

2. Revere Your Mother And Father As God

Emperor Nala, who reigned over a vast kingdom, could not take with him anything when he passed away.

Did King Mandhata, who adorned the *Kritha Yuga*, carry any wealth with him when he left the earth?

Even Lord Rama, who built a bridge across the ocean, is not to be seen on the earth today. Many kings have ruled over the earth, but none of them could carry even a fistful of dust with him.

Oh noble one! do you think you can carry the kingdom and its riches on your head when you leave the world?

(Telugu poem)

You brought nothing into this world at the time of your birth. Property, wealth, bank balance, etc. are all acquired in the middle, during the course of life's journey from birth to death. You cannot take these along with you while departing from this world. Then why should you worry over losing them in between?

Never forget God, who is supreme

You are not born for shedding tears. Hence you should also leave this world happily. Why worry about the ephemeral things like wealth and property, which are physical, fleeting, and impermanent? Such an attitude is unbecoming of a human being. These are all gifts from God. There are four concepts that you must always keep in mind: the individual (*vyashti*), society (*samashti*), creation (*srishti*), and God (*Parameshti*). Creation emerged out of God. From creation came society, and society itself consists of individuals. Without individuals there can be no society. Hence, ultimately these are all God's gift.

Are we making any efforts to shed tears for the sake of God? No. We are worried about passing clouds, which are ephemeral. This is not the true nature of a human being. You might have noticed that when thick clouds gather in the sky, the sun or the moon is obscured by them. It should not bother you. Just wait a few minutes. The dark clouds move away, and the sun and the moon are back shining brightly. What is required is a little patience.

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat (India).

Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance.

The nectarous feeling in this country is the feeling of love toward one's mother.

Character is valued far higher than the very life itself.

People have forgotten the basic principles of this great culture and are imitating western culture. Alas!

The *Bharatiyas* (Indians) are not aware of the greatness of their cultural heritage just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength.

(Telugu poem)

The power that a human being possesses is unparalleled. The human being is most powerful. That is why even God incarnates in the form of a human being (applause). It is said "God is in the form of a human being (*Daivam manusha rupena*).” A human being is the crown of God's creation. And, God is supreme. It is a sacrilege

to forget such an omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent God. You must constantly contemplate on God. You may be engaged in a variety of tasks, but never forget God, who is changeless and eternal. That should be your true nature. Your true nature should always remain the same.

The root cause for all the troubles we face is that we forget God and hanker after illusory worldly things. Happiness or sorrow is all our own making. God is always blissful. He always gives us happiness, joy, and bliss. We, out of our illusion, misinterpret God's gifts as difficulties and feel sorry for the same. Your own feelings are responsible for your suffering. Hence, change your feelings, develop a positive attitude, and you will never experience pain and suffering.

Today, you all have come here wearing white shirts and black blazers. Our Anil Kumar thought, "When our boys are wearing black coloured blazers, why not I?" He also wore a black coat and attended this function. This is imitation. In fact, the whole world is full of imitation. Such imitation is not a good sign. It may give you a momentary pleasure only.

There were kings and emperors in the past who ruled the world, but all of them left this world empty-handed. They could not take even a blade of grass along with them. No doubt we can enjoy good things as long as we live in this world. Thereafter, we cease to have any relationship with them. All the worldly relationships are only of our own making. We should not maintain such artificial relationships. As long as you live, be happy and enjoy your life. But your joy should not be like the one you derive when you eat an ice cream, which melts away in a short time. Real joy springs forth from your heart. That is bliss. You should experience that bliss continuously.

The body is made up of five elements. It is bound to fall. We as human beings feel happy when a child is born and feel sad when someone dear to us dies. Never give scope for sorrow. You may encounter any number of sorrows and difficulties, but you should face them with courage and faith in God, thinking, "I am a part of Divinity; I will not therefore feel sorry or shed tears." Lord Krishna declared in the *Bhagavad Gita*:

Better indeed is knowledge than mechanical practice.

Better still is meditation.

But better than meditation is renunciation of the desire for the fruit of *karma* (action).

For, peace follows renunciation.)

Sreyohi Jnanamabhyasath

Jnanaddhyanam Visishayathe

Dhyanath Karmaphala Tyagah

Tyagah Santiranantaram

The divine principle alone is eternal in this fleeting world

As long as one develops a desire for the fruit of one's actions, one will not have peace of mind. Take the case of a man. Before marriage, he was one and only one. With marriage he becomes two. The couple begets a child after one year. In the beginning, the man has only two legs; after marriage, they have four; after the child is born they multiply into six legs. Thus, as the family grows, the number of legs also grows, and they will end up in sorrow. It is not of God's making. It is the result of one's mental weakness.

