

Sanctity Your Life By Chanting The Divine Name

*If you leave ego, you become dear to all;
If you conquer anger, you become free from
worries;
You become prosperous when you control your
desires;
You attain happiness only when you conquer greed.*
(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

IT is the main duty of man to acquire a cool mind like the moonlight and shining wisdom like sun light. As long as man is egoistic, none will love him, including his own wife and children. He will win the love of all when he gives up his ego. Ego is like a bomb that destroys man. So, in the first instance, man should get rid of ego. So long as there is anger in man, he cannot be free from sorrow. He will be respected by all only when he gives

up anger. One with greed can never attain happiness. Man can be happy and make others happy only when he gives up greed. Ego, anger and greed are three evil qualities that turn man into a demon.

Do All Service As An Offering To God

There is One in this world, by knowing whom you would have known all. If That is not known, there is no point in knowing the rest. That is the knowledge of the Self. Zero gains value only when the number one is associated with it. The more the number of zeros, the more is the value. When one is removed, all zeros lose their value. Love for the Self can be compared to the number one. Man's life gains value only when he has love for the Self. *Isavasyam idam sarvam* (the entire universe is permeated by God). Who is Easwara? It is the *chaithanya* (consciousness) that pervades all beings.

Embodiments of Love!

Your lives will be redeemed only when you contemplate on the Divine Name incessantly. All your wealth and comforts will be of little consequence if you do not have love for God. In Bharat, there are millions of people who serve their fellowmen with God's Name on their lips. *"Neither by penance nor by pilgrimage nor by study of scriptures nor by japa can one cross the ocean of life. One can achieve it only by serving the pious."* (Sanskrit verse) Service is very important. Serve everybody with the conviction that God dwells in all. As you serve others, you

have to kill your ego. It cannot be called service if it is done with the feeling that “I am serving others”. *Sarva karma Bhagavad preethyartham* (do all actions to please God). This is the attitude one should have while serving others. There are many who take part in service activities, but how many are able to enjoy the benefits derived therefrom? First of all, you should understand the term service. True service is that which is done with divine feelings, forgetting oneself. Service should be done as an offering to God. Service has value only when it is done with *daivabhimana* (love for God) and not *dehabhimana* (attachment to body). Even a small act of service done with the sole intention of pleasing God will acquire great significance.

Cultivate The Spirit Of Oneness

Embodiments of Love!

Enquire, who is serving whom. The one who is serving and the one who is served are one and the same. *Ekatma sarvabhutantaratma* (the same atma is present in all beings). *Ekam Sath viprah bahudha vadanti* (Truth is one but scholars refer to it by many names). *Ek Prabhu ke anek naam* (one God has many names). God is one though you extol Him by various names. Names and forms are not important. Feeling is the basis for devotion. God is *bhavapriya* (lover of feelings) not *bahyapriya* (lover of external show), which means God sees the feeling behind your activities. People from Bejawada (Vijayawada) have

come here after taking part in Grama Seva (service to villages) chanting the Divine Name for the last 76 days. Thousands of devotees from Shirdi have come here on a pilgrimage. They visited various pilgrimage centres and have come here from Kanyakumari via Bangalore. *Karmanubandheeni manushya loke* (human society is bound by action). Why is the body given to you? God has given you the body to perform *loka seva* (service to the world). Do not misuse the body by indulging in evil thoughts and deeds. Undertake noble deeds and sanctify your lives. Man's foremost duty is to serve society with noble feelings. Consider the body as an instrument given by God in order to serve your fellowmen with love.

