

## 6. Live up to your role

DIVINITY is present in everyone in an unmanifested form. All human beings are sparks of the Divine like the waves of the ocean. Every man is the embodiment of the Divine *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Being-Awareness-Bliss). This has been described categorically in the Bhagavad Gita.

As God is the embodiment of love, man is also an embodiment of love. But man today does not manifest it fully and properly because of his selfishness and self-centredness.

Though humanity has advanced considerably in the material and scientific spheres, it has gone down grievously morally and spiritually. Selfishness is predominant in every action. Behind every thought, every word, self-interest is prominent. It is only when this selfishness is eradicated can Divinity reveal itself.

In rendering *Seva* (service), there should be a recognition of the omnipresence of the Divine in all human beings. Men have not developed the spirit of *Thyaga* (sacrifice) or aversion to *Bhoga* (sensual pleasures). True service calls for a spirit of sacrifice. Sacrifice has been declared to be the only means to achieve immortality.

### **Man has become prey to discontentment**

Men appear to be in quest of God. They do not realise that all that they see is permeated by God. All forms are Divine. But because man's vision is externalised, he is unable to have the inner vision of the Divine.

Man craves for peace. Though the source of peace and bliss is within himself, he seeks them in the external like one pursuing a mirage. Owing to restless activity, endless worry and limitless desires, man has lost peace of mind and has become prey to discontent and misery. At the outset, peace has to be cultivated within ourselves. And then that peace has to be extended to the family. From the home it should be spread to our village. Thus, peace should begin with the individual and spread to the whole society.

In the Sai organisation, efforts are made to propagate the values of Truth, Righteousness, Love, Peace and Non-violence. This is only propagation, but not practice (or demonstration). Mere preaching is of no avail. Truth must be practised. Truth and Righteousness are the highest values upheld by Bharatiya Culture. If people do not live up to Truth and Righteousness, their humanness is worth nothing.

Of all the virtues, love is the foremost. If love is fostered, all other qualities flow from it. In every form of *sadhana* love has the first place. Love is the supreme mark of humanness. Love is God. Live in Love. Start the day with Love. Fill the day with Love. End the day with Love. You have to engage yourselves in *Seva*, eschewing every trace of *Ahamkara* (conceit). Our degradation is the result of forgetting God. When we remember God, our life will be filled with peace and happiness.

Man has three kinds of *Ichha-sakthi* (wishing abilities). One is: *Swechcha* (wishing freely). Two: *Parechcha* (carrying out the wishes of others). Three: *Anichcha* (without wishing). *Swechcha* does not mean freedom to act as you please, using your strength and possessions as you like, regardless of the rights of others.

### **True meaning of the three wishing abilities**

True *Swechcha* (freedom to act as one wishes) consists in taking a decision with your own mind, carrying it out in action and accepting the consequences, for good or ill, wholeheartedly. This is true freedom of will. The freedom that you desire in doing what pleases you should imply that equally freely you accept the consequences flowing from its fulfilment. *Parechcha* refers to what one does at the prompting or bidding of others and laments the consequences resulting from such actions, casting the blame on others for what one suffers. *Anichcha* refers to fortuitous happenings that occur without one's own willing or as a result of actions prompted by others and are accepted as providential.

Having got the precious human form, men must seek to live according to the true requirements of that form. It should be realised that man is not born to wallow in ignorance, poverty or sin. He is born for a higher destiny. He should live up to the role conferred on him.

### **The king, the *sanyasi* and the dancer**

Once a *sanyasi* (renunciant) came to a Maharaja and expounded to him the sacred truths of the *Vedanta*. The king was pleased with his exposition and offered him a plate full of gold coins. The ascetic declined to accept it, saying it was not in keeping with the cowl he was wearing to accept any material gifts. "*What need have I for these things when I have renounced every worldly thing?*" he said. The king was pleased with the *sanyasi's* attitude.

The next day the same person turned up in court in the guise of a danseuse. She danced superbly before the king. The king was pleased and offered to her a plate of gold coins. She declared that she was not willing to accept such a meagre guerdon and wanted more. The king realised at that moment that the person in the dancer's dress was the same person who had appeared as a *sanyasi* the previous day. The king told her: "Yesterday you declined to accept the gift at my hands and today you ask for more than I have offered. What is the inner meaning of this difference in attitude?"