You participated in the annual sports meet and performed various feats. You derived joy out of it. Pleasure or pain, everything is the result of your own actions. Nothing is permanent in this world. All are fleeting. One need

not be elated or depressed for anything. Whatever is born today is bound to die at some time or the other. No one knows for sure what happens to us the next moment. You are an embodiment of Divinity. The divine Principle in you is eternal. That lives today, tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow. Hence, treat the past, present, and future as one even though your experiences in the three phases of time are different. Do not give much credence to these experiences. Past is past; it will not come back. We are not sure of future. The present is the only reality with which we should be concerned. This is not ordinary present, but omnipresent because the past as well as future are present in it.

Dear Students!

All your experiences in this changing world are only momentary and unreal. They are like passing clouds. You need not be too much worried about them. You are marching forward. Continue your life's journey with steadfast faith in God. Why should you have to look back and brood over the past? Some people worry for everything, not only about their education but in life too. They are worried about some individuals who are no longer living. Whoever is born has to depart from this world at some time or the other. God is the only one present at all times—past, present, and future—since He is omnipresent. He may assume different forms and names at different times in keeping with the aspirations and imagination of the devotees. Keep aside your imaginations, and God can be perceived as the one and only one Divine Principle at all times.

A few days ago, people celebrated the New Year all over the world. From where did this New Year come? It did not suddenly descend from the heavens. There can be no “new” without “old”. The old transforms itself into the new and the new becomes old after some time. Thus, old and new are like the object and its reflection. Hence, do not attach much importance to these variations in time. Constantly contemplate on the timeless principle, that is, Divinity. If at all you are worried about some sorrows and difficulties troubling you, keep them aside. Some boys are worried about their examinations, which is totally unnecessary. You must face the examinations boldly and write the answers confidently to the extent of your preparation. God will take care of the rest. It is the courage and confidence that will fetch the desired result. This courage is also called “strength (*pushti*)”.

Six evil qualities form part of the human psyche: desire (*kama*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*), pride (*mada*), and jealousy (*matsarya*). The same qualities reflect in the outside world. Hence, keep your inner consciousness clean. Then, you can win over the outside world in all areas.

Embodiments of Love! Dear students!

You are acquiring degrees in several branches of knowledge, but of what use are they?

Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom.

What is the use of acquiring education that cannot lead you to immortality?

Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.

(Telugu poem)

What is the use of acquiring so many degrees without realising one's own nature? The education that you pursue must ultimately bring some benefit to the society. You should pursue such type of education. Share your knowledge with others—then only will your outlook be broadened. The very purpose of your humanness will be fulfilled. The individual (*vyashti*) is only one. When another individual joins the individual, it becomes society (*samashiti*).

Develop sense control

Develop the power of senses by developing control over your senses. It is only by sense control that a human being can be called an individual. Unfortunately, today we do not at all find sense control anywhere. The senses are allowed to run amuck in the outside world. The senses are created by God for making proper use of them by a human being by exercising proper control over them. It is not for indiscriminate “enjoyment” of God’s creation. The birds, insects, and animals are doing the same. Even ants are raising families and sustaining them. You do not have to follow their example. You are a human being.

Whoever created you will also provide for your sustenance. You need not worry about your food and other needs. You may earn five thousand dollars a month abroad. No doubt it is a lot of money when converted into Indian rupees, but compare the cost of living in India and abroad. The five thousand dollars you earn in foreign countries is equivalent to five hundred rupees in India. This much amount is sufficient here.

Several people go abroad with great hopes, but what is there abroad? That broadness lies in your heart. You need not go abroad. Develop broad-mindedness. Remain here. Take good care of your parents, wife, and children. Make your children acquainted with Indian culture and spirituality. That is true education.

Does education mean reading and writing? Can you call all those who have learnt to read and write educated people? No, not at all. Knowledge without discrimination and not beneficial to the society — can it be called education? Education that does not develop discrimination is totally void. Real education is that which comes from within, that is educate. What all the teachers teach is only that which is contained in books. Real education is not available in the books.

Hence, dear students, don’t waste your time reading books and acquiring merely bookish knowledge. You read throughout the night, without sleeping. Thereby your health is spoiled. Hence, you have to read only those books that are necessary for your purpose, not all the trash you find in the bazaar. People read several books, cinema magazines, and newspapers, which are in no way useful to them. When you open a newspaper, it is full of advertisements and cinema pictures. There is nothing you can learn from them.

