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1. Repose Faith In Your Conscience

Date: 15 January 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Sankranthi

The sun appears serene and peaceful. The days have become shorter, and the cool wind is blowing. The fields are ripe with golden crops. Marigold flowers are blossoming like garlands of pearls on the banks of rivers. The farmers are rejoicing and singing. The sweet festival of Sankranti has come in the month of Pushya (a month in Indian calendar), filling our homes with the newly harvested grain. (Telugu poem)

GOD willed that the Sankranti festival shall bring all prosperity to the people and that they should not feel any inconvenience in the matter of food and other needs. The farmers, having brought home the produce after harvesting it, will be happily taking rest in their homes. Even the agricultural workers will be free, for, the harvesting season will be over by then. Having worked hard day and night in the fields for some months, they will now be enjoying the comfort of a home, by God's grace. Whatever God does, it is for the good of the people. For, they are all His 'amsa ' (parts) only! Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being), said Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Not only human beings, even animals, birds and insects are the embodiments of God. However, all people do not realise this truth. Saint Tyagaraja sang in one of his immortal kirtanas, cheemalo Brahmalo Siva Kesavadulalo prema meera velasi unde birudhu vahinchina Rama nannu brovara (Oh Rama, in Your pure and unsullied form of love, You indwell all beings from an ant to Brahma as also in Siva and Kesava. Please be my protector too). Unable to realise this truth, people kill the ant that crawls on their bodies. The same people will worship the ant if it appears as an embodiment of Divinity. Thus, the feelings make all the difference.

During this season, the sun appears to be gentle and soothing during daytime. The days are shorter and the nights long. During the nights, the moonlight is cool and comfortable. Having worked hard during daytime, people will have comfortable sleep during nights. The human body needs rest. Hence, every human being should have adequate rest. As the saying

goes, "Sleep a while after lunch." One should take a nap at least for a short period after lunch. However, one should not keep himself awake for long during nights. One should have sound sleep during night.

Everything is God's will. The entire universe is created by God. Nothing in this world will move without God's will.

Not even a blade of grass will move without divine Will,

People who do not realise this truth, get carried away by their pride of intelligence and discrimination.

But no one however great one may be knows what lies ahead for them in future.

(Telugu poem)

Unity Is Divinity

Who is a "HINDU"? The letters in the word HINDU stand for: H - Humility, I - Individuality, N - Nationality, D - Devotion, U - Unity.

Wherever there is unity, there will be Divinity. It is only Divinity that can unite the world. You should not try to break the world into pieces saying 'This is my India', 'this is my Japan', 'this is my Germany', etc. The divinity called 'I' in all human beings is only one. There is only one race, that is human race.

Humanness is very sacred, holy and divine. The word 'Manava ' (human being) means very sacred. The festival of Sankranti reminds you of this truth and awakens you to this reality. During this holy period of Makara Sankramana , people, especially the village folk, enjoy themselves by participating in several kinds of rural games and play. As a matter of fact, this is a festival season for the animals too! Some people in the villages bring together the gangireddu (a decorated bull) and a cow naming them as Rama and Sita and perform their marriage symbolically, in the hope that their

marriage shall bring forth peace and welfare to the world. The cowherd gives suitable training to the bull and the cow in advance. He asks the cow "Amma , Is Rama handsome?", the cow shakes its head in disapproval of the proposal. Then, the gangireddudasu with the stick in his hand tries to counsel the cow: "Amma , Rama is blackish blue in colour. Yet he is very good. He is a great king. He is mighty and prosperous." Thereupon the cow nods its head in approval as if to indicate, "Yes, I like Rama." The children in the village watch the gangireddu play very enthusiastically. They invite their friends and relatives to witness this play thus: "Oh my dear brother, here comes the Gangireddudasu. Come, let us go and see him. He wears a silver medallion and a waist belt. He carries a decorated staff and wears special marks on his forehead. He brings with him richly caparisoned sacred cow and bull and performs

their marriage. Let us see the marriage ceremony and offer our gifts." (Telugu song)

Thus, the village folk will be tastefully decorating their cattle and playing with them. Sankranti is a festival that gives joy to the birds too. They will be perching in large numbers on the temples and minarets, chirping and singing. They thus teach a lesson in unity and joy to the human beings of all regions and religions in the world. Sadly, several people nowadays have no faith in the religion. Religion sets great ideals for the human beings to follow.

There are several students studying in Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions. They have no differences of religion at all! In fact, one who believes in such differences is not a human being. There is only one religion - the religion of love. A real human being is one who follows such a religion. We must cultivate the goodness in all religions. There is a lot to learn from the birds, beasts and insects. Religion means love. Today, we do not at all find such religion of love. Devoid of love, there can be no relationship with anybody. Hence, we must follow the religion of love. No one thinks of such religion of love in the modern age. Our ancestors did recognise the true meaning of religion and followed it in letter and spirit. They took their elders as an ideal in this regard. Even now if you enquire from children, "Who told you this?", they

will reply "My grandmother told me, my grandfather told

me", etc. One should never disregard the advice of elders. When you follow their advice, everything will turn out to be good for you. Unfortunately, no one listens to the good words of elders these days. They prefer to listen to all sorts of movie songs played in a tape recorder. They imitate those songs. Whatever tune is played in the tape recorder, they try to imitate that tune. Man today is not living like a human being. He is turning out to be a mere gramophone record or a tape recorder. We should never disregard the words of elders. Man today does not listen to the sound advice of the elders. He acts contrary to the nature of a human being. People do not listen to good things; they indulge in all unnecessary and unwarranted activities.

The festival of Sankranti is meant to remind man about the sanctity of humanness. It is said, Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). Hence, every human being, nay, every living being is an amsa (part) of God! But, there seems to be a flaw in your own behaviour. What is the reason? You throw to winds the sacred feelings and allow your mind to run after all and sundry things. That is how your behaviour is tainted. You are now in your prime of youth. Your body, mind and intellect are strong and secure in this age. Hence, you have to make proper use of your capability to live up to your sacred feelings. Sankranti is not to be considered as a mere festival like any others. The festival of Sankranti brings great joy to one and all. Even a poor man will arrange to make payasam (sweet pudding) in his house and partake of it happily. The festival of Sankranti will bring joy in ever so many ways. It is not limited to song and play. It expands one's heart with joy. It is a festival of unity; that unity develops purity resulting in divinity in human beings. Hence, people must cultivate unity and purity in the first instance. What is purity? Our vision must be sacred; our words must be soft and sweet and our ears must listen to only good things. Our nose should smell only divine fragrance. Thus, all the senses in our body must be put to proper use.

Man is born out of karma . Karma is the most important Dharma (duty) of a human being: Man is born in action, is sustained by action and ultimately merges in action. Action is the cause for pleasure and pain. Truly speaking,

action is God for man. (Telugu poem)

Hence, we should continue to perform karma . What is karma ? It is not merely reading and participating in the games of football, volleyball, etc. Even inhaling and exhaling are karma ! There can be no karma without these two. When you inhale your breath, the sound of 'so ' emerges. Similarly, when you exhale your breath, the sound of 'hum ' emerges. Thus, every act of inhaling and exhaling results in the sound of 'sohum ', meaning 'I am that Divinity'. That life-breath which is a great energy is the gift of God to a human being. It is vital to the sustenance of a human being. It is not the real nature of a human being to only eat, drink and be merry. First and foremost, wherever you go, people will observe your qualities. You must conduct yourself in such a way that people will be able to say, "Look, his behaviour is good. We feel very happy to talk to him. We feel very happy by merely looking at him." It is only your good qualities that bring happiness and joy to you. Man should make proper use of his panchapranas (five vital airs), panchabhuthas (five elements) and panchendriyas (five senses). The food we eat must be satwic . It is not good to take too much of chillies or chilli powder. One should not hanker after 'taste'. It will 'waste' our life. One should eat for the sake of satisfying one's hunger, without hankering for special taste or flavour.

There is no charity greater than feeding the hungry,

There are no greater gods than parents,

There is no greater gain than the company of the good. (Telugu poem)

Truth Is Supreme

There is nothing greater than truth. Truth is only one, not two. By associating yourself with good people, you will also become good. Who are real friends? It is only the good people who are real friends to you. It is said, "Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are". Hence, you must always join good company, talk to good people and live with good people. Only then will you

become a good person. Otherwise, you will spoil yourself. Good friends will always strive to work for the good of each other and bring about a transformation in each other. If for any reason your friend took to bad ways on any occasion, of what use is your friendship, if you do not try to bring him back into good path? On the other hand, if you are taking to bad ways, your friend should help you to come back to normal ways. Thus, trying to help each other to tread the good path is the hallmark of true friendship. However, friends in present time wish each other 'hello' and separate. Later, they say 'goodbye'. Such attitude is not good. Instead of saying 'goodbye', you must become a good boy. Thus, you must tread the path of truth in daily life. Only then will you become an educated and courageous person in the real sense, with a sense of discrimination. If you are a good person with a sense of sacrifice, people will follow you. If your behaviour is not good, none will even look at your face. It will only be people without character who will be moving in your company. It will do no good for your spiritual advancement.

You say, "So and so is my good friend". But, for how long? Only for some time. Later on, if that person does not pay attention to your words or refuses to oblige your demands, you hate him. You will become enemies. Indeed, you must be very careful in developing friendship with others. In every aspect of our life, our behaviour itself is a witness to our interpersonal relationships. You may reside in any place or go to any country; but, keep up your good character. Respect all. Love all. Hate none. Earn a good name for yourself. It is not the academic degrees that bring greatness to us. Haven't we so many Ph.D.'s in this world today? Haven't we so many people who did I.A.S. in the country now? Has the world become better in any way on account of these people? In fact, it is only because of the so-called educated people that the country is sliding down from its eminence. Let us not be concerned with such so-called 'great' people. It is enough if people wish each other with a Namaskar and enquire their welfare. That itself is greatness. One has to imbibe humility and obedience, along with education. Only such a student is the real student; you should not have even a trace of ego, pride, pomp and such other bad qualities.

