

17

Put Human Values Into Practice

Man today feels proud that he has mastered many branches of knowledge and studied a number of texts. But he does not try to understand the essence of education. Nowadays, learning is limited only to physical and worldly aspects; moral, ethical and spiritual aspects are left out.

A Test Of Intelligence

Today the parents make strenuous efforts to provide education to their children. But nobody is trying to know the real meaning of education. People think that those who can speak eloquently and have studied a number of books are highly educated. But the fact is that it shows just the knowledge of the alphabet and nothing else. Mere knowledge of the alphabet cannot be called education. Besides knowing the letters, one has to know the meaning of the words and the sentences constituted by them. Having realised this truth, King Krishnadevaraya convened a big assembly. He posed a question to all the assembled poets and scholars. Also present in this assembly were eight renowned poets of his court known as *ashta diggajas* (eight eminent scholars). They were: Allasani Peddana, Nandi Thimmana, Madayyagari Mallana, Dhurjati, Ayyalaraju Ramabhadru, Pingali Surana, Ramarajabhushanudu and Tenali Ramakrishna. Krishnadevaraya wanted to know who among them was the best. He wanted them to frame a meaningful sentence consisting of five words, each word having the same meaning in five different languages. “Whoever comes out with an answer to this question by tomorrow morning will be suitably rewarded”, he declared.

Since his house was far away, Tenali Ramakrishna decided to spend the night in his brother-in-law’s house. When he was provided with a comfortable bed for the night, Ramakrishna refused to sleep on it. He said, “I have to think of an answer to a question put by the king by tomorrow morning. A bed like this is sure to put me to sleep in no time. So, provide a cot for me in the cowshed.” As he was lying on the cot, at one o’clock in the night, one of the cows in the shed gave birth to a calf. Ramakrishna called out to inform his brother-in-law about this. His brother-in-law wanted to know which cow it was since he had given different names to his cows like Lakshmi, Saraswati, Radha, etc. He asked Ramakrishna, “*Ye Aav Ra Bava*” (Oh! brother-in-law! Which cow is that?). When Ramakrishna heard this, his joy knew no bounds since he had found an answer to the king’s question. So, he repeated the phrase again and again. His brother-in-law thought that Ramakrishna was behaving in this strange manner due to lack of sleep.

Next morning, Ramakrishna went to the royal court and found that no one else had the answer to the question. All others were convinced that it was not possible to frame such

a sentence. “*Ye Aav Ra Ba Va*. This is the answer”, he said. Everyone was intrigued. Then he explained, ‘*Ye*’ in Marathi, ‘*Aav*’ in Hindi, ‘*Ra*’ in Telugu, ‘*Ba*’ in Kannada and ‘*Va*’ in Tamil convey the same meaning, i.e., ‘come’. All the five languages were represented in this sentence.

In this manner, one should know the meaning of every letter. People today read many books without knowing the real meaning of the words. But in ancient times, people knew the meaning of every letter that they studied. Pleased with the answer of Tenali Ramakrishna, Krishnadevaraya presented a bundle of gold coins and precious diamonds to him. Ramakrishna was happy to receive the precious gift from the king, but he was worried how he should safeguard it. Therefore, he requested the king to provide him with two bodyguards to enable him to carry the bundle safely to his house. Accompanied by the bodyguards, he carried the bundle safely to his house. On reaching there, the thought of keeping the bundle safe in the house caused him a lot of worry since he did not have any iron safe. His wife came near him and saw the bundle. At that time, Tenali Ramakrishna noticed two thieves who had followed him all the way and were now hiding in the backyard of his house. Then he told his wife that he was going to drop the bundle of gold coins and precious gems into the well in the backyard of his house for its safety. He spoke loudly so that the thieves could overhear him. Instead of putting the bundle of precious gems in the well, he actually put a bag of stones in it. All through the night, the thieves kept on drawing water out of the well in expectation of getting the bundle of gold coins and precious gems. All their attempts proved futile. They left the place at daybreak. Tenali Ramakrishna was happy that he could save the precious bundle from the clutches of thieves and in the process his garden was adequately irrigated.

One who knows the meaning of every letter, every word and every sentence is a true poet. Tenali Ramakrishna was one such great poet.

*Kavim Puranamanushasitaram Anoraniyansamanusmaredya,
Sarvasya Dhataramachintyarupam Adityavarnam Tamasa Parastat.*

(He who contemplates on the all-wise, ageless, the ruler of all,
subtler than the subtle, the universal sustainer,
possessing a form beyond human conception,
refulgent like the sun and far beyond the darkness of ignorance,
reaches verily that supreme divine *Purusha* (God).

