

Have Faith in God, the Only True Friend

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How is it that the sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening with utmost regularity everyday?

How is it that the stars glitter beautifully in the sky at night and hide themselves during the day?

How is it that the wind blows incessantly and sustains the living beings without taking rest even for a moment?

How is it that the rivers make gurgling sounds as they flow perennially?

(Telugu Poem)

The whole world, nay, even every individual is permeated by the five elements of earth, water, fire, air, and ether (*pancha bhutas*). What is *prapancha* (world)? *Pra* means vast, and *panchamu* means permeated by the five elements. Therefore, *prapancha* means the vast space, permeated by the five elements. Wherever you see, you will find the effulgence of the five elements enveloping the vast world.

Embodiments of Love!

God is the source and sustenance for all creation. No one can question why God acts in a particular fashion. He is the Supreme Lord of the Universe, and He can act according to His Divine Will. The creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the Universe are all His Will. But whatever He does is only for the good of the world.

For example, one cannot find a place or time without air; though air is not visible, one can experience it.

Every act in this world, the tiniest one, happens as per the Divine Will. For instance, a particular act of God may bring you some inconvenience or sorrow. That is at your individual level.

But, in God's creation, there is nothing like sorrow. Whatever God does is for the welfare of humanity.

Some people feel depressed and wail as to why God gave them troubles and sorrows. But, sorrows and difficulties are our own making. God does not differentiate or cause trouble to anyone. Sorrows and difficulties are only your feelings. Everything in God's creation is meant to provide happiness and convenience to the living beings.

That is what I have been repeatedly emphasizing: Whether you are in sorrow or enjoying happiness, always think that everything is for your own good. One has to develop a firm conviction that whatever God does is for one's own good and not for putting one to trouble.

Unable to realise this truth, people experience all sorts of difficulties and sorrows. This is not the correct attitude. One has to strive to recognise the truth underlying God's creation.

There are countless people in this world, with various feelings. Also, several people strive to sharpen their intellect. But very few strive to cultivate noble qualities. Without cultivating noble qualities, what is the use of intelligence alone? All ancient sages (*rishis*) exhorted people to cultivate noble qualities.

It is a great mistake to consider oneself very intelligent and well educated merely by acquiring high degrees. Mere intelligence and acquisition of high degrees in education are of no use. One has to cultivate noble qualities along with education and intelligence. Intelligence without noble qualities is undesirable.

Today is the first day of the *Navaratri* celebrations which are held for nine days (*Nava Rath-*

rulu). All festivals are meant to remind people to cultivate noble qualities by engaging in activities beneficial to their own self and society. Whatever activity we undertake, we must analyse for ourselves whether our intention and resolve to do the same are good and whether we would be able to develop noble qualities by performing such an act.

Due to the effect of the *Kali Yuga* (the age we are now in), people have been able to develop their intelligence in several areas by conscientious effort, but they are not making any effort to cultivate noble qualities. People have lost confidence in themselves. Though one is able to occupy high positions in worldly life with one's intelligence, it is of no use without noble qualities. Therefore, the need of the hour is for people to deepen their faith (*nammakam*). Faith is like the two eyes to a person. Devoid of faith, one is blind. Only when one has faith in oneself, can one have faith in God.

Some people declare "I have no faith in God." This is a meaningless statement. If they have no faith in God, on whom else do they have faith? Only when one develops faith in God can one have faith in everything else. Therefore, one has to develop faith in God, in the first instance.

With faith in God, one can achieve success in all endeavours. One who has faith in God will be able to develop faith in every individual. Such a person will develop a firm conviction that God is immanent in every living being.

The *Upanishads* declare that the entire universe is permeated by God (*Isavasyam idam sarvam*) and that God is the indweller of all beings (*Easwara sarva bhutanam*). God is immanent in every being as faith (*nammakammu*). Therefore, one has to cultivate faith in God, as one's first and foremost duty. All the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, and scriptures emphasise this as the duty of a person.