God is present in every being as the eternal witness. This truth is proclaimed by 'Soham' which is pronounced with each breath, 'So' with each inhalation and 'Ham' with each exhalation. 'So' means That (God) and 'Ham' means I. This process goes on for 21,600 times a day in every human being. In this manner, the inner voice reminds man of his divine nature as many times everyday. But man acts in a foolish manner without paying heed to his inner voice. Who is the doer? Who breathes, who speaks, who listens, who acts? It is the Self within, which is the same in all. Cultivate this spirit of oneness. The one who does and the one who makes you do are one and the same. Understand that you are not serving others, you are serving yourself. The same truth is proclaimed by the Vedas in the four *Mahavakyas: Prajnanam Brahma* (Brahman is Supreme

Consciousness); *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman); *Tattwamasi* (that thou art), *Ayam Atma Brahma* (this atma is Brahman). These are the greatest teachings given to mankind by the Vedas. Unfortunately, man today has lost faith in the teachings of the Vedas. Divinity shines in every breath of man. Truly speaking, man is endowed with *sujnana* (wisdom) and *prajnana* (awareness). But man, out of his ignorance, is acting contrary to his divine nature. Before partaking of food, you offer it to God with the prayer:

*Brahmarpanam Brahma Havir
Brahmagnou Brahmanahutam
Brahmaiva Thena Ganthavyam
Brahma Karma Samadhina.*

You say that the food is an offering to Brahman. Then where is Brahman? He is within. So, immediately God replies from within:

*Aham Vaishvanaro Bhutva
Praninam Dehamasrita
Pranapana Samayukta
Pachamyannam Chaturvidham.*

Glorify Human Life By Your Meritorious Deeds

God is present in the form of Vaisvanara in everybody. So, when you help others, you are helping yourself. Similarly, hurting others amounts to hurting your own self. *Sarva jeeva namaskaram kesavam pratigachchhati* (whom-

soever you salute, it reaches God) and *Sarva jeeva tira-skaram kesavam pratigach-chhati* (whomsoever you denigrate, it reaches God). There is no point in undertaking pilgrimages or chanting the divine name without understanding the oneness of divinity. You may call Him by any name and worship Him in any form, but God is one. Never forget this principle of unity. But, unfortunately, man fragments unity into diversity. Try to visualise unity in diversity. This is the true service that man is supposed to undertake. *Man mein ram hath mein kam* (install God in your heart and use your hands in the service of society). Then whatever work you do will be transformed into worship.

Today man lacks faith in the path of service. For the past many years, you have been listening to discourses and performing various service activities. But what have you achieved? What have you known? Nothing whatsoever. Therefore, in the first instance, you should cultivate righteous conduct. Develop right vision, right listening and right speech. By practising these, you can develop goodness. Only then can you attain Nirvana (liberation). Do not be under the impression that God is confined only to temples. It is not enough if you merely visit temples and offer your salutations to the idols of God. Offer your salutations to all beings with the conviction that you are saluting the Lord Himself. There is no being without God. God is the Indweller of all beings (*sarvabhutantaratma*). Man's foremost duty is to understand this truth and act accordingly.

You have been listening to various discourses, going on pilgrimages and reading sacred texts. But what is the use if there is no transformation in you? Man today has become stone-hearted. Heart should be as soft as butter. Mind should be as cool as moonlight and speech should be as sweet as honey. These are the main values that the Sathya Sai Organisation stands for. These are the true ornaments of man. Though man is endowed with sacred qualities and immense powers, he is leading a meaningless life without making use of them in the service of others. Though God has endowed man with a sweet heart and a sacred mind, man is not putting them to proper use. Never utter harsh words; always speak softly and sweetly. Make proper use of the faculties given to you by God.

Embodiments of Love!

To be born as human being is the greatest blessing. *Janthunam narajanma durlabham* (out of all the living beings, human birth is the rarest). It is the result of merits accrued over many previous lives. Such a sacred life should not be misused. Speak sweetly and offer your respects to all with a smiling face. You call yourself a devotee. But there is no truth in this statement if you lack these noble qualities. Fill your mind with noble thoughts and perform meritorious deeds. There lies the glory of human life. You should earn the respect of everybody by your behaviour.

Do not consider yourself a mere mortal. *Jiva is deva* (man is divine). This is the fundamental teaching of Indian

philosophy. *Easwara sarva bhutanam* (God is the Indweller of all beings). Fill your hearts with such noble feelings, put them into practice and sanctify your lives. Remember that you are born as a human being. Live up to your stature as a human being. Spirituality does not mean doing worship, going on pilgrimages or doing *bhajans* alone. Spirituality lies in destroying the animal tendencies and rising to the level of divinity. So long as there are animal tendencies in man, he cannot rise to the level of divinity. Day by day, animal qualities are increasing in man. You are neither a wild animal to cause fear in others nor a docile domestic animal to be afraid of others. You are born as a human being with noble human qualities. So, recognise your humanness and divinity. But man today is not able to realise this truth and consequently he is wasting his life.