Acquire The Knowledge That Makes One Immortal

Today people try to know the meaning of sentences without trying to know the meaning of letters and words that constitute the sentences. Even the preceptors today give only the worldly meaning of the sentences, but none gives the moral, ethical and spiritual import of the sentences. It is the responsibility of teachers to disseminate the knowledge pertaining to moral, ethical and spiritual principles. That is true education. Today the students pursue their

studies, but if you ask them what they are doing, they reply, “*Chaduvu-Kontunnamu*”, which also means, “We are buying education”. That is no education at all. We have to know the meaning of every letter, every word and every sentence and act accordingly. Despite acquiring all this worldly knowledge, one has to meet one’s end which is inevitable. One should acquire that knowledge which makes one immortal. It is the knowledge of the five human values, namely, *sathya*, *dharma*, *santi*, *prema* and *ahimsa*.

The first one is *sathya* (truth). Truth is deathless. Truth is one, not two. *Dharma* (righteousness) is eternal. *santi* (peace) is the source of bliss. Next is *prema* (love). Right from a child to an old person at the verge of death, everyone is endowed with love. But love has no death. The last, but not the least, is *ahimsa* (non-violence). Where is the death for *ahimsa*? Buddha propagated this principle. He declared: *Ahimsa Paramo dharma* (non-violence is the highest *dharma*). Knowledge and practice of these five principles is real education. Speak truth, follow the path of righteousness and experience peace. Share your love happily with all and lead your life with non-violence. This is the essence of education. These are the five main human values which should be propagated in the world. They are eternal and immortal. Today we run after all that is perishable, ignoring that which is immortal. The President of India has told you many important things. You can achieve great heights if you put his teachings into practice. Every human being is endowed with these five human values. If we promote these five human values, we become God. The Vedas declare: *Tat Thwam Asi* (That Thou Art). This profound statement of the *Vedas* contains the essence of all knowledge. Therefore, these five human values have to be inculcated in everyone right from childhood.

When you rely on truth, you can achieve anything in life. *Daivam manusha rupena* (God is in human form). God is not separate from man. All are the embodiments of divinity. The same principle of the *atma* is present in all. But it assumes many names. Develop self-confidence. Face all difficulties with self-confidence. Whomsoever you see, consider him as your own reflection. God is beyond all attributes and actions. Develop the spirit of sacrifice. *Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaike amrutatthwamanasu* (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). You should be prepared to make any sacrifice. Have the firm conviction that you are God and God is not separate from you. Wherever you see, God is there. There is nothing else except God. Names and forms may be different, but the same principle of the *Atma* is present in all.

Practice Of Human Values Promotes Unity And Harmony

All that man experiences is the result of his actions. It is already very late now. I do not want to cause inconvenience to you by speaking at length. It is enough if you know these five principles and put them into practice in your daily life. It is only by practising these five principles that you can know them, not merely by reading or writing about them. Any knowledge that is not put into practice is no knowledge at all. Put into practice at least one or two principles in your life out of all that you have learnt. Then only will your

life be redeemed and you will acquire merit. Then you would have followed the right path. You have heard many things from Me and Kalam. What is the use of all your listening if you do not put anything into practice? It is your rare fortune that you got the opportunity of listening to such sacred talks. Make the best use of the opportunity and attain the goal of your life.

Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavad Gita, *Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana* (the eternal *atma* in all beings is a part of My Being). You are all sparks of divinity. You are not mere mortals. You are not separate from Me. Being an aspect of My Divinity, you should conduct yourself accordingly. Do not waste your time in vain gossip. These five values have originated from God. Wherever you see, there is the principle of unity. You and I are one. Many people ask Me about My true identity. I tell them, “You and I are one. You are not separate from Me.” Consider all your fellowmen as your brothers and sisters and strengthen the bond of love with them. You should all stand united. Never give room for evil qualities like anger, hatred and jealousy. These qualities will create only differences. We should develop the five human values which will promote harmony and unity in the world. We should develop those qualities which will bring us closer to each other and not the ones which will distance us from each other. Leave the burden of all your responsibilities to God. This is My message to you today.

Benedictory Address,
Sri Sathya Sai International Centre for Sports,
22-11-2006. Prasanthi Nilayam