Today, people have faith in everything in the objective world. For example, when a news item appears in the newspaper that so and so died in Russia under such and such circumstances, we believe that news without an iota of doubt. How did we believe that news? Who gave this news to us? It is only through the newspaper. We are able to believe the newspapers, but we are unable to

believe an experience born out of eternal truth and its practice in daily life.

In order to develop firm faith in the eternal truth, we have to cultivate noble qualities. This is our foremost duty. By doing so, our faith in God also increases. Unfortunately, today we are setting aside our faith in God and believing in what others say. Thereby, we are entering the wrong path. We have to develop self-confidence first. Only then can we develop faith in every aspect of God's creation.

Dear Students! Devotees!

What is of utmost importance today is to develop faith in God. People develop ego, believing they know everything in this world. This ego is, in fact, a sign of ignorance.

Without having faith in God, if one says that one believes everything in this world, then such faith is not based on a solid foundation. People today believe everything in this world, even that which they have not seen. But they are not prepared to believe that which is right in front of their eyes, the manifestation of Divinity in ever so many ways.

There is fire latent in the branches of a tree, which becomes patent when one branch rubs against the other and friction is generated. Can anyone deny the existence of fire in the branches of a tree? But, why are people unable to recognise this truth (Divinity)? It is because of ego. Just as the fire born out of the branches of a tree destroys the tree itself, so also the ego born out of a human being destroys the very human being. Hence, one has to develop firm faith in the existence of God. Without this faith, one degenerates into a demon.

Students! Teachers! Patrons of education!

You should understand the true meaning of education. Education does not mean mere acquisition of bookish knowledge.

Can you call all those who know how to read and write educated?

Can you be called educated merely by acquiring degrees?

How can you attain the eternal knowledge if you do not know your true Self?

(Telugu Poem)

Make efforts to know your true identity. All your education will prove futile if you do not know who you really are.

When you are seated here, you listen to the discourses in rapt attention. But, once you leave this place, you forget everything. You will lose faith in what you have heard here. This is not expected of a human being. You should have total faith in the spiritual teachings, put them into practice, and experience bliss.

Faith is the first and foremost quality that one inherits by birth. One develops faith in one's mother in the first instance. The mother may scold or beat the child, yet faith in the mother remains firm. That is the greatness of the love of a mother. One should develop as much faith in God as one has for one's mother. But unfortunately, people lack such firm faith in God.

Everyone wants to have the direct vision of God. Who is God? Where is He? It can be said that the sun is the direct manifestation of God, since the sun gives us light and sustains our life. The sun-god bestows his love on all in the form of light. If you do not have faith in the light of love, your life will be filled with darkness.

Once a disciple asked his teacher (*guru*), "Where is God?" The *guru* replied that He was everywhere and was present in all beings. The disciple expressed doubt as to how it was possible for God to be present in all beings. The *guru* asked him to bring ten vessels and fill them with water. The reflection of the sun could be seen in all of them. Likewise, God is present in all beings. Vessels may vary, but the sun's reflection is one and the same in all. Hence, the sun is the direct manifestation of Divinity (*pratyaksha Param-atma*). However, there can be no reflection without water.

Our physical body can be compared to a vessel and the inborn tendencies (*vasanas*) to water. If your thoughts and feelings are good, you can see the reflection of Divinity clearly. When your thoughts are impure and bad, you will not be able to see the reflection of Divinity. The mistake lies in your thoughts, and not in the reflection.

Likewise, only you are responsible for your happiness or sorrow. Hence, cultivate noble and sacred feelings in the first instance.

I often tell you that the physical body is like a water bubble and the mind is like a mad monkey. Therefore, do not repose your faith in the body or mind. Have firm faith in your Self. It is from the Self that the body and mind have originated.

Students!

When you have faith in your Self, you will not experience difficulties and sorrows. Therefore, at least have faith in the teachings of elders and follow them implicitly.

The sun-god is only one, but he appears separately in different parts of the world. When the sun rises in America, it is time of sunset in India. The Indians will say that the sun is setting and at the same time the Americans will say that the sun is rising. There is no question of argument here. Time may vary, but both are correct from their own points of view.