Divinity Can Be Attained Only By Love

Embodiments of Love!

It is most important for you to take note of these teachings, which I am repeating time and again. Never neglect them. The divine power latent in you is limitless. *Anoraneeyan mahato maheeyan* (divinity is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). Therefore, it is impossible to estimate the nature of divinity. Words are inadequate to describe it. Whatever description you give is only for your own satisfaction. It is a great mistake to try to gauge the infinite power of divinity with your limited mind.

However, the microcosm and the macrocosm differ only in quantity, not in quality. Here is a small example. The ocean water is saline. Go to an ocean and get a potful of water. The water in the ocean and the water in the pot differ only in quantity but the taste remains the same. You should always have quality in mind, not quantity. God is interested only in quality. One teaspoon of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk. Don't get carried away by quantity. Do not run after material objects. Do not be greedy. Greed leads to sorrow. Aspire for quality. It is the quality and not the quantity that gives you happiness.

Embodiments of Love!

Today there are many who are in search of God. Where is God? He is here, there and everywhere. Such being the case, where is the need to search for Him? Prahlada said, "*Never doubt that God is here and not there. Wherever you search for Him, He is there.*" (Telugu Poem) He was a small boy. His teachers Chanda and Amarka tried to change his mind and even subjected him to punishment; but Prahlada was undeterred in his resolve. His mind was always focused on Lord Narayana. He was constantly repeating His Name. One day his father Hiranyakasipu summoned him and said, "My dear one, it seems you have studied many subjects; let me have the pleasure of listening to some of them." Prahlada replied, "Father! The teachers have taught me many things, I have understood the four objectives of life: Dharma (righteousness), *Artha* (wealth), *Kama* (desire)

and *Moksha* (liberation). *I have studied many things; in fact, I have understood the very essence of education.*” (Telugu Poem) When his father asked him as to what the essence of education was, Prahlada chanted the Divine Name, *Om Namō Narayanaya*. Hiranyakasipu became furious. He could not tolerate Prahlada repeating Lord Narayana’s name. He punished him and sent him away. Hiranyakasipu hated God, whereas Prahlada had intense love for God. Only through love can *manavatwa* (humanness) be transformed into *Daivatwa* (divinity).

Embodiments of Love!

Never have hatred and jealousy. Kill your ego. Only then will love blossom in you. Through love alone can you attain divinity. That is why the *Gopikas* sang, “*Oh Krishna, play your sweet flute and sow the seeds of love in the desert of loveless hearts. Let the rain of love fall on earth and make the rivers of love flow.*” (Telugu song) How nectarous is the song of the Divine! Only those who are filled with divine feelings can experience its taste.

Do Namasmarana And Redeem Your Life

Embodiments of Love!

It may not be possible for you to undertake rigorous spiritual practices like meditation, penance, yoga, etc. It is enough if you chant the Divine Name. Do not undertake practices which you do not understand. Take to the simplest path, i.e., *namasmarana*. In *Krita Yuga*, meditation

was prescribed as the means to liberation. In *Treta Yuga*, it was *yajna*. In *Dwapara Yuga*, people performed *archana* (worship), and in this *Kali Age*, *namasmarana* is the prescribed path to liberation. “*In this Kali Age, chanting of the Lord’s Name alone can grant you liberation. There is no greater path than this.*” (Sanskrit sloka) So, sing His glory and cross this ocean of worldly life. *Namasmarana* is the basis of all spiritual practices.

Embodiments Of Love, Students, Pilgrims And Sevaks!

There are nine paths of devotion: *sravanam* (listening), *kirtanam* (singing), *vishnusmaranam* (contemplating on Vishnu), *padasevanam* (serving His Lotus Feet), *vandanam* (salutation), *archanam* (worship), *dasyam* (servitude), *sneham* (friendship), *atma-nivedanam* (self-surrender). Paths may be different but the goal is one and the same. Follow any path and reach the goal. With the passage of time, you should move closer to the goal. Do not go away from it. Never act against the divine command. Do not submit to selfishness and self-interest. Selfishness takes you away from spirituality. Give up selfishness and dedicate your lives for the divine cause. When you proceed along the divine path, you will be charged with divine energy.

Today thousands of people from Shirdi have come here after visiting many *Punya Kshetras* (pilgrimage centres). They have been chanting the Divine Name all

along. It is the power of *namasmarana* that has brought them to Prasanthi Nilayam. *Kshetras* (fields) may be different but the *kshetrajna* (knower of the field) is one. The Lord says in the *Gita*, *Kshetrajnām chapimāam viddhi...* (recognise Me as the knower of the field also). There can be no *kshetra* without *kshetrajna*. You may visit any number of *punya kshetras* but in the first instance, you have to purify your *hridaya kshetra* (field of the heart). Never utter harsh words. Do not criticise others. Give up *para chintana* (thinking about others) and cultivate *paramatma chintana* (thinking about God). This is the true *sadhana*.

Serve the needy to the extent possible. The service you render should be meaningful and purposeful. Here is a small example. Many of our former students are undertaking various service activities in the neighbouring villages, e.g., Brahmanapalli, Beedupalli, Enumula-palli, etc. How should one serve? One should do it in the true spirit of service. When you go to a village for service, you should involve the villagers also in the service activities and motivate them to undertake such sacred work everyday in their village. It is not possible for you to go to the villages everyday. You may go to a village once in a month or two. Therefore, when you involve the villagers in the service activities, they will learn to serve themselves. You should teach them the importance of cleanliness. Usually, villagers live in unhygienic conditions which cause various diseases. So, you should teach them to keep their village clean. The water

that we drink and the air that we breathe should be free from pollution. Only then can we lead a happy and healthy life.

Cultivate *samyak drishti* (right vision), *samyak vak* (right speech), *samyak sravanam* (right listening), *samyak bhavam* (right thinking) and *samyak karma* (right action). This will make your life perfect. Then you become deserving of divine grace. Only then can you attain *sayujyam* (liberation). *Salokyam* (perception of the divine) is the first step, *sameepyam* (proximity to the divine) is the second, *sarupyam* (identity with the divine) is the third and *sayujyam* (merger with the divine) is the fourth. Just as rivers ultimately merge with the ocean, man should become one with God. *Nadinam sagaro gathi* (the ocean is the goal of the rivers). What is the goal of human life? Is it to enjoy worldly pleasures? No. You may have all the comforts you like, but ultimately you should strive to become one with the divine. The very purpose of life is to have the vision of God, experience Him and ultimately merge with Him. But today man is doing just the opposite. He has forgotten God and is wasting his life in the pursuit of worldly pleasures. Human life is highly sacred, noble and divine. It should not be wasted in such unworthy pursuits.

Students! Pilgrims!

Do not be carried away by worldly pleasures. Take to the sacred path and sanctify your time by chanting the

divine name. There is no need to allocate a specific time or place for *namasmarana*. You can do it wherever you are and whatever you are doing. One needs to pay tax for water, electricity, etc., but there is no tax for *namasmarana*. Nobody can stop you from doing it. It is very simple, yet most effective. But man does not realise the value of *namasmarana* as it is so easy to practise. He thinks that God can be attained only through severe austerities. This is a misconception. Without troubling yourself or causing trouble to others, you can chant the divine name.

Cultivate love for God. That is true devotion. Without love, there is no devotion. Love is the basis of all spiritual practices like *japa*, *thapa*, *yoga*, *dhyana*, etc. Bereft of love, any spiritual practice is a futile exercise. For the life here and hereafter, love is most important. Love is the basic requirement for all, whether one is an *aartha* (one in distress), an *artharathi* (seeker of wealth), *jijnasu* (seeker of knowledge) or a *jnani* (one of wisdom). Love is the foundation for a theist as well as an atheist. Develop such sacred love. Do not criticise or ridicule anybody. Give happiness to all by sharing your love with them. This is the true spiritual practice. Follow this simple path, experience *ananda* and sanctify your lives.

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