The student who did the role of Prahlada in yesterday's play did well. His

voice was sweet. Also, his acting was exemplary. Prahlada's father Hiranyakasipu had to undergo punishment on account of his hatred towards God. God assumed the form of Narasimha Avatar and killed him. When we lead a good and virtuous life, our end will also be good. We will also earn a good name for ourselves. Right from our birth till death, we must lead an exemplary life. However, people do not listen to good words. They listen to only wrong advice and spoil themselves. It is our common experience that while we travel in a train or a bus, we come across a beggar singing the glory of Ramanama beautifully. Our fellow travellers will be happily listening to the song fully immersed in it. Finally, when the beggar completes his song and begins to move away, people compliment him saying, "You sang well and made us very happy." They express their gratitude to him by offering some charity. Thus, life can be really meaningful when you make others happy.

Be Good In Thought Word And Deed

You are all students gathered in this hall. You must share good thoughts and words amongst you on such occasions as these. Good thoughts, good words and good deeds are the qualities of Divinity. We must cultivate good qualities. When you stand in front of the sun at sunrise, your shadow will be fifty feet long while you are actually five feet tall. As the sun begins to rise in the sky, the length of your shadow becomes shorter. When the sun positions itself exactly above your head at noon, your shadow falls under your feet. In the same way, when you begin your journey towards God and gradually progress in the Godward path, the shadow of maya (illusion) falls behind. On the other hand, if you go against God and travel in the opposite direction, the shadow of maya will be in front of you.

Embodiments of Love! All our students are gold. What sort of gold? Pure 26 carat gold. Wherever they go and in whichever activity they participate - in sports, in education, in behaviour, in their talk and in every activity, they are earning good name for themselves. It is only due to this reason, I have heard people praising everywhere, "The students of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institution are exemplary in character". If you just look at them, you will find Sai Baba reflecting on their faces.

The Ati Rudra Yajna will commence on the 19th of this month in Chennai. But, the people in Chennai are eagerly awaiting the arrival of Swami 's students, not the Ati Rudra Yajna . They are looking forward with a feeling, "We understand Sai Baba will be here to participate in the Yajna along with His students. His students alone are ideals for us." The sanctity of education is deteriorating due to the misuse of scientific knowledge, today. The scientists are endeavouring to change the laws of nature. If a tree were to bear fruit, it is being given an injection. If a cow were to yield milk in greater quantity, it is fed tripe from other slaughtered animals. They think that by feeding animal parts to the cow it will grow strong and yield more milk. Even the water is polluted nowadays. It is that polluted water that is responsible for all the diseases suffered by man today. In whichever fruit you see, there are insects and bacteria. The figs used to be very good for consumption, earlier. But, now there are bacteria and pollutants even in the figs. What is the reason? Only the polluted water that is fed to the plant. People have to clean and boil the water and then only drink it. We have supplied drinking water from the Krishna river to the people of Chennai by spending 200 crore rupees. I have seen small children bathing in cesspools and drinking the same dirty water. I felt very sorry for them. I had decided then itself, "I will not visit Chennai till we supply pure drinking water to the people of Chennai." That was ten years ago. Now I have supplied drinking water to them. I am now visiting Chennai in the backdrop of the children drinking pure water and happily spending their time in play. We can be healthy and happy only when we drink pure water and eat healthy food. That is how you have to protect your health. However, I find that some students are not taking good food. They are tempted by all varieties of dishes. You please do not look for the taste. You just see for yourself whether the food you are eating is good for your health or not. Only then will you be healthy and happy.

Dear Students! Study well. Do not waste time. Whenever you find time, read only good books. Tread the good and Godward path and become good people. It is only the students of Sathya Sai Educational Institutions that can transform all the people in the world into good citizens. You be good and make others good. Avoid evil qualities like kama (desire) and krodha (anger). Today, our children are going to present a play called "Sri Krishna Rayabaram

". You all know that in the Mahabharata the evil Kauravas troubled the Pandavas in many ways. However, the Pandavas were of very good nature. Their mind was pure. They tried their best to do good to the Kauravas. I will quote one small example to illustrate how pure their minds were. The elderly Kunti, mother of the Pandavas broke down and breathed her last on hearing the sad news of Lord Krishna leaving His mortal coil. Dharmaraja, her eldest son who was near her during her last moments kept her head on his lap. The four brothers Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva surrounded him. Dharmaraja then explained to his brothers, "Dear ones, Lord Krishna who protected us all the while has left for His heavenly abode. We should not therefore remain in this world any more." He then called Bhima near him and told him to make arrangements for the funeral of their mother. He also called Arjuna and told him to make arrangements for the coronation ceremony of Parikshit as king. Finally, he called the two younger brothers Nakula and Sahadeva to his side and ordered them, "We have to begin our great march towards the Himalayas. You go and make all arrangements for our journey." Thus, on one side he was arranging for the funeral of their mother and on the other, the coronation of the grandson of his younger brother as king to ensure the continuity of the dynasty. Can anyone undertake such task in such a grievous situation? Thus, all responsibilities were discharged at the same time, then and there.

The Pandavas embarked on their great march. Droupadi, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva dropped down in the middle of the journey. Dharmaraja continued his journey and first reached Naraka (hell). He saw many people undergoing several kinds of punishment for their sins, there. The moment Dharmaraja stepped into hell, they were relieved of their suffering and felt very happy. Now, the question arises as to why at all Dharmaraja had to go to hell in the first instance?

He never spoke a lie during his entire life. However, during the Mahabharata war he spoke the words, "Aswatthama hathah " (Aswatthama died) loudly and then "kunjarah " (the elephant) softly, in order that the mighty warrior Dronacharya dies on account of the shock of the news. The words, "Aswatthama hatha kunjarah " meant the elephant by name Aswatthama

died. Unfortunately, the name of the son of Dronacharya's was also Aswatthama. In the din and commotion of the war, Dronacharya could not hear the word "kunjara" properly and mistook the words of Dharmaraja as 'Aswatthama died'. Unable to bear the grief and shocked over the 'death of his son Aswatthama', he threw away his bow and arrows in the battlefield. Thus, Dharmaraja was indirectly responsible for the fall of Dronacharya by uttering falsehood on one occasion. For expiating this sin, he had to spend some time in hell. Thereafter, he was taken to heaven. While Dharmaraja was leaving for heaven, the people undergoing punishment in the hell fell at his feet and prayed, "Sir! Please do not leave us, you stay here itself and give us happiness". Dharmaraja then replied, "My dear ones! I cannot but obey the command of God", and left for heaven. Wherever we are, if we do good, we will experience good only. Good work begets good results only.

Dear students! After passing your examinations in this Institution, you can pursue higher studies elsewhere if you wish. But, along with academic excellence, let your behaviour also set an example to others. Do not indulge in falsehood, injustice and evil ways. Follow the path of truth and become immortal. Lord Krishna declared, "Mamaivamso .. ." You should not forget this truth. You pursue any type of education anywhere, with this awareness. (Bhagawan then enquired, "Am I giving you any trouble?" The students replied in one voice, "No Swami ".) Making you all happy, working for your progress, striving to remove all pain and suffering from you, making your parents also happy - this is My job. Your happiness is My food. I need no other food. That one type of food is sufficient for Me. Hence, may you all lead a happy and blissful life always! You may encounter any number of difficulties; keep them aside and march forward.

Today, some people are indulging in false propaganda saying, "Sai Baba's reputation is growing day by day. Sai Baba is converting all foreigners as Hindus." They are highly jealous of Me. Due to this jealousy, they write all sorts of trash in the newspapers.

We should ignore such writings. We must have firm faith in our own conscience. Whatever they may say, put it aside considering it as nonsense.

We have nothing to do with it. You repose faith in your conscience. Whatever I do, it is for the good of all. If someone abuses you, you take it as, "He is abusing only my body, not me", If they hurl abuses against you openly, let those abuses merge into thin air. On the other hand, if they scold you silently, they do not reach you. Do not bother about them. Keep your faith in God firmly. That should be your attitude.

God is immanent in every living being. The name and form may be different. But, God is only one. He is present in one and all. You are all embodiments of Divinity! Develop that feeling in you. Do not cultivate the differences of high and low. All are one. Repose faith in the principle of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man and lead your lives happily.

Dear students! I wish that all of you should come out in 1st class in your examinations with good marks.

You should give happiness to your parents. In the traditions of our country, it is said that you should give happiness to your father and your mother. Only when you are able to do this, will you have achieved something. It is only when you can put such ideals into practice, that you will have learnt something. Students, boys and girls, you should do all your work with the thought of God in your mind. I bless you that you get this strength. It is not as if you do not know the current situation in the world. Wherever you go, qualities like untruth, unkindness, hatred, and jealousy are becoming prominent. At such a time, students like you, armed with weapons of kindness, forbearance, love, and patience must enter society and bring about a social transformation.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

2. All Parties Should Unite To Make Bharat Strong

Date: 21 January 2007 / Location: Chennai / Occasion: Nehru Indoor Stadium

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. The nectarous feeling in this country is the feeling of love towards 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 are not aware of the greatness of their cultural heritage just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength. (Telugu poem)

I have never so far given a discourse in Tamil in such a vast assembly. I will not speak about a particular State or a region since I do not observe any such differences. The whole of Bharat is important for Me. It is only man who has divided the land into various regions. God has not willed any divisions.

Make Atma The Basis Of Your Life

All Bharatiyas should join hands to make Bharat a land of prosperity. It is possible only through love. The awareness of the principle of the atma can unite all.

Religions are many, but goal is one;

Clothes are many, but yarn is one;

Flowers are many, but worship is one.

Therefore, embodiments of love, do not observe any differences on the basis of religion. The same effulgent atma is present in the heart of everybody. People may wear different types of dresses and speak different languages, but the atma present in all is one and the same. Names and forms can be different, but the divine principle is one in all. He is a true Bharatiya who

recognises this truth and acts accordingly. It is man who has created all differences. We give different names to different forms for the sake of identification. But God has no form. He is also referred to as atma . We should love atma and make it the basis of our life. This is true human quality. That itself is Sathya , Dharma , Santhi , Prema and Ahimsa (truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence). Where there is love, there are peace and truth. Truth is one, not two. If you adhere to the path of truth, you will encounter no difficulties or dangers. Man should love his fellow human beings like his own brothers and sisters. This is true devotion. At the worldly level, you should discharge your duty and at the spiritual level, you should love everybody without observing any differences. Even if you come across your enemy, you should not turn your face away from him. Rather, you should greet him, saying, "Hello brother, how are you?" Then, he will also say, "How are you, brother?" Mind is the witness of mind. A fool will witness only foolishness. We should never act in a foolish manner. Love All, Serve All. Not only that, Help Ever, Hurt Never. We should not harm anyone. We should love everybody. Then, this love will reach God.

Love attracts everybody. The five elements, the five senses and the five life-breaths are all present within you. It is a sign of ignorance to search for God outside when He is present very much within you. You should develop self-confidence that God is within you. When you have self-confidence, you will have self-satisfaction, and self-satisfaction will lead you to self-sacrifice. When you practise self-sacrifice, you will attain self-realisation. Hence, self-realisation does not come from outside. If you ask a millionaire, "Sir, do you have peace?" his reply will be, "I have money, I have a number of houses, I have everything, but I have no peace of mind." Where does the peace of mind come from? Peace lies within us, not outside. You are unable to experience peace because you have turned your innate peace into pieces. We should live in unity and love without observing any differences. All the people of the world belong to the same family. Instead of living like members of one family, people create differences on the basis of parties which bring harm to the country. We should never give scope to any differences whatsoever. The Vedas declare, Na karmana na prajaya dhanena Thyagenaike amrutatthwamanasu (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or

wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). Money comes and goes. Nothing is permanent. Only consciousness is eternal. We should take this as the basis of our life.

We should respect all parties. All parties are one. Just like human beings have different names, parties also have different names. Everybody will be happy when we develop the feeling of oneness of the atma without observing any differences. "He is happy, but I am unhappy." Why do such differences arise? Happiness and sorrow are not separate from each other. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. There can be no happiness without difficulties. So, we should treat both of them with equanimity.

Put Your Wealth To Proper Use

I am very much pained to see the plight of the poor. Once I was travelling to Madras (Chennai) by car. There were many cars following My car. As I was coming to Chennai, I enquired at a place, "What is this?" The devotees who were travelling with Me in the same car said, "It is Red Hills." They told, "The rain water collected in this area is used for growing crops. But it has now become dry because there is no rainfall." I saw small children drinking dirty water from puddles. They told me that the same water was being used for cooking. By drinking such dirty water, we spoil our health ourselves. People in many villages are put to a lot of trouble due to lack of drinking water. Here and there they dig borewells for water, but borewells are not a permanent solution to their water problem. They are functional only for a short time and then they become dry. There are three things that affect our health water, food and environment. Man can enjoy good health when all these three are pure. Today our health is spoiled because we drink polluted water, eat improper food and breathe in polluted air. I said to a devotee travelling with Me in the car, "My dear, there are a number of wealthy people in Chennai. Why don't they make some sacrifice?" When a beggar comes to their doorstep, they drive him away. They even chase him away by their dog. Is there anyone who gives even a paisa for the welfare of society? Can't they extend a helping hand to others and the country at large? Can't they provide drinking water to quench the thirst of others? They spend so much money on

cigarettes, cinema, eating and drinking. Instead of indulging in misuse of money in this manner, is it not possible for you to provide even a gulp of water to poor children? Health, education and peace of mind are very important for man. If we look at the present educational scenario, we find that one has to pay a huge amount to get a child admitted even in a primary class. Over and above this, one has to pay fees every month. Wherefrom can poor people get so much money? We should bear this in mind that the money which is with us is not really ours; it is the gift of God. With this sacred feeling, we should utilise the money for the welfare of the masses. (Narrating the story of the great conqueror Alexander, Bhagawan explained the futility of amassing wealth and conquering territories since everyone has to go from this world empty-handed howsoever wealthy or powerful one may be.) For whose sake should you accumulate so much wealth? You may very carefully accumulate great wealth, but all that may be spent by your children. During your lifetime itself, you should make proper use of your wealth. I do not keep even a single paisa with Me. Any money sent to Me is directly sent to the bank. I utilise all the money on welfare projects. As I am undertaking many welfare projects, a lot of money is getting collected in the banks. What for should we keep money in banks? It is only for spending on noble causes. In many villages, small children have to walk long distances to go to school. We should help these children by establishing schools in those villages. Many women have to take their sick children to a hospital at a far off place to consult a doctor. Hence, we should establish a hospital in every village. Seeing the plight of people who are unable to get medical treatment, I have established hospitals, two of which are super speciality hospitals. Crores of rupees have been spent on each building. Those who come to our hospital for any treatment are not put to any inconvenience. Not only are they given free medicines, they are given free food also.

Besides the hospitals, we have established educational institutions also. Students come to our institutions from various places. We do not collect even a paisa from them, not even examination fee. In this manner, thousands of students are receiving free education in our institutions. (At this point of time, Bhagawan asked some students to come onto the stage.) All of them are postgraduates. They have completed courses like M.A., M.B.A., M.Sc., etc.

After completing such courses, these boys have been praying to Me, "Whatever work Swami gives us, we will happily do it." That is why I have given them village work. They go from village to village distributing food to poor people. What is the use of all your education if you do not help the poor? Aren't there so many highly educated people in this country? They are heroes in accumulating wealth and zeroes in noble tasks. Accumulation of money is not important; the work we do is much more important. Education will become worthwhile if you utilise it in the service of others. Otherwise, it is all a waste. (Pointing to a student) This boy has come from Himachal Pradesh. Students come here from many places, and even from Russia and America. Those who come from Russia have so much devotion. I send them along with our college students to distribute food from door to door in villages. They go to each and every house and distribute food and clothes and experience bliss.

There is no charity greater than feeding the hungry,

There are no greater Gods than parents,

There is no greater gain than the company of the good,

There is no enemy greater than anger,

There is no wealth greater than good reputation,

There is no greater Dharma than compassion. (Telugu poem)

One with compassion is a true human being. One without compassion does not deserve to be called a human being. We are born as human beings. When we call ourselves humans, we should not behave like animals. Fighting and killing are the qualities of animals, not of human beings. The selfishness that is seen in man today is not found even in monkeys. Everything man does is motivated by selfishness; he does not undertake anything for the welfare of others. All fields of human endeavour like music, literature, politics, etc., have become polluted by selfishness.

Love each other with a pure mind. Never hate anybody. Desire the welfare of all. When all are happy, we will also be happy. When there is no happiness in the world, how can we be happy? I want that all of you should live in unity like brothers and sisters. Money can fill your belly, but it cannot give you mental satisfaction. **Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows.** Hence, develop morality. Only then can we live up to the title of a human being. Strong determination is very essential on the path of spirituality. Having resolved something, we should never give it up under any circumstances.

Having resolved, what ought to be resolved, hold on to it till you have succeeded. Having desired what ought to be desired, hold on to it till your desire is fulfilled. Having asked what ought to be asked, do not leave the hold till you get it. Having thought what ought to be thought, hold on to it till you have succeeded. With heart mellowed, the Lord must yield to your wishes or forgetting yourself, you should ask Him with all your heart. Persevere, be tenacious, and never give up, for it is the quality of a devotee never to retreat, abandoning his resolve. (Telugu poem)

If you find anybody in trouble, you should go and talk to him lovingly. That itself will give him great satisfaction. You are all embodiments of God. Do not think that only Sai Baba is God. God is present in all. All of you are divine. Therefore, help everybody considering him as divine. This is very important. One who understands this truth and acts accordingly will achieve great success in life. I am not talking about any particular party or individual. I am talking, keeping the welfare of the entire country in view. When the individuals are prosperous, the country will also become prosperous. There are five fingers in the hand. It is possible to catch any object only when all the five fingers join together. In the same manner, people of all parties should become one. Followers of one party should not hate those of other parties. You pursue what you want, let them have what they want. Not only should you not hate people of other parties, you should not hate the followers of other faiths also. I want that you should live in unity without hating anyone.

If we can light one bright lamp in one house, the entire street will be lighted. In a similar manner, if each student has a bright light in his heart, there will be then be no doubt whatsoever that the whole community will be led from darkness to light.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

3. God Will Help You If You Help Others

Date: 27 January 2007 / Location: Thiruvannamiyur, Chennai

Man is born in action, is sustained by action and ultimately merges in action. Action is the cause for pleasure and pain. Truly speaking, action is God for man. (Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

THERE is no need for man to search for God anywhere. God is present in each one of you. Lord Krishna declared in the Bhagavad Gita : Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being). "All are an aspect of My Divinity," He declared. Where then would you search for God when He is in you and with you? Whatever work you do, consider it as the work of God.

The Youth Should Tread The Sacred Path

God has blessed man with body, mind, intellect and mind-stuff (chitta). The youth are endowed with a healthy body, a strong mind and a sharp intellect capable of deep thinking, but they are misusing them. Instead of thinking of God and making proper use of their limbs, they are misusing their senses. This is a big mistake. At this age, you should put the power of the body, mind and intellect to right use. What is meant by right use? It means, treading the sacred path.

Just because we are gifted with eyes, there is no need to see everything. Try to see all that is good. Do not hear with your ears the criticism of others or all that is unnecessary. Hearing the criticism of others and seeing all that is evil is a great sin. We will acquire evil only when we see evil. We do not try to listen to good words with our ears; instead, we listen to evil talk. Surdas was blind. But he constantly chanted the name of Krishna. Hence, Krishna gave him Darshan and fulfilment in life. Why has God given you tongue? Is it to enjoy the taste of anything and everything or to talk ill of others? No, no. It is

meant to sing the glories of God. Man can attain God-realisation by putting these modes of worship into practice: Sravanam (listening), Kirtanam (singing), Vishnusmaranam (contemplating on Vishnu), Padasevanam (serving His Lotus Feet), Vandanam (salutation), Archanam (worship), Dasyam (servitude), Sneham (friendship), Atmanivedanam (self-surrender).

Consider All As The Children Of God

Chant the name of God. Let others also hear it and redeem their lives. We do Kirtan (devotional singing). What for do we do it? Is it to enjoy the melody of Raga (musical mode)? No, no. We do it to get rid of our roga (disease). "Rama, save me!" This can be recited like a poem. But it does not give us as much happiness as it gives when we sing it in the form of a song. If we chant the name of Rama wholeheartedly, it is enough. The name Krishna is also very powerful and supreme. Many people describe and praise Krishna in many ways. What we are supposed to do now is not merely to chant the name of Rama, Krishna or Sai, but to help those who are in trouble, saying, "Oh dear one, what do you want? Are you hungry? Take this food." You should offer food and help to him to the extent possible. Many small children roam about in the streets when both their parents go to work. They are exposed to many accidents and dangers. We should help such children and protect them from dangers and mishaps. Some people get injured in accidents; they should be taken to hospital and provided treatment and other necessary help. Be courteous to the poor and help them. Provide help and means of treatment to those who suffer from some ailment. Extend a helping hand to those who are weak and unable to walk.

When we teach others the value of Seva (service) after putting it into practice in our own life, it will create awareness in them. Then people will think, "These children are teaching us so many good things; so, we should also extend help to them." We should talk to children nicely. When we call them, we should do so lovingly, saying, "Dear child, please come." We should avoid calling like, "Hey, come here" with anger. Talk lovingly and sweetly without hurting them. Do not cast angry looks on them. We should express our love towards them while talking to them. Love is a supreme power. Therefore, call

everybody with love, saying, "Come, brother, come." Ask him about his difficulties, "Do you have financial or health problem?" After understanding his problems thoroughly, provide necessary help to him. There are some who lead a lonely life as they are without father, mother, relatives or friends. We should offer brotherly affection to them. We should encourage them by saying, "I am like your brother," and talk to them lovingly, saying, "Oh dear one, you have no elder or younger sister? I am your elder sister; I am your younger sister." Speaking to them in this intimate way, we should give them courage and succour. You are all the children of one mother, verily. That mother is God. Follow the maxim: **Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God**. Since all are the children of God, you should consider all of them as your brothers and sisters; you need not, however, share your property with them. Whomsoever you come across, talk to him nicely and love him wholeheartedly.

God is the embodiment of love. He protects the entire mankind by His love. If only there is love in you, it is enough. Then you will all become united. You should not create distance between one another by your talk or conduct. Draw everybody close to you with love. Then you will all attain the proximity of God. When you look at others with love, God will also look at you with love. In whatever situation you may be, you should never show anger, jealousy, hypocrisy or pomp. Do not treat others with anger or hatred. By experiencing your love, love in others will also increase. When you treat others with love, they will also show love towards you. On the other hand, if you show anger towards them, they will also behave angrily with you. When any beggar stands in front of your house and begs for food, saying: Bhavati, bhiksham dehi (Mother, please give me alms), you should lovingly ask him to stay for a while, bring food from inside the house and offer it to him, thereby making him happy.

During the war for the liberation of Rangoon, a mother and her son somehow escaped from the area of war and managed to reach Kolkata. They had no shelter or food. The mother would go begging for alms from house to house, give most of it to her son and partake of whatever little was left. When she did not get enough for both, she would give the entire quantity of food to her

son and would herself go without food. Consequently, she became weak day by day. One day the son, unable to see her suffering, told her, "Mother, from today, you take rest, I will fetch food for both of us." From that day, he would go begging from house to house, give most of it to his mother and partake of whatever little was left. Sometimes, he would lie to his mother that he had already taken his food. Consequently, he too became very weak. The son had no strength to look after his mother nor did the mother have any strength to protect her son.

One day, he stood in front of the house of an officer and begged for alms. The officer was relaxing in an easy chair in the verandah, reading a newspaper. He took pity on the boy, went inside and brought some food on a plantain leaf. He told him to sit and eat it there itself. But the boy said that he would take it home for his mother. The officer said, "You say you are hungry, then why don't you sit here and eat? You can take it for your mother afterwards." Then the boy replied, "Sir, all these days my mother was bringing food for me taking great pains. Consequently, her health deteriorated. Hence, I have to feed her first." As he was uttering these words, he felt giddy. He fell down and breathed his last with the words, "First to my mother, first to my mother!" on his lips. The officer felt very sad. He was astonished at the love the boy had for his mother. He went in search of the mother and found her lying under a tree. He was in a dilemma as to how to break the tragic news of her son's demise. With the help of a servant, he brought the dead body of her son and placed it next to her. She got up at once and called, "My dear one! My dear one." But there was no response. Then the officer said, "Oh mother! Your son breathed his last while bringing food for you." She was immersed in grief and lamented, saying, "Alas! Where is the necessity for food when I have lost my son?"

Worldly Relations Bereft Of Love Are Useless

So far as the mother has strength, she nourishes her children. The children should nourish their mother in the same way. God has given us human birth to nourish and nurture each other. What for are the relations like brothers and sisters? Not merely for the sake of division of property and wealth. These

relations are for developing love and sharing it with each other. Real relations are those who share love with each other. Worldly relations bereft of love are useless. Those who are strong and powerful should protect the weak and helpless. When you see someone in trouble, show kindness towards him and try to wipe his tears. This is real compassion. This compassion is righteousness; it is love. When we expand our love, we can give happiness to the whole world. Therefore, develop love. If you come across a poor man, a sick person or one who is in trouble, give them whatever help you can. When you extend help to such people, God will shower His love on you. In every human being, God is present in the form of love. We should not waste or misuse this love. Today we express our love arbitrarily for anything and everything. By loving undesirable things, we tread the wrong path and come to a sorry state.

Some people show great love for outsiders, but do not show the same love towards their mother and father in their house. First and foremost, we should love our parents and then, other people. But we should not limit our love to our friends and relatives alone; we should love all. Only then will God shower His love on us. When we see somebody in trouble or an injured person on the road, we should not show indifference towards them. Howsoever urgent be the work we are having, we should try to remove their suffering. Then God will manifest before us and fill us with energy. There is none in this world who can give us more love than God. We do bhajans and perform service activities only to attain the love of God. God's love fills us with great energy. It is God only who gives us this energy. Therefore, love God, and love all people who are verily the children of God. Some children become orphans. You should alleviate their suffering. Then your birth as human being will become worthwhile. You see a person in trouble and go away without showing any kindness to him. There is no sin greater than this. The next day when you are in trouble, then your friends will also ignore and deride you. Therefore, you should love others and receive their love. Charity and kindness are an important part of Dharma (righteousness).

There is no charity greater than feeding the hungry,

There are no greater Gods than parents,

There is no greater Dharma than compassion,

There is no greater gain than the company of the good,

There is no enemy greater than anger.

(Telugu poem)

In no condition should we allow anger to overpower us. We should obey our parents. We should love even those who hate us. One should sacrifice even one's life for the sake of love. One's life becomes worthwhile only when one has love.

Develop Love And Experience Unity With God

Members of Seva Dal! First and foremost, imbibe love in your heart. Whomsoever you come across, you should talk to him with love. Draw all those who are in trouble close to you. Then God will shower His love on you. How can you receive the love of God if you do not love your fellowmen? If you want to become deserving of God's love, then first and foremost you should become deserving of the love of your fellowmen. God will help you if you help others. **Help Ever, Hurt Never.** Never put anyone to trouble. Love everyone. Lead your life with goodness of heart. Your heart should melt with love and love should flow in it.

Therefore, embodiments of love, you all embody love. Develop love in you more and more. This is an aspect of Divinity. It is in reference to this that Lord Krishna declares that all beings are only an aspect of His Divinity. Dear ones! You are not different from Me; I am in you and you are in Me. As I love you, you should also love one and all. Then your love and My love will unite. If you add love to love, it will increase immensely. You can achieve greatness only when you develop love in you. This is the service you have to render. Only when you develop love will you become deserving of God's love and grace.

You should offer the fruits of your Sadhana,... the fruits which will come from your own life, to God. These fruits are good conduct, truth, good habits, love, etc. If such fruits, grown by your Sadhana, are offered to God, the benefit will come to you. In the preliminary stages such pujas with flowers plucked from a tree are necessary. To adopt this procedure for all your life is not the right type of Sadhana. It will be like sitting in the same class in a school for all your life.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

4. Be United In Divine Love

Date: **11 February 2007** / Location: **Prasanthi Nilayam** / Occasion: **Bhagawan's message to devotees of Adilabad**

Embodiments of Love, Young Men and Women,

IT is very necessary to recognise the importance of human values, today. People these days are unable to lead the life of a human being since they lost the human values. The qualities of a human being are of two types, internal and external. Kama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (attachment), mada (pride), and matsarya (jealousy) are external. Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Righteousness), Santhi (Peace), Prema (Love) and Ahimsa (Non-violence) are internal.

Today, we are giving a go-by to the inner, eternal and truthful qualities and are hankering after the worldly and transient matters. This is not correct. We must develop the inner vision of atma bhava . If only there is Truth, it is enough; Righteousness will follow. Where Truth and Righteousness go together like the positive and negative, there will be Peace; where there is Peace there will be love. There will be no scope at all for violence when a human being is surcharged with the current of Love. Today, violence is rampant everywhere. People suffer from sorrows and difficulties. Hence, you must strive to cultivate the innate human values. Truth is eternal. It cannot be destroyed. It is said, Sathyam bruyath, priyam bruyath, na bruyath sathyamapriyam (speak Truth; speak pleasantly; avoid speaking Truth that is unpalatable). Truth is not born out of an individual, nor does it go away with one individual. Truth is universal. It applies equally to all human beings. You must cultivate such universal Truth. What you think, you must speak; what you speak, you must put into action. That is real humanness.

Anger, desire, greed, attachment, pride and jealousy are unbecoming of a human being. Today, man is limiting his love to his own wife and children. He is not developing broad-mindedness. As the saying goes Ekam Sath viprah bahuda vadanthi (Truth is only one; the wise men say it in different ways).

Sarvam khalvidam Brahma is the declaration, which means everything in the universe is Brahman only. Truth is the very embodiment of Brahman . And that Brahman is omnipresent. Hence, first and foremost, establish Truth in your heart. Thereafter, the other four human values of Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence will reign in the world. Then, there will be no violence at all in the world and all human beings irrespective of religion and nationality will live in peace and harmony. A human being has enormous strength in him. That has to be channelised properly. Anger, desire, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy have to be controlled.

You sing various bhajans . It is only when you sing the bhajans in proper sruthi , it will be melodious. Similarly, your desire must have a limit. If you wish to marry, you can do so. Later on you may wish to have children; you can have that also. But, you must bring them up in proper way, so that they become useful citizens in their later life. God has prescribed certain code of conduct for the proper conduct of life of a human being. One should not behave like an animal or a bird or a beast. We must control our behaviour. This is the most important value to be cherished by a human being.

The human values are not visible to the naked eye. What is the form of Truth? None has seen the form. Rather, it is beyond any form. It emerges out of our bosom. What is Dharma (Righteousness)? Dharma is to follow the teachings of our own heart. Where is Santhi (Peace)? Is it outside? No. it is only asanthi (unrest) outside. Man today craves for peace and peace alone, inspite of possessing all sorts of wealth. You ask any millionaire. His reply will be "I have money, houses and all kinds of wealth; but, I have no peace". Peace therefore is not to be obtained from the world outside. It has to flow from within. Where there is Peace, there will be Love. The light of Love shines in one and all. It is Love that illuminates the entire universe. Hence, if you strengthen Love, there will be no scope for hatred at all! It is only when you develop a feeling of separation, there will be hatred between one another. On the other hand, if you develop a feeling of oneness, how can there be a feeling of hatred between you and the other man?

Dear Golden ones (bangaru), No one should develop bad qualities like

jealousy, hatred, desire and anger. Develop Love. Love is God and God is Love. "Prema muditha manase kaho Rama Rama Ram â€œ!â€œ!â€œ!" is the bhajan . Love is the greatest gift God has given to a human being. The value of any material object in this world can be assessed; but not the value of Love. Hence, develop Love. Not only that, share that love with others. Thus, when you exchange love and spend your lives happily, evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, ego, etc., cannot come anywhere near. You must be knowing about a chemical stick called "Lakshmana Rekha" . When a line is drawn with this stick in the house, no insect of any kind can enter the area. Similarly, where there is Love, there the evil qualities cannot enter. Hence, only one quality, the quality of Love is sufficient to drive away all evil qualities. Love can be shared with any number of people; it will not deplete in quantity. In fact, the more you share it with others the more it will grow. God is our father, we are all His children. All these children have a right to inherit His property. All have to share that 'property', i.e., the property of Love. You may forget anything in this world; but you should not forget God. Everything in this world is transient. But, Love is not that which comes and goes. On the other hand, it grows. Develop such Divine Love. Constantly do namasmarana , with absolute faith in God. We are uttering so many words every day. Can't we utter sacred words like Rama and Krishna? Surely, we can. Once you chant these Divine names, all your sorrows and difficulties will vanish.

Man has several types of worries: To be born is a worry, to be on the earth is a worry; world is a cause of worry and death too; entire childhood is a worry and so is the old age; life is a worry, failure is a worry; all actions and difficulties cause worry; even happiness too is a mysterious worry. Devotion to Swami alone will put an end to all your worries. Oh people! Develop such devotion and love. (Telugu poem)

Develop Love for God, so that you may get rid of those worries. That is the only effective medicine for all your worries. By chanting the Divine Name of God, all your worries can be cured. Where is God? He is everywhere (omnipresent). The panchabhuthas (the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether) are the embodiments of Divinity. The body is like a water bubble. The mind is like a mad monkey. Hence, you should not follow either the body

or the mind. You should follow the advice of the intellect. You should develop a pure and steady consciousness (chittha). In fact, all our sadhanas (spiritual practices) are meant to develop only chittha shuddhi (purity of consciousness)! The evil qualities of desire, anger, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy are only acquired qualities and not our innate qualities. Our innate qualities are Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Righteousness), Santhi (Peace), Prema (Love) and Ahimsa (Non-violence). We have to manifest them.

Today, wherever you turn only violence is present. People indulge in violence for the sake of money. Money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows. In the past several kings and emperors had accumulated enormous wealth. But, could any one of them take even a paisa with them? No. Alexander the Great during his last moments called his ministers and requested them to wrap his body after his death with a white cloth, keeping his empty hands projected upward and take it in a procession through every street of his capital city. His idea was to convey a message to the people that man has to leave this world with empty hands, in spite of acquiring great wealth or conquering vast kingdoms. Whatever we acquire in this material world is only for our satisfaction. True and Eternal Bliss can be acquired only through Love. It is not enough if you spend your time with Love when you are in Prasanthi Nilayam. Those blissful moments should be cherished forever. Wherever you are, you should continue to live with Love. Irrespective of the country where you are living, U.S.A., U.K., Japan or Germany, Love has no difference. Your body may be in a particular place, but Love is universal. Love is all-pervading. You must develop such love. You must love even those who hate you.

Whenever you encounter an enemy, offer your pranams to him and enquire, "Hello brother, how are you?" I am sure he will respond saying "Brother, How are you?" All are brothers and sisters, verily. God is the only Father to one and all. The Bhagavad Gita declares, Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). You are not different from Me; we are all one! You must develop faith in such Oneness. Where is God? He is present as the indweller in every human being. You should develop the feeling 'Whatever I do is an offering to God, the Indweller

of my heart'. You must develop the faith that whatever happens, whether happiness or sorrow, is for your good only. You are aware that a person suffering from malarial fever will be administered the bitter mixture of quinine. It is only when that bitter mixture is taken the fever will subside. Similarly, realise the truth that the sorrows and difficulties you undergo are for your own good. God is omnipresent, you need not go far to realise Divinity. If you search your own heart and share your love with others, you can easily understand Divinity. All are bound by the bond of love. All will be united with love only. Hence, wherever you go, be united. Especially, the youth can achieve a lot if they are united. Prayer, chanting of the divine name and love for God are the three sadhanas we have to undertake. When you conduct yourself based on these three sadhanas , you can achieve anything.

God is not separate from you. You are not separate from God. You and God are only one. You must always think "God is residing as the Indweller in my heart. I am verily God." There may be differences in names and forms, but God is One and One alone. The different names like Rama, Krishna, etc., are those visualised by poets and artists like Ravi Varma. In fact, God has no particular form. They pray "Allahu Akbar ". Allah has no form. There is no one higher than Allah. He is Supreme. God has no name and form. But, He will assume the form you constantly contemplate upon. Yad Bhavam tad bhavati (as is the feeling, so is the result). We are visualising Him in a particular form as per our own thoughts and feelings. You develop the feeling "God is in me, with me and is guiding me" and march on. May you all be happy!

5. Tread The Path Of Truth By Constantly Contemplating On God

Date: 16 February 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,

Is there a place in the cosmos where truth does not exist?

Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.

(Telugu poem)

TRUTH is all-pervading. Truth is omnipresent. We are witnessing Truth everywhere. In fact, all our Darshan, Sparshan and Sambhashan are associated with Truth only! Where is Shuddha Sattwam (pure consciousness)? It is everywhere. Truth has no form. Whatever we see is Truth. (Saying there Swami created an object) This is Truth. From where did it come? It has come from Truth and it will merge in Truth. It is said, Sarvam khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman). Truth is the embodiment of Brahman . Truth is indivisible. It is not two; one and only one. Yet, people have to make a lot of effort to realise this Truth. Truth is not merely a word. It assumes several forms. Similarly, Brahman assumes infinite number of forms. Yet, Brahman is one only. That is the reason why it is said, Brahma sathyam jagan-mithya (Brahman alone is real, the world is a mistaken perception). Everything else is the reflection of Brahman , nothing else. Truth is one, but the wise say it in different ways. Everything in this Universe is born out of Truth. Dharma (righteousness) has emerged from Sathya (Truth). It is said, Sathyannasti paro Dharma (There is no Dharma greater than adherence to Truth). When Truth and Righteousness go together, Peace is the result. From Peace comes Love. This Love envelopes one and all. There is no place in this world, where Love is not present. Similarly, there is no place in this world where Truth is not present. Thus, from Truth and Righteousness emerges Peace and from Peace, Love; and finally from Love emerges Bliss. Where there is love, there is no scope for hatred. It is exactly at such a place, non-violence makes a

beginning. Hence, if you wish to promote non-violence, you must cultivate love. If only there is love, all will become one. The Bhagavad Gita says, Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being). The import of this declaration is "All are My amsa (part). You are not different from Me. You are My own reflections! You are Me and I am you." Names and forms may be different, but, the atma present in everyone is the same. Each body assumes a different name. These names are given for the purpose of identification. They do not, however, reflect your true self. It is the same atma that is in all life. Hence, love that atma . Then, it amounts to loving yourself. Today, love has assumed different names and forms in the world. The love between a husband and wife is termed as anuraga . Similarly, the love a mother has towards her children is referred to as vatsalya . These are all mental feelings only. However, the love that permeates all individuals is only one. With such a universal love, all can be united. There will be no scope at all for differences. There will be no duality. Where there is no duality, all are one. It is said that. "A man with dual mind is half blind" We are not blind. Are we? We have two eyes; together, they see one object only. Hence, we are all one.

Wipe Out The Feeling Of Differences

When the feeling of 'fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man' is cultivated, the feeling of difference, fighting with one another, unrest, agitation, etc., will be wiped out from the world. All are children of one father, God. We have to foster such a noble feeling today. Only then will humanity become one. How do you refer to yourself? You say, "I am a human being." Who is a human being? A person full of kama (desire) and krodha (anger)? No, no. The real meaning of the word Manava is one who conducts his life with no feeling of difference. In fact, we should not entertain any feeling of differences. We are all embodiments of Divine Self! We are the children of one father, verily! The names and forms appear to be different. Basing on these names and forms, we should not develop a feeling of differences. Wherever we go, we must all be united. Is it not a fact that the hand is only one, though the five fingers are different from one another?

Jewels are many but gold is one.

Cows are many but milk is one.

Beings are many but breath is one.

Castes are many but humanity is one.

(Telugu poem)

We have taken birth as human beings. We are all human beings. Though we are all human beings we may have different capabilities, but the Atma in all the human beings is one only. Look! There are several electric bulbs glowing here. Though the bulbs appear to be different, the current flowing in them is only one. Human bodies are like those bulbs. Each bulb may be of different wattage. I will always be happy to drive home this point of oneness. I have received lakhs of letters recently urging Me to restrain Myself from drawing out lingam from My body. They prayed, "Swami , You are making the Atma Linga emerge out of Your body. The doctors are also advising against it. You are, of course, required to bring out the Linga to make the human beings realise the truth and experience its divine effulgence. The Hiranyagarbha Linga will be in liquid form in the body. For it to solidify, a lot of energy is required. To expel the Linga calls for a lot of strength of the body. Each Linga that emerges out of your body has much weight. It is not good for your physical body to spend so much energy to draw out those Lingas . Let those who believe your Divinity do so; have no concern for others who do not. Please do not strain Your physical body under any circumstances. Your body is very important for us. We have, in fact, sought refuge in You. If you thus weaken Your body, we are very anxious. Hence, kindly restrain Yourself and conserve Your physical energy. God, by His Divine Will can achieve anything. He can change the earth into sky and vice-versa. It is very easy for Him. But, of what use it is? What will happen to the Sadhakas , thereafter? Hence, please do not make use of Your precious divine energy to make the people happy or to satisfy them." True. This body is already 81 years old. This will last for a few more years. I have to maintain this body to provide joy to all of

you in several ways. Very soon, I will provide you infinite bliss. For those who will be happy to see My physical body in good condition, the body is important and necessary. Hence, it is also My duty to take good care of My physical body.

In Bharat devotion is very important. You call this country as 'Hindu' country. The five letters in this word 'Hindu' stand for several pentads of entities such as Panchabhutas (five elements), Pancha Pranas (five life-breaths) and Pancha Koshas (five life sheaths). Then, what is the inner meaning of this word 'Hindu'. The letter 'H' stands for Humility, 'I' for Individuality; 'N' for Nationality; 'D' for Divinity and 'U' for Unity. It is only when you maintain unity, you can achieve divinity. Similarly, it is only when you develop divinity, you can achieve peace and happiness. We have to safeguard the national feeling. We have to develop faith in the unity of the nation. If we lose the national feeling, we cease to exist. What is it that protects national feeling? The individuality will sustain humanity.

Have Faith In The Atma Tatwa

We have to set a limit to our aspirations in this world. Only then will we have peace. God is omnipresent. The entire universe emerges from truth. The entire creation reflects collectivity. Wherever you see, it will only be equality. Do not imagine that God is somewhere far away in a niche of his own. You are all embodiments of Divinity! You develop that feeling. In fact, this truth is being experienced by every human being directly. You just reflect on yourself for a moment, closing your eyes: "Who am I?" What did you see on closing your eyes? Nothing. But, you hear one question constantly ringing in your ears: "Who am I? Who am I?" Then you will realise, "I am not this form." All these names and forms are transient. They are never permanent.

The body is given to you to toil hard. You should not feel bad about sorrows and difficulties. If there are no difficulties at all, you will not know the value of happiness. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. In fact, we derive pleasure out of pain only. Even difficulties are only for a short period. If you wish to acquire more happiness, you must experience some difficulty and

pain at least. Saint Purandaradasa sang thus: Oh Rama! Who is the one that painted the peacock's feathers?

Who is the one that gave a red beak to a green parrot and made it beautiful?

Who is the one that watered the tree on a hill?

Who is the one that provides food to the frog in the rock?

You are the sustainer of the entire universe.

(Telugu poem)

Divinity is the direct witness to humanness

May you therefore protect all!

May you pervade all living beings!

You are omnipresent as the Divine Atma

The Atma protects Atma, none else;

Oh God, May you grant all, the awareness to realise this truth. (Telugu poem)

We have to develop faith in the atma tatwa . Atma has no name and form, whatsoever. Yet, if you develop faith in the atma tatwa , it will protect you always. In fact, atma is the living divinity!

Sarvatah panipadam

Tat Sarvathokshi siromukham,

Sarvatah sruthimalloke

Sarvamavruthya tishthati.

(with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe).

The atma tatwa that pervades all living beings is true and eternal. The Atma is indivisible. The same Atma permeates all, just as the same current flows through all bulbs. If the electric wire that carries current to all the bulbs is cut at one place, all the bulbs cease to glow.

Dear students! The scientific advancements are creating lot of havoc in the world. Several difficulties are arising on account of these scientific experiments. Cows are being fed with tripe in America, with an expectation that they will yield more milk. But, those cows are suffering from several other diseases. In fact, those who drink their milk are also exposed to diseases. Each country is experimenting with some new changes. It is only the Bharatiyas who are leading a natural life till now. One should not lead a life of artificiality. If you lead such a life, everything in your life will be artificial. For example, you might have observed a lot of changes in the vegetables we consume of late. We the Indians consume a lot of green leafy vegetables. The leafy vegetables provide good strength to our body. Now, they are grown with the polluted water flowing through the drainage system. Today, all the vegetables and green leafy vegetables are polluted. Several people in India, especially those living in the southern states, like brinjal curry (called Vankaya in Telugu). There is a poem which extols the taste of this curry thus: Matchless is the taste the curry of Vanka(ya)

Matchless is the face of virtuous Sita like a blossomed Panka(ja) (lotus)

Unmatched is the compassion of the Lord Sanka(ra)

Unequaled indeed is the valour of the victor of the Lord of Lanka. (Telugu poem)

But, this poem does not apply to the present-day brinjals. They are totally polluted. Because of this increasing pollution day by day, our minds are also polluted.

Recognise The Glory of Indian Culture

Dear Students! You are well educated. You should not read all sorts of trash and pollute your mind. Follow our glorious Indian culture. Indian culture is very sacred. Our ancestors experienced the glory of our great culture and led their lives happily. I am sure that in the very near future even the people from overseas will fully realise the greatness of our Indian culture and adopt it. We, however, need not wait till such time. Let us take to the noble path right now. God protects all in every way. He knows everything. When God Himself is in us and with us, we need not fear anything.

Prior to independence in our country, I used to conduct meetings in villages. I used to tour the villages with a view to help the poor people. When I was moving about in the villages wearing a knicker and half sleeves shirt, people used to restrain Me treating Me as an immature boy. They used to bring a dhoti and make Me wear it over My shorts so that I may look like an adult to match the kind of activities I was doing. I used to go to the houses of the Harijans and teach them some folk songs. Here is one such song that was meant to bring about a transformation in the rich, in their attitude towards the poor: We toil in the fields day and night

ploughing and sowing and harvesting;

You sit in the cozy comfort of your mansions

eating, drinking and making merry;

You don't even get down and enquire our welfare,

Toil is ours and all comforts, yours;

Is it proper?

(Telugu song)

The Harijans used to sing songs composed by Me in the public. Whenever anyone questioned their intransigence, they used to sing another song composed by Me, as a reply: The earth is God's gift,

not the property of the rich,

If you attack us with your might,

God is there for us;

Great souls there are, charged

with the feeling of brotherhood,

Awake! Awake! Rise up from the slumber of Maya.

(Telugu song)

While I was thus inspiring the poor and the downtrodden with My songs, the rich used to feel embarrassed and wanted to attack Me. Even the elder brother of this body used to reprimand Me, saying "Why do you engage yourself in such activities in the public? You don't go out. Sit quietly in the house and study Your lessons. You should not stir out of the house, hereafter." So saying, he used to lock Me up in a room at home. All My regular companions would come to our house and call Me, "Raju! Raju! Raju!" Poor souls! They were so much attached to Me. I used to counsel them saying, "My dear ones, bear with Me for sometime. I shall surely come out and fulfil your aspirations. I belong to you." Thus, I have been helping the poor since then, till date. To protect the poor, provide succour to them by giving food, shelter and water and thereby make them happy is My duty. Even now I am sending My students to every nook and corner of the villages to distribute food to the villagers. Whenever a hungry person stood in front of our house, I used to provide food to him even foregoing My own share of food. For those who had no clothes to wear, I used to give away My clothes. Thus, I have been helping every needy person since My childhood. My motto then as well as now has

been **'Help Ever, Hurt Never'**. I had a lot of opportunities to help others since childhood. Several people pay 'lip service' to the poor, but they do not really help them.

Manasyekam vachasyekam,

Karmanyekam mahatmanam;

Manasyanyath vachasyanyath,

Karmanyanyath duratmanam.

(Those whose thoughts, words and deeds are in perfect harmony are noble ones; those who lack harmony of these are wicked). I have been protecting, fostering, counselling and making the people tread the right path since My early days till today. I never did any harm to anyone. I have never shown anger or hatred to anyone. However, some people, out of egoistic envy, are fabricating some stories about Me and publishing them in the newspapers. They are resorting to false propaganda about Me in the print and electronic media. All this does not perturb Me. I am not afraid of anybody. My very name is "Sathyam, Sathyam, Sathyam" (truth). I am bound by truth. The name of this body is Sathyam (Truth). I will never stray away from the path of truth. Persons indulging in vituperative publicity impelled by envy, greed or hatred will reap the appropriate consequence. The time has come when proper action has to be taken to dissuade these people from resorting to such false propaganda. Of course, they are also not to be blamed. They are resorting to such false propaganda for the sake of money. They must try to realise their mistake. There has not been even an iota of dosha (impurity) in Me at any time. Hence you all follow Sai. You can achieve anything in this world by following the path of truth. Tread the path of truth by constantly contemplating on God. (At this point, Swami enquired the children whether He was causing any inconvenience to them by giving a long discourse. The children replied in one voice, "No, Swami ")

It had never been My intention to cause suffering to anyone. Such thoughts

do not come anywhere near Me. Whatever I do is for your own good, not for Me. In fact, even the food I partake is for you only. The water I drink is for you. Thus, all the activities I undertake are for your good only. Those who realise this truth will be benefited. Their lives will be sanctified.

Help Others And Do Good To All

I was deeply pained to know that people in some upland areas of the East and West Godavari districts are drinking polluted water. Immediately I arranged for the supply of pure drinking water at a cost of two hundred crore rupees. Nearby in the lowlands the Godavari flows, but they had not even a drop of water to drink. Hence, I arranged for lifting the Godavari water to the upland areas through pipes. They are all very happy now. I intend to visit those people shortly. That is great news for them. They are very happy and give expression to their joy thus: "Swami , We never imagined that You will shower such abundant grace on us. Your love and compassion are unparalleled. We are extremely happy and grateful to know that You are visiting us." They are cleaning all the roads en route and are making all arrangements for My visit. Ramakrishna and Kondal Rao, who executed the project, are accompanying Me. Thus, we must help others and do good to all, to the extent possible. If you thus lead your life, you will also be happy. Everything will be turning out to be good for you as well.

Dear Students! Whenever you come across an enemy, offer Pranams (salutations) to him lovingly and say, "Oh Brother!" They will also wish you in the same way, with love. All are brothers only. It is only when you conduct yourself in such a manner that you would earn good name to our Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. We are not taking even a paisa from the students. Not even examination fees. Students from different parts of the country and even from abroad come here, pursue their education and go with high academic degrees. We are even providing for research degrees like Ph.D., at great cost. If all the students develop such exemplary character as in Sathya Sai Institute, our country will earn great name. We have good news about our past students pursuing their vocations in America. Recently, a plane load of our past students from U.S.A. visited Prasanthi Nilayam. The

plane was specially chartered from America for their visit in appreciation of the services rendered by them in that country. They said, "Swami , there are several students from your Institute in our country. They are great people. They are giving us a lot of joy." There are two hundred past students from our Institute. They, along with their families, numbering 250 in all, came here. They experienced great bliss during their stay in Prasanthi Nilayam. While leaving, they expressed their gratitude saying, "Swami , we never imagined even in our dreams that You would provide so much grace to us." I intend to undertake a world tour, shortly. Several devotees are coming here from Africa and Russia. The devotion of the Russians is indescribable. There are several Russian devotees sitting in this hall. They enjoy a lot, My discourse. (Pointing towards the Russian devotees) "Look! Those devotees with raised hands are all Russians." They are all very devoted. (Pointing towards the Russian devotees again) "You are not Russians. You belong to our country only! I love you all." Dear Students! There are several countries in the world like Russia, America, Germany, Japan, Italy, France, etc. Though the countries are different, the people living in all those countries belong to us only! They helped a lot for the construction of the Indoor stadium in Prasanthi Nilayam. They worked hard day and night. They love Swami intensely. Wherever I go, they follow Me. They run after My car. They even came to Chennai (Madras) recently when I was there. They are coming here, unmindful of the great difficulties and expense. You have to learn a lot from their devotion to Swami

Our good and our bad are contained in our qualities. For all these things, the factor which is responsible is one's selfishness. So long as this selfishness is present, man cannot experience any kind of happiness. The quality of selfishness is of a demoniac nature. It does not take into consideration the happiness or the well-being of others.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

6. Give Up Ego And Attachment To Become Great

Date: 17 February 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

Dear Students,

Can all the birds of green colour talk like a parrot? Can the insects that crawl on the flowers become the bumble bees? Can an over sized pig become an elephant? Can one who does not know about himself acquire knowledge of the Self? (Telugu poem)

MAN today considers himself as great. On the other hand, one who is devoid of humanness is not a human being at all. A real human being is one who manifests humanness. A real human being is one who practises the five human values of Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Righteousness), Santhi (Peace), Prema (Love) and Ahimsa (Non-violence) and preaches them to others. Even if one out of these five values is deficient, it is unbecoming of a human being. Man, in fact, is very intelligent. His intelligence is unlimited and unparalleled. But, it is not being reflected in his behaviour.

Once Lord Easwara was absorbed in intense tapas (penance). Parvati wished to marry Him. But, her parents tried to dissuade her. They started to reason with her describing Siva's form thus: Oh Gowri, you are very young and

Sambasiva is old;

He has matted locks and

wears a tiger skin;

He rides a bull and

is constantly on the move;

He is adorned with snakes;

How did you court Him?

Don't you know all this?

He has no house of His own and

sleeps in the cremation ground.

(Telugu poem)

Parvati paid no heed to all these reasoning and ignored it. Lord Easwara knew her nature and Parvati knew Siva's nature. They are, in fact, not different from one another. Lord Siva is Siva-sakti-atmaka-swarupa (embodiment of Siva and Sakti). So too is Parvati.

How can the ordinary mortals understand such mystic nature of Lord Easwara and Parvati! Where there is a feeling of duality, there arises doubt. It is said that a man with dual mind is half blind. In fact, there is no difference between Lord Siva and Parvati.

Meanwhile, Saraswati arrived on the scene to counsel Parvati about Lord Siva's unsuitability as her bridegroom. She explained, "Dear Parvati, society will not accept such an odd combination. There is no compatibility between you and Lord Siva. You yourself know everything. I need not elaborate on the point further. I am sorry that knowingly you have fallen into that illusion." Parvati replied firmly, "Oh Saraswati. I am interested only in Lord Siva and none else. I have no other interest in life except becoming the consort of Lord Siva. No one can change my decision." Isavasyam idam sarvam (the entire universe is permeated by God). The power of Lord Siva permeates the entire universe. The foremost duty of a human being is to love Easwaratwa (the divinity of Lord Easwara). Actually, the same divine power is immanent in

every human body also. Just as the human body is covered with a cloth, Divinity is enveloped in maya (illusion). Hence, though Easwaratwa is omnipresent it is not visible. In accordance with the maxim Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings), Easwaratwa is permeating every living being. Parvati explained that this Easwaratwa transcends age and it is in no way related to external appearance.

Mother Lakshmi too tried to dissuade Parvati from marrying Lord Siva. She explained, "My dear, you are quite young and beautiful. You have great power in you. It is unbecoming that you seek to wed someone who goes begging from house to house for alms." Parvati was very upset and she sternly replied, "My bridegroom is no beggar. In fact, He is the one who gives alms to the entire world. It is not proper for you all to indulge in this campaign of slander against Him." Several others also were averse to the choice of Parvati. They enquired, "He is adorning Himself with snakes. How did you court such a person? Don't you know about it?" Parvati retorted, "The snakes have poison only in their fangs. But, a human being has poison in the entire body. His vision, his hearing and his actions are all full of poison. You consider such a poisonous human being as a good person. If the fangs are removed, the snake cannot harm anybody. But, the human being with his two fangs of ahamkara (ego) and mamakara (attachment) is roaming about nonchalantly and causing great harm to fellow human beings and to the world around. He is considering himself great. Man is full of poison. How can such a human being be corrected?" One with pride will not be successful in any of his endeavours.

He will commit sins and will be ridiculed by

one and all.

His own people will abandon him.

He will lose all wealth and respect.

His pride will ruin him completely.

(Telugu poem)

God is loved by one and all. Every human being lives by love alone. In fact, one who has no love in him is not a human being at all. The love that exists between God and human being is comparable to that between a father and a son. What a great sin it is to attribute ill-will to such pure and unsullied love? In fact, it is the result of evil qualities that has permeated society. When the innate divine nature of every human being is recognised, there will be no scope for any kind of differences. All are one, be alike to everyone. We have to achieve such transformation in our lives. You study several texts. Mere reading is not enough. It will not help you in any way. The truth contained in those texts has to be realised and experienced.

Laila and Majnu were great lovers. Theirs was selfless love, which became immortal. Unable to understand the true nature of their sacred love, people attributed all sorts of motives to their love and created a lot of confusion. The mind must be filled with pure love. One should not develop attachment to sense objects and poison one's own mind. It is only then can real happiness be experienced. Every human being in this world must analyse for himself what is to be changed and corrected and what is to be accomplished. Accordingly, he should conduct himself. It is only then that he would have realised real humanness. The Divinity called 'I' is immanent in every human being. This Divinity 'I' is not to be construed as Brahma, Vishnu or Siva. These are all names ascribed by man to Divinity for the purpose of recognition. The names are not that important. The real Divinity is 'I'. 'I am I'. We consider Brahma as the creator, Vishnu, the sustainer and Siva, the destroyer. God grants darshan to each one in the same form on which each one contemplates.

Parents Are Living Divinities

Once Lord Siva and Mother Parvati were strolling in the ethereal world. They saw, on the earth, one person cutting the branch of a tree on which he was resting. The branch was almost cut and was about to fall any moment. Parvati was very anxious. She prayed to Lord Siva, "Oh Lord, Please save him

immediately from falling on the earth below." Easwara replied, "It is you who saw him first. You only realised that he may fall down by cutting the branch on which he was sitting. Hence, it is your responsibility to save him." Parvati then laid down a condition, "Swami , normally, any person falling from a height will express his agony by uttering the words 'Amma ' or 'Appa ' If this man cries 'Amma ' I will rescue him. On the other hand, if he cries 'Appa ' You have to rescue him." Easwara agreed for this suggestion. Meanwhile, the branch that was being cut finally broke. The person sitting on it fell down. Mother Parvati was ready to save him. Lord Siva was also ready. But, the person prayed to neither 'Amma ' nor Appa ' He just wailed 'Ayyo' Though Lord Siva and Mother Parvati were both waiting to rescue him, the man did not call them! This story is a reminder to one and all that we must always remember our parents wherever we are and in whichever situation we are placed. They are the living divinities constantly guarding and guiding us. The Upanishads exhort, Matru devo bhava, Pitru devo bhava, Acharya devo bhava, Atithi devo bhava (revere your mother, father, preceptor and guest as God). You may be highly educated. You may be an adept in all branches of knowledge in this world. Yet, to your mother you are only a child. Your mother's blessing will always be with you. The life of a son who neglects such a mother is worthless.

It is only Mother Parvati who has a compassionate heart to protect a man in distress. Hence, we must constantly contemplate upon that Saktiswarupini . Lord Easwara is the Father and Mother Parvati is Saktiswarupini . Easwara cannot independently move forward to save a devotee. It is only after Sakti takes a step forward, Lord Easwara follows her. Hence, one has to worship the Saktiswarupini in the first instance. She is the mother, verily. That is the reason why it has been said Matru devo bhava . It is the mother who has been given the first place. Even one's own country is compared to the mother. We say, "India is my motherland." Everyone refers to his country as 'motherland' and not as 'fatherland'. It is a common practice in the country of Bharat that a girl after her marriage goes to her in-laws' house to live there with her husband and in-laws. The lady of the in-laws' house is referred to as 'mother-in-law' in the English language. But Mother Parvati is 'Mother-in-love' for the whole world. 'Law' is a word relating to the world, whereas 'love' refers to

one's heart. Hence, first and foremost develop love. Consider love as your everything. It is only then that you would have led a fruitful life. Your mother may be very simple and not worldly-wise. She may be very weak physically and intellectually. Yet, a mother is a mother. You should not neglect your mother simply because she is weak or has fallen sick. A mother is always full of love for her children. That is the reason why Bhakta Ramadas prayed to Mother Sita, "Oh Mother Sita, Please represent my case to Rama and help me. When you are engaged in happy conversation with Rama in solitude, kindly make a mention about my pitiable condition." Bhakta Ramadas worked as a Tahsildar under Nawab Tanisha. He spent all the revenue collected from the people in building a temple of Lord Rama, Lakshmana and Mother Sita and decorating the idols with gold jewellery. He was imprisoned on charges of misappropriation for not depositing the money in the treasury. Unable to bear the agony in jail, he lamented, "Swami , I have dedicated all the money collected by me in your service only." In a beautiful kirtan (song), he sang thus: Oh Ramachandra! I have spent ten thousand gold coins to adorn Mother Sita with a gold necklace and another ten thousand sovereigns to decorate your brother Lakshmana with a gold belt. That crest jewel which adorns You cost me another ten thousand gold coins. Unmindful of my travails, You are flaunting the jewellery as if You have got it with Your own money!