As part of the *Navaratri* celebrations, people worship different forms of divinity. You should develop sacred feelings and experience divinity.

What is the inner meaning of the *Navaratri* celebrations? These nine nights represent nine planets. Each planet has its own significance. However, these planets are not outside, they are within. If your feelings are impure and unsacred, the result also will be the same. You are responsible for the good and bad you think and experience. They are not the products of the outside world. They are the reaction, reflection, and resound of your inner being.

People face the vicissitudes of life because they are bound by these three. But people forget these three and search for solutions to their problems. They think they are highly intelligent. In fact, that is not true intelligence. Lack of faith in Divinity is the real cause of their suffering.

God is one. Likewise, human beings are one, though forms (*akara*) and behaviour (*acharana*) may vary. But due to narrow-mindedness, people are unable to understand this unity.

When you eat a mango, you cannot get the belch of a cucumber. Likewise, whatever you experience is the result of your own thoughts and feelings. No outside force is responsible for it.

Do not be carried away by external influences. Follow the sacred feelings that originate from your heart.

The *Navaratri* celebrations are symbolic of the nine forms of energy. What we have to cultivate during this *Navaratri* is the feeling of oneness. Though there are nine forms of energy, the underlying truth in all of them is one and the same. That is the principle of *Atma*. It is all-pervasive. It is present not only in human beings but in all living beings.

If you are walking toward the West when the sun is rising in the East, your shadow will be moving ahead of you, much bigger than your size. As the sun rises gradually, your shadow becomes smaller. At noon when the sun is right above your head, the shadow will be right under your feet.

Likewise, when you develop equanimity, your ego will be subdued just like the shadow under your feet. First and foremost, you have to give up ego to understand the oneness of the *Atma*. God is one, but the wise refer to Him by various names (*Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti*). God is one without a second (*Ekam eva adviteeyam Brahma*).

There is only unity everywhere; multiplicity is your own imagination. The mistake lies in your vision, not in the creation. Make efforts to understand this underlying principle of oneness.

First, develop faith in yourself. See only goodness in others. If you see bad in others, it is the reflection of your own feelings. Develop love for the Self (*atmabhimana*) and will power (*atma shakti*). Exercise self control. Only through self control can you achieve self satisfaction. Visualise unity in multiplicity.

Embodiments of Love!

You are the embodiments of one principle of *Atma* (*Ekatma swarupas*). You have only one heart, not two. If you have two hearts, you have to be admitted in the hospital. Likewise, there is only one *Atma*. That is the ultimate truth.

Hence, develop the feeling of oneness. If you follow the path of truth, you will find the manifestation of truth everywhere. There is only one principle of love in you. But, you are dispersing it

in diverse ways. You think that there are various forms of love. It is only your imagination.

Make efforts to understand the principle of spirituality. Have firm conviction that you are the embodiment of *Atma* and there is no second entity in this world. All worldly relationships such as mother, wife, and children are of your own making. It is only a temporary relationship but not the reality. Do not get deluded by such worldly relationships.

Develop firm faith in your 'real nation' i.e. the *Atma*. Do not believe in the world. Believe in yourself. Have firm conviction that God is everywhere. With hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth, and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe (*Sarvatah panipadam tat sarvathokshi siromukham, sarvatah sruthimalloke sarvamavruthya yishthati*). But you see duality because of your mistaken identity and delusion.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is in you. It need not be acquired from outside. Worldly love is based on worldly relationship. Whomever you love, you love your own reflection. It is a mistake to think that you love someone else.

You point to somebody and say, "He is my friend." But in fact, God alone is your true friend. He will never betray you. Sometimes, you may doubt your true friend, but He will never doubt you or forsake you. Your feelings may change according to time and situation, but God is changeless. He always has the feeling of oneness. Once you consider God as your true friend, everyone will be friendly toward you.

Truly speaking, you have no enemies. There is none other than you in this world. When there is no second person, how can there be an enemy? All are like passing clouds, but you think they are permanent and repose your faith in them. Consequently, you are unable to have faith in God, who is pure and selfless. You forget the divine love and get intoxicated with the 'deep wine' of worldly love.

