.

The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Have the firm conviction that God is present in everybody. There is no place where God does not exist. But you cannot see God as long as there is the sense of 'I' (ego) in you. The *gopikas* had absolutely no sense of ego. Their 'I' had merged with Krishna. As long as there is ego in you, you will find only multiplicity. Once you realize that you and I are one, you will find unity everywhere, which is true and eternal.

Dedication of the 'Messengers of Sathya Sai'

The old student association of Anantapur Campus, the Messengers of Sathya Sai, is celebrating its anniversary today. They are serving society and spreading Swami's message in accordance with the sacred name of their association. You have listened to the report of their activities. Truly speaking, they have done much more than what was mentioned in the report. In fact, I instructed them to make the report as brief as possible. Though their report is brief, they are doing yeoman service to society. Not only here, but also in various other

countries like Japan, Canada, America, and Germany. They are undertaking service activities, upholding the ideals of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. They are spending their earnings in service activities. When questioned by their parents, they reply, “Swami has given us free education and free medical care. We owe our wealth and health to Swami. So, all our earnings should be directed for the service of society. We are not misusing even a *naya paisa*.” Thus they are bringing about transformation even in their parents.

Never underestimate the capacity of women

You all know that there is a lady doctor, an eye specialist, by name Vansa in our General Hospital. She is a widow. Her daughter studied in our college and now she is living in Australia with her husband. She has brought about a transformation in her husband and, as a result, he is also actively involved in various service activities. Both the husband and wife spend their earnings in service of the society. They do not have children.

Dr. Vansa prayed to Me that her daughter be blessed with a child. Her daughter said that Swami is everything for her and she does not want to get entangled in bondage by having children. She said that she considers all children as her own. She prayed that she should have the freedom to render service activities to her satisfaction.

There are many women who have such noble desires, but among men, we hardly find anybody having such broad feelings.

Since ancient times, many noble women have taken birth in this sacred land of Bharat (India), women who have set an ideal to the world with their exemplary character and devotion. You might have heard of Savitri, who brought her dead hus-

band back to life; Chandramati, who extinguished the wild fire in a trice, demonstrating the power of truth; Sita, who came out of blazing fire unscathed; and Damayanti, who burnt a wicked hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity. All these noble women have brought name and fame to this sacred land of Bharat. Not only Bharat, the whole world will progress because of women of character and nobility. So never underestimate the capacity of women.

Women symbolise bhakti and men stand for jnana

The 75th Birthday of this body is approaching. The Messengers of Sathya Sai have chalked out elaborate plans for the 75th Birthday and have already started executing them. They have purchased 1000 bags of rice for free distribution of food for 10 days to the devotees during the 75th Birthday celebrations.

There are nearly 3000 members in their Organization. Their faith is unwavering, and their devotion for Swami is becoming stronger and stronger day by day. They are preparing to distribute 75,000 saris. They want all the saris to be of the same design, so they have already placed an order in this regard. Such devotion and sincerity are present more among women than men.

In fact, women symbolise *bhakti* (devotion) and men stand for *jnana* (wisdom). The one with devotion has the right to enter even the inner chambers of the divine palace, whereas the one with wisdom has access only to the audience hall of God. You may be aware that kings of yore would convene meetings in their royal audience hall, where only men would assemble. Men had no entry into the *antahpura* (inner chambers of the palace). Only women who symbolize devotion have the access to the *antahpura* of God.

What is the *antahpura* of God? What is *antahpura*? *Antaratma* (Indwelling Spirit) is the *antahpura*. It is only devotion, not wisdom, that has entry to *antahpura*.

Most of the men who have assembled here today are here only because of the inspiration of their women. Women are responsible for men treading along the path of devotion. In My opinion, the Messengers of Sathya Sai should take the lead in spreading the divine message throughout the country. Mainly by the effort of women will the country progress. Not only Bharat, the whole world should progress. The ancient culture of our country should be revived.