She pointed out that everyone has to act up to the role assumed by him. Wearing the *sanyasi's* robe it was the proper thing for the ascetic to reject any material gift. But in the dancer's role she was entitled to ask for as much as she thought fit. That day she was playing the role of the dancer.

When the king heard her reply, he felt that he had learnt a good lesson from her. "Here I am, a king. I should conduct myself as a king and not behave in any way unbecoming of a person wearing regal robes." He appreciated the lesson which the woman had taught him.

Today someone may wear the ochre robe, but his heart is filled with foulness. He has desires from which even a householder is free. The Bharatiya culture has been undermined with such double life. When you consider the *pandits*, many of them are well-versed in the scriptures and can recite them by rote. They may flaunt their *rudraakshamaalas* (necklace of the sacred beads used in *japa*). They may wear precious shawls. But their actions are not in accordance with their costumes and adornments. "*Pandithaah samadarsinaah*," declares the Gita---the true scholar looks at: everything with an equal eye. How can those who do not have this equal-minded vision be described as *pandits*? If one claiming to be a *sanyasi* has renounced all mundane things, but continues to entertain desires, how can he be regarded as a *sanyasi*? Today many who parade the knowledge of the scriptures are *Bhogarajus* (those who are revelling in luxury) or *Rogarajus* (glorying in disease) but are not becoming *Thyagarajus* (those who are masters of renunciation).

### **Role of Sai *sevaks***

You are the members of the Sathya Sai Seva Dal. As such you must strive to render service in keeping with your role. You are *sevaks*. Have the feeling that whomever you serve, you are serving God. Remember in what spirit Hanuman, the monkey, served Sri Rama. You should not imagine that because he was a monkey he lacked intelligence or other qualities. He has been described as "tranquil, virtuous and strong." Such a person, when he was on a tree in the Asokavana in Lanka, was questioned by the *Rakshasas* as to who he was and wherefrom he had come. Hanuman replied: "*Daasoham Kausalendrasya*" ("I am the servant of Sri Rama, the Lord of Kosala"). He did not boast about his valour or knowledge. He was content to describe himself as the humble and devoted servant of Rama.

Bear in mind the maxim "Without being a *kinkara* (one who is ready to carry out the Lord's command), you cannot become a *Sankara* (the Divine)."

You have to transform your life through service. You should give no room for arrogance or self-interest to the slightest extent in your service activities. Install in your heart the feeling that the service you render to anyone is service to God. Only then does service to man become service to *Madhava* (God).

### **Dedicate all your actions to God**

Born in society, brought up in society, educated by society and deriving countless benefits from society, what are you doing for society? Social service should be regarded as an expression of gratitude to society for what it has done to us. Without society we cannot survive. The God-given body should be employed for practising *Dharma*. As Prahlada said: "Of what use is human birth if the various organs like hands, legs, mouth and ears are not engaged in the worship of the Lord? Such a man is a burden to the womb that bore him." Sankaracharya, exponent of the *Jnana Marga*, in the last reckoning commended the path of *Bhakti* in his "*Bhaja Govindam*."

Women are given to excessive talking. They should treat even their daily chores as a form of concentrated work. If they are unable to attend a *Satsang* on account of household duties, they should not feel miserable on that account. Discharge of duties at home is as sacred as attending a *satsang*. Only if you do your duties at home properly will you be able to render proper service outside. In whatever work you do at home, whether sweeping the floor or making chappthis, convert it into a form of spiritual exercise. Infuse every action with love of the Divine and dedicate it to God.

*Discourse to a large gathering of active workers and other devotees at "Abbotsbury", Madras, on 23-3-1989.*

*Live in the constant contemplation of your kinship with others and with the Universe. Do good to others, treat all nature kindly, speak soft and sweet, become a child devoid of envy, hate and greed; When your ego crosses the threshold of your family or group and takes kindly to those beyond, you have taken the first step to cross the threshold of Maya.*

*BABA*