Follow your conscience, which guides you. If you follow your conscience, you are worthy of being called a human being. You don’t become a human being simply because you have certain limbs like hands, legs, eyes, ears, nose, etc. Even small insects have them. Can you equate yourself to them? Certainly not. You must lead the life of a real human being and set an example to others. You must be an example in true culture.

Humanity is your caste

There is a subtle difference between caste and culture. You belong to the caste of humanity, for there is only one caste, the caste of humanity. It is an inborn gift from your parents. On the other hand, culture is something that is adopted in your life. Culture teaches you what is to be done and how. It is based upon certain traditions. None can change your caste, which is humanity. Based upon your inborn caste of humanity, you can follow a culture.

Another important point to be noted in this context is that caste and culture devoid of discrimination are not only useless but harmful too. Your knowledge and sharp intellect are not that important. Discrimination is of utmost importance. You must be able to choose that which is useful and necessary for you. You have to switch on a light when you are in darkness. It is not proper to switch on a light when there is already light in the room.

Dear Students!

It is not knowledge or energy that you have to develop but the power of discrimination. Whatever object you come across, first enquire within yourself: “Is it good or bad, is it useful to me or not?” Before you take up a particular work, think carefully whether it is worth it or not. Being a human being, develop the quality of humanness.

Do not at all cause pain to your parents, who are responsible for your birth. The *Vedas* emphasise the need for showing utmost reverence to the parents by declaring, “Revere your mother and father as God (*Matru devo bhava, pitru devo bhava*).” Children today do not care for their parents. Husbands consider wife, the “artificial doll”, as the central point of their life. They follow the dictates of their wife, ignoring the parents who gave birth to them and nourished and nurtured them all through undergoing several difficulties. You may love your wife, nothing wrong in that, but you should obey your parents too. Parents deserve your utmost concern. All others come after the parents.

First and foremost, love your mother and follow her commands. It is only when you make her happy that your life will also be happy. If she sheds tears for any reason, you will have to suffer for your entire lifetime.

Very few people today have recognised the value of a mother’s love. If the mother were to say something, they try to snub her saying, “Keep quiet; I know everything.” Yet others bluntly tell her, “Shut up. You need not advise me. I am highly educated. I have a number of degrees. Do I not know?” You may have earned degrees in the academic field, but did you acquire a degree in general knowledge useful for leading a balanced life? Only parents can teach that knowledge. One has to serve their father and mother and make them happy, apart from acquiring high degrees. Then only can one lead a happy and peaceful life. These are the things one has to learn and carefully follow in life.

Dear Students!

Do not underestimate the importance of singing the glory of the divine name. *Hari Bhajana Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi ...* (Without singing to the Lord, there’s no peace or happiness ...). Participate in *bhajans*, which bring a lot of peace and confer bliss on you. *Bhajan* is a group activity where a number of people come together (*samashiti*) and sing the glory of God. One important point in *bhajans* is that everyone should join in singing the *bhajans*. There would be a lead singer and all others follow them. If you are not confident of your voice, at least repeat the divine name in your heart. Unfortunately, today, people have no time even for that. You may forget any item of work in your daily life, but never forget remembrance of the Lord’s name (*namasmarana*) and singing the name of the Lord (*nama sankirtana*). The divine name is eternal. Hence, constantly contemplate on the divine name.

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It is a good sign that more and more youngsters are coming forward to join the *Seva Dal* (selfless service organization) and take part in service activities. The participation of youth is necessary for the welfare of the world. We should rejoice when they turn over a new leaf in their life. There is a commonplace saying that you should not rejoice and distribute sweets, etc. when a child is born, but you should do so only when the child grows up and earns a good name as a good son (*satputra*). You can’t please

Me just by joining the organisation. I shall wait for the day when you turn over a new leaf and transform yourselves into better individuals. You should become persons of sterling character and good qualities.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Ido not insist that a person have faith in God. I refuse to call any person an atheist. Beings exist as a result of His will, in accordance with His plan, so no one is beyond His grace. Besides, everyone has love toward some thing or other, and that love is a spark of the Divine. Everyone ultimately has to base their life on some one truth; that truth is God. No life can be lived out in complete defiance of truth; one has to pay heed to truth and speak the truth to someone in order to make life worth living. Now, that moment is God's moment and at the moment when one utters the truth or loves, or serves or bends, one is a theist.

So, not even devotion is essential. It is love, truth, virtue, the eagerness to progress, to serve, to expand one's heart, to take in the whole of humanity in one's love, to see all as forms of the divine consciousness.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba