

Association With Sacred Company Confers Mental Purification And Bliss Sathya Sai Baba

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Sai Baba gave this discourse during the *Athi Rudra Maha Yagna*, a great rite (*maha yagna*) performed over 11 days (9-19 August 2006) for world peace and prosperity. *Athi* means ultimate and *Rudra* is a name for Siva, so this *athirudra* is the highest form of worship of Siva.

During the rite, 132 priests chant and perform oblations around 11 fire-pits. The chanting consists mainly of many repetitions of *namakas* (because each verse ends in *namah*, meaning "name") and *chamakas* (because each verse ends in *cha me*, meaning "and to me [may this be granted]") from the *Vedas*. The *namakas* praise Rudra and describe His attributes; the *chamakas* ask for blessings.

For a detailed report, visit media.radiosai.org/journals/Vol_04/01SEP06/CoverStory_Army.htm

Priests, the Embodiments of Sacredness, Devotees and Students!

Bharat (India) is the land of abundance. It is the sacred land that has given birth to a number of great scholars, musicians, and women of character. It is a great misfortune that having been born in this sacred land, people are not able to realise its ancient glory and rich cultural heritage.

The rituals performed by the head priest this morning have a profound significance and a great inner meaning. People observe the performance of the rituals, but they are not able to experience the philosophy underlying the rituals. Whatever we hear from our elders, we should try to experience them in our heart.

It is said, "Those whose thoughts, words, and deeds are in perfect harmony are noble ones; those who lack harmony of these are wicked (*Manasyekam vachasyekam, karmanyekam mahatmanam; manasyanyath vachasyanyath, karmanyanyath duratmanam*)." Therefore, it is necessary for all those who observe the performance of these rituals and hear the *Vedic* mantras being chanted therein to experience the divine feelings in their heart. In Bharat, wherever you look, you will find excellence in the fields of music and literature.

Listening, singing, contemplating on Vishnu, serving His Lotus Feet, salutation, worship, servitude, friendship, self-surrender (*sravanam, kirtanam, Vishnusmaranam, padasevanam, vandanam, archanam, dasyam, sneham, atmanivedanam* — these are the nine forms of devotion for attaining God. They have been propagated since ancient times.

The intense devotion and steadfast faith that are seen in Bharat are not seen anywhere else. It is only in Bharat that people are able to overcome their trials and tribulations and lead a peaceful life by contemplating on God all the time. Such sanctity and sacredness is not found anywhere else in the world. All over the world, wherever you go, you find only misery and suffering. It is the good fortune of the people of this country that they are born in this sacred land.

We do not find the performance of sacred rites like rituals and sacrifices (*yajnas* and *yagas*) anywhere else in the world. People think that offering oblations in fire is *yajna*, but true *yajna* is offering oneself to God, pleasing God, and becoming worthy of His love. A rite should not be performed for selfish ends. It should be performed for the welfare of the entire world.

In Bharat, people have been performing rituals and sacrifices since ancient times. rituals and sacrifices were performed even in *Thretha Yuga* (Era), but demons tried to disrupt the rituals because they did not understand the significance of the *Vedas*.

With the advent of *Dwapara Yuga* (Era), people made an attempt to understand the truth and significance about the performance of rituals and sacrifices (*yajnas* and *yagas*). King Janaka did not attain satisfaction despite performing many rituals and scarifices.

Being educated, people should understand the meaning of rituals and sacrifices. In fact, it is necessary that everyone should involve themselves in their performance. It only means that whatever actions one does should be to please God. We should have the firm conviction that whatever we do, we do only to please God. In fact, the very purpose of human birth is to please God.

Human life is not meant to be wasted on eating and drinking. The purpose of human birth is to attain liberation. One should try to recognise one's true nature.

Whomsoever you come across, you keep on asking, "Who are you?" and thus waste your time. But you never ask, "Who am I?" Once you know the truth about yourself, you will know the true nature of everybody. Do not waste your time on trying to know about others.

The prayer goes,

Salutations to time,
To the one who is beyond time,
To the one who has conquered time,
To the one who transcends time,
To the one who is the embodiment of time,
To the one who ordains time

Kalaya namah,
Kala kalaya namah,
Kaladarpa damanaya namah,
Kalateetaya namah,
Kalaswarupaya namah,
Kalaniyomitaya namah.

Therefore, we should not waste even a single moment in our life. People today strive to attain materialistic gains and intellectual growth and to satisfy the senses, but nobody is making an effort to

attain self-realisation. How long do the sensual pleasures and bodily pleasures last? They are all momentary and fleeting. Only what is heartfelt is lasting. Therefore, make efforts to satisfy your conscience. This is possible only by associating yourself with good company.

The company of the good takes one away from
false attachments;
When attachment is lost, delusion ends;
When delusion ends, the mind becomes steady;
From steady mind comes liberation even in this
life.

Satsangatwe nissangatwam,
Nissangatwe nirmohatwam,
Nirmohatwe nischalatattwam,
Nischalatattwe jivanmukti.

(Sanskrit verse)

You become bad by associating with bad company. Tell me your company, and I shall tell you what you are, so goes the saying. The type of qualities you acquire depends upon your company. Therefore, associate with noble and spiritually minded people.

The people gathered here form a great spiritual company. This type of company is not available anywhere else. When you associate yourself with such noble company, you get noble feelings. When water evaporates, it forms into clouds. But all clouds do not bring rain. Rain depends upon the type of clouds. Today we are not getting good rains. One's life depends upon water. Pure water ensures good health and long life.

Many diseases are caused by polluted water. Similarly pollution in the environment is the cause of many diseases. Therefore, we should keep our environment clean and pure. It is also necessary to consume only pure water. Then only can one become healthy and blissful. Happiness is very essential for good health.

Students! Boys and Girls!

You are all young. It is essential for you to have your environment and food clean and pure. You should always have good company. Speak good words, have healthy entertainment, and engage in good activities. Life is a game, play it. Engage yourself in the welfare of others and lead a life in such a noble way that it leads to liberation. Anyone you talk to, always speak in a calm

tone, in words of empathy and compassion. Avoid harsh words. Your harsh words will hurt the feelings of others. Speak such words that touch the heart of others. Help Ever Hurt Never.

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

Saha navavathu
Saha nau bhunakthu
Saha veeryam karavavahai
Tejaswinavadeetamasthu ma vidvishavahai

Develop friendship with others by speaking good words. Good company will make your heart filled with good feelings. When your thoughts are good, your actions will also be good. And when your actions are good, their result is bound to be good. The tongue, that is the gift of God, should therefore be used to speak softly and sweetly in a sacred way. It is a noble tradition of Bharat that people here speak such sacred words.

When an elder person comes to your house, treat them respectfully and offer them a proper seat. Never use improper and disrespectful words while talking to elders. Your being good or bad depend mainly upon the words you use. When you speak politely, you will have respect in society and others will also speak to you politely.

Students! Never be proud of your education. If you develop pride at this stage, you will become egoistic in life. When your words are good, your heart will also be good. When the heart is full of sweetness, all our feelings will also become sweet. Therefore, make your heart pure, soft and sweet.

During the forthcoming days, many learned persons will address you. You will have the opportunity of listening to their sacred talk. See that these sacred words are imprinted on your heart.

Embodiments of Love!

Lead your lives with compassion, kindness, and love. Suffuse your life with love. Love is nectarine—it has unmatched sweetness. Therefore always use polite words. Even if you come across an enemy, offer your salutations to him. Do not turn your back even upon your enemy. Be friendly with everybody. The *Vedas* declare that we should

live and work together and achieve noble goals with unity.

Let us all move together, let us all grow together,
Let us all stay united and grow in intelligence
together,
Let us live together with friendship and harmony.
(Telugu poem)

This is the foremost teaching of the *Vedas*. God has given you a soft tongue. Do not speak harsh words with your tongue. The soft tongue should always speak soft and sweet words. Harsh words will make you hard-hearted. If you speak politely, you will have good results. On the other hand, harsh words will always bring bad results.

Embodiments of Love!

The chief priest has given a talk on a very good spiritual topic. Try to understand the meaning of the subjects dwelt upon by him during this holy ritual (*yajna*).

Do not limit your education to what is taught by the teachers in the classroom. Bookish knowledge is artificial. This type of artificial education is of little worth. What is important is not artificial but “heartificial”.

In the coming days, you will listen to talks by many learned speakers on valuable subjects, which will enhance your knowledge and purity. Listening, singing, contemplating on Vishnu, serving His Lotus Feet, salutation, worship, servitude, friendship, and self-surrender (*sravanam*, *kirtanam*, *Vishnusmaranam*, *padasevanam*, *vandanam*, *archanam*, *dasyam*, *sneham*, *atmanivedanam*) are the nine forms of devotion. Among them, listening is the first one. So, listen to good things and try to assimilate the goodness contained therein. Move away from the place where unpalatable words are spoken. Let everything bad dissolve in thin air.

Accept only all that is good. Then only good will remain with you for ever. All that is related to God is good. Only that is eternal and sacred. Absorb all that is sacred and base your life on these eternal values.

God’s teachings are full of sweetness. His words are nectarine. Never ignore the teachings of God. You may even give up the body, but not the teachings of God.

The human body is made up of five elements. Nobody knows when it meets its end. It is bound to fall one day or the other. Do not give importance to the body. Life is not meant merely to sustain your body.

Associate with this type of sacred company for mental purification and the attainment of bliss. It isn't enough to merely associate with sacred company; suffuse your heart with the sacred teachings of such an exalted company.