Embodiments of Love!

If you want to know God, imbibe the principle of oneness. When you have the feeling of oneness,

you can see the direct manifestation of God. The sages of *Vedic* times adored the sun as the direct manifestation of God as described in the *Gayatri Mantra*. Consider God as your mother, father, friend and everything.

He alone is the father and mother, friend and relation, wisdom and wealth to every individual

Twameva mathascha pitha Twameva,
Twameva bandhuscha sakha Twameva,
Twameva vidya dravinam Twameva
Twameva sarvam mama Deva Deva

But people have forgotten God and are craving fleeting pleasures. Nothing is permanent in this world. All your worldly relations are temporary. Your life itself is temporary. Such being the case, how can you consider someone as your permanent friend?

There is only one permanent friend: God. If you want to experience true love, have full faith in God. God's love is steady. It never diminishes. You may undergo any amount of suffering, yet you belong to God. You are His and He is yours. No third person can come between you and God.

It is only because of illusion that you think there is a third person. You say, "He is my classmate; he is my sports mate." But none of them can come to your rescue. You have to look after yourself. You should have faith in yourself. Only then can you realise the truth.

Embodiments of Love!

Never forget love. Love is the form of God. Love is God. Live in love. Only then can you understand the reality. Do not go by what others say. Follow your conscience. Never lose faith in God under any circumstances.

Sometimes even your parents may try to dissuade you from taking to God-ward path. Tell them that God means everything for you. He is your true friend.

You love your mother because it is she who gave you birth and fostered you. You consider someone as your teacher because you learn your lessons from them. You treat so and so as your mother, father, teacher, etc., based on your relationship and experience. Truly speaking, all these relationships come and go just like moving pictures on a cinema screen.

Don't be deluded by the pictures that appear on the screen. Have the picture of God imprinted on your heart. Develop strong conviction and consider Him as your sole refuge. Only then can you have the vision of God.

This morning, a Russian lady came to Me. During the course of conversation, she said, "Swami, I have a friend." When I asked who he was, she took out her wallet and showed a small photograph.

I told her, "Mother, he is your husband, not your friend. Do not consider your husband as your friend or your friend as your husband."

She said, "Swami, this is what I have been doing all these years. Is it a mistake?"

I said, "Yes, it is a mistake, it certainly IS a mistake." Then I asked her when she met him first. She said that she knew him for the last three years.

I told her, "This type of relationship is temporary. God alone is your true friend. You may forget Him, but He will never forget you. He will be with you even after your death. Hence, treat God as your true friend. Ultimately, you will become one with Him."

Embodiments of Love!

Many in this world do not understand what is true spirituality and thereby forget reality. God alone is your true friend. That is the reality. He is your mother, father, teacher, etc. Develop such firm conviction. Then God will always take care of you.

When you cultivate the principle of oneness (*ekatma bhava*), all divine qualities will manifest in you. You will be an ideal to the world. You will be free from suffering. You will have neither death nor any punishment. You will realise your true identity.

If someone puts a question, "Who are you?", say with firm conviction, "I am I." Never identify yourself with the body. He who realises this truth is a blessed one. I will elaborate on this subject in the days to come.

Worldly teachers (*gurus*) undergo change with the passage of time. God alone is changeless and He alone is your true *guru*. Have total faith in

God. Develop faith day by day. Only then can you be called a true human being (*manava*).

God incarnates in the form of a human being (*Daivam manusha rupena*). Hence, consider yourself divine. Declare with total conviction, "I am I." When you lead your life with such a sacred feeling, Divinity will certainly manifest in you.

Never be under the mistaken notion that God is elsewhere. He is always in you. Your reflection is God's reflection. Your reaction is His reaction. Everything is basically divine in nature. It is God who makes you play your role in this cosmic drama. It is He who makes you sing, dance, etc. He is the cosmic play director. You may call Him by any name, but He is only one.

Embodiments of Love!

If you want to attain God, develop the principle of oneness (*ekatma bhava*). You will certainly be able to see and experience Him, everywhere.

(Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan*, "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho...*")