The heart of Uddhava, who was considered one of wisdom, transformed on seeing the love and devotion of the *gopikas* for Krishna. He approached Krishna with a prayer that he may be blessed with at least a fraction of their devotion. The *gopikas* said they had only one mind, and that was centered on Krishna. But men have many minds! The statement of the *gopikas* is in itself the highest philosophy.

True Christmas spirit in Prasanthi Nilayam

If you look at the world with material view, you see variety. If you look at it with an understanding of Divinity, all of it will appear to be the form of God. *Yad bhavam tad bhavati* (as your feelings, so you become). Allah, Jesus, Zoroaster — all these are names for the same Divinity.

Today (Christmas) is mainly celebrated by Christians, but do not make the mistake that it is only for Christians. It is a holy and happy occasion to be celebrated by the entire mankind. Get rid of religious and philosophical differences and enlarge your *matha* (religion) and *mathi* (mind). There is only one God, and He is the indweller of your heart. If you realise this truth, the entire humanity becomes a single race. There is

only one religion in the universe and that is divine love (*prema*).

The one without this principle of love in his heart is neither a Hindu nor a Christian nor a Muslim nor a Sikh. He is no better than a demon. Complete unity of all religions can be seen only in Prasanthi Nilayam. Imagine what a phenomenon it is that Christians from 64 countries in this world have assembled here to celebrate Christmas.

This principle of unity is the sign of true devotion. Swami reiterates that it is not a celebration for Christians only but is a holy occasion for the entire humanity. It is the desire of Swami that such differences be completely eradicated.

There are several tasks in front of the Messengers of Sathya Sai. Mere distribution of food and medicines and conducting *bal vikas* programs is not enough. Of course, all these are necessary, but along with these activities, spiritual teachings are also essential. If the spiritual element of life is lost, life is a waste. Therefore, all of you ensure that your spiritual life is in the forefront of all your activities. These words are addressed not only to the ladies of the Messengers of Sathya Sai. Young men should take up similar activities.

Women can transform the world

Women generally have less freedom than men. If only women had been given the level of freedom that is allowed for men, the shape of society on the face of the earth would have been changed. They work under many constraints put by their husbands, fathers, and children. In spite of severe pressures from all sides, they are advancing.

On the other hand men have hardly any such constraints. It is surprising why people with such freedom do not enter into a spiritual quest or social service. What is the use of your educa-

tion if you do not use it for the service of society? You might as well throw your books in the fire.

Accumulate *guna*, not *dhana*

It is more important to achieve virtues (*guna*) than to accumulate wealth (*dhana*). Wealth is accumulated by so many persons. What have they taken away with them when they leave this world? Nothing. Of course, one has to earn wealth. But, accumulation of wealth should be within limits. All your faculties should be at the disposal of society. Only then your country will also advance.

You know very well the kind of unrest that is prevalent all over the world today. Fear and terror haunt you wherever you turn. It is the duty of the youth of this generation to set right this situation. First of all, serve your parents. Then, look after your family. Serve your community. Then, you should undertake the task of serving your country. But do not be hankering after the results for your efforts. The appropriate reward for all your actions will be granted to you by God. Service to the country itself becomes worship of God.

Swami is pleased with the services that you have performed so far. But, it is the desire of Swami that you should all perform much more. You know how a mother blesses you. It is necessary for you to act in such a way as to get your parents' blessings and approval. Tomorrow you may also become mothers. Serve your parents today so that in turn your children may serve you in times of your need. As you sow so you reap.

The only worthwhile thing in this world is divine love. This is the noblest acquisition, which leads to bliss and immortality. Once you obtain this divine love all else in the world is yours for the asking. For this you first immerse yourself in social work.

The vain desire to obtain higher and higher educational qualifications should be moderated. You may earn as much wealth as you can, but use it for the welfare of society. Contemplate on God with your whole mind and heart. Only then will you attain a meaningful goal of your life.

25 December 1999
Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam

Be pure in words and deeds and keep impure thoughts away. I am in every one of you, so I become aware of the slightest wave of thoughts. When the clothes become dirty, you have to give them a wash. When your mind is soiled, you have to be born again for the cleansing operations.

—Baba