(Telugu poem)

One cannot achieve anything in life, unless one gets rid of ego and attachment. Anything can be achieved with humility and obedience. In all spheres of life - moral, spiritual, physical and even political, one should conduct oneself with devotion. Only then will the task achieved shine in glory.

There Is No God Greater Than One's Mother

When a mother leaves her physical body, her soul will still be concerned with her children and their welfare. One day a mother approached Me and pleaded with Me, "Swami , my daughter listens to everyone. But, she gives importance to only Swami's words. My daughter is obstinate from the very beginning. She does not listen to what I say. But, if You once talk to her, she will follow Your

advice. She has lot of faith in You. She will not disobey Your words." Thus, several mothers come and pray for several things on behalf of their children. Mothers have an important role to play. There is no God higher than mother. Hence, one should never disregard one's mother. Those who ignore their mothers will always encounter difficulties. Women should be respected, loved and shown gratitude. It is only then will men and women reach an exalted position. You may be great or highly educated or you may be illiterate even. But you must respect your mother and give weight to her words as your foremost duty.

A mother and her son by name Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar used to live in a small village near Kolkata. The mother used to struggle a lot to bring up her son. Since there were no lights in their house, Vidyasagar used to sit under the streetlights and study his lessons.

Thus, he worked hard day and night and studied well. Finally, he attained a good position in his life. He became very famous as an orator. People used to gather in thousands to hear his lectures. Once, Vidyasagar was travelling in a train to go to some town to give a lecture there. An I.C.S. officer was also travelling in the same compartment to go to the same town to hear his lecture. As soon as the officer alighted from the train at the station, he called for a coolie to carry his briefcase. Vidyasagar approached that officer and told him, "Sir, give me that briefcase. I will carry it for you. By the way, where have you to go?" The I.C.S. officer replied, "I am going to the place where Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar will deliver a lecture." On hearing those words, Vidyasagar smiled to himself and started for the place of meeting. As soon as they reached that place, Vidyasagar handed over the briefcase to that officer and said, "Sir, I take leave of you." The officer offered some money to Vidyasagar for carrying his briefcase, saying, "Look! Take this money." Vidyasagar replied, "Sir, I have carried your briefcase as an act of service, not for money," and politely declined the offer of money. The meeting commenced. Vidyasagar was profusely garlanded and brought on the stage with honour. The officer, on seeing Vidyasagar recognised him as the person who carried his briefcase a few minutes ago. He felt very embarrassed. As soon as the meeting was over, he fell at the feet of Vidyasagar and begged

for pardon.

It is only humility and obedience that brought great honour to Vidyasagar. Even today, you will find the life story of Vidyasagar in the textbooks. Greatness is not in the education we pursue or the high academic degrees we obtain. It is humility and obedience that bring greatness to us. There are several educated people in this world. But, of what use it is? What benefit does the world derive out of their education? It is only because of ego and attachment that a person is spoiled. One can become really great when he sheds these two.

During his debating tour of north India, Adi Sankara met a great scholar named Mandana Mishra. He had a wife by name Ubhayabharati. She was selected to be the arbitrator and judge to decide the winner in the debate between Adi Sankara and Mandana Mishra. She considered truth as God and was therefore eminently suited for the assignment. Sankara defeated Mandana Mishra in the debate and he was declared the winner by Ubhayabharati. As per the conditions of the debate, Mandana Mishra had to take to sanyas (renunciation), and he did accordingly. As a dutiful wife, Ubhayabharati followed suit and she also became a renunciant.

One day, Ubhayabharati was going along with her disciples to the river Ganga for taking bath. On the way, she observed a sanyasi who was relaxing, keeping a dried bottlegourd under his head. He was using this for storing drinking water, and hence he was preserving it carefully. Ubhayabharati saw this sanyasi's attachment to the bottlegourd and said to her disciples, "Look! This man calls himself a 'Sanyasi' , but he is attached to a bottlegourd which he is keeping under his head as a pillow." The Sanyasi heard this comment, but did not utter anything then. While Ubhayabharati and her disciples were returning from the river, he threw away the bottlegourd in front of them in order to demonstrate that he was not attached to it. Observing his action, Ubhayabharati aptly remarked, "I thought there was only one defect in him - abhimana (attachment). Now I realise that he has another defect also - ahamkara (ego). How can one with abhimana and ahamkara become a Jnani and Sanyasi ?" Her comment was an eye-opener for the Sanyasi . He

expressed gratitude to Ubhayabharati for imparting true knowledge of renunciation to him.

Diverse population must be following different paths in the world. Lord Krishna is the one who taught the path of wisdom and established the truth that the quality of love is common to all. He forgave even people with demonic qualities, like Duryodhana and Dussasana. Though Karna joined the evil forces, he was a man of noble qualities. Hence, Lord Krishna praised his qualities. Karna did not have even a trace of ego and attachment. He was a great warrior and a person of highest charity. One should therefore emulate his noble qualities. Every student should hear good things and put them into practice. Experience bliss and share that bliss with all. This is your foremost duty.

Too much of anything and extremism are not good. We need food, but we should take it in limits. We need water, but we should take it in limits. If we transgress these disciplinary limitations, it will cause a disease... In the same manner, wealth, anger, temper, and all qualities should be within limits. We must put these qualities along an useful path. In this tumbler, there is water and at the bottom of the water there is sugar. If we drink the water from the surface, it will be tasteless. If we stir it nicely and then drink it, the water will taste sweet. There was sugar even earlier, but when we stirred the sugar, it spread everywhere and gave us the sweetness. So also in the tumbler of our heart, there is the sweet sugar in the form of divinity. Because we do not recognise this divinity, we experience only the superficial worldly pleasures. But if we use our Buddhi as a spoon and stir the sugar, with the help of Sadhana then there will be sweetness everywhere. Therefore, if you perform Sadhana, materially and spiritually you will taste sweetness.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

7. The Happiness Of Everyone Is My Happiness

Date: 20 March 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ugadi

Embodiments of Love!

THERE are sixty years in the Telugu almanac by name Prabhava, Vibhava, Shukla, Pramodhutha, Prajotpatthi, Angirasa, Srimukha, Bhava, Yuva, Dhathu, Easwara, Bahudanya, Pramadhi, Vikrama, etc. This cycle culminates in the 60th year Akshaya. This body has seen two Akshaya years so far. This year, Sarvajit, is very significant to realise the divinity latent in a human being. A human being has several desires and aspirations. The year Sarvajit fulfils such desires which are truthful. The year will see significant progress being made in the moral, physical, righteous, spiritual and scientific fields. A truthful desire will always result in fulfilment. One has, however, to hold on to Truth with steadfast faith. Sarvajit year will bring victory in all possible ways. It is the most important year in all these sixty years. 'Jit' signifies victory. Sarvajit means victory in all fields of human endeavour. If one were to progress in life, one has to cultivate truthful desires in this Sarvajit year. I have not seen a single person who cultivated such truthful desires and failed in his life. Hence, I exhort you all to cultivate truthful desires and aspirations and lead a life full of happiness and bliss in this Sarvajit year.

Goddess Parvati was responsible for naming this year as Sarvajit. She did severe penance for a number of years with an ambition to marry Lord Siva, giving up food and sleep. Lord Siva was pleased with her penance and appeared before her. He enquired, "For whose sake are you doing this penance?" She replied, "Oh Lord, I am doing this penance to win your grace." Lord Siva then told her, "Your wish is fulfilled today. You can join Me now." Before Parvati could join Lord Easwara, several divine ladies tried to dissuade her from marrying the Lord, criticising thus:

Oh Gowri, You are very young and Sambasiva is old;
He has matted locks and wears a tiger skin;

He rides a bull and is constantly on the move;
He is adorned with snakes;
How did you court Him? Don't you know all this?
He has no house of His own and sleeps in the cremation ground. (Telugu poem)

They enquired, "Why do you wish to marry such an old man who goes about begging in the streets?"

Parvati replied "You do not know, you are seeing only his external form. You are not making any effort to realise the Atma Tatwa in him. I am, in fact, aspiring for the divinity in him. Divinity is changeless and eternal."

Lord Easwara accepted Parvati as His consort. She was happy in every respect. The day on which Goddess Parvati could fulfil her desire surmounting all difficulties, is celebrated as the New Year day of Sarvajit.

In fact, this name to the New year was given by Goddess Parvati herself. The names of the years that follow this Sarvajit are Sarvadhari, Virodhi, Vikruthi, Nala, Pingala, Kalayukthi, Siddharthi, Roudri, Durmathi, Dundubhi, Rudhirodgari, Raktakshi, Krodhana and Akshaya. It is only when you pass through all these years that you can reach Akshaya. Goddess Parvati rejoined the divinity, that is Akshaya (imperishable), only by great penance and after undergoing several hardships and pain. Divinity always incarnates in the year Akshaya only. This body was born in the year Akshaya during Brahmamuhurtha (the auspicious period at dawn) at 6.00 a.m. It is only when we get into the inner meaning, that we will be able to know the good and bad of any aspect.

The Birth of Chennai Water Supply Scheme

Parvati is the Goddess who supplies water to the entire world. Lord Easwara granted this boon to her. Ganga is another form of Goddess Parvati. That is

why the river Ganga is worshipped as Gangadevi. Some years ago, I visited the East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh. I had to travel by car to reach Chennai (Madras). There is a place called Red Hills near Chennai, where a huge reservoir was built to store water. I was told that drinking water was being supplied from that reservoir to the entire city of Chennai. But, there was no water in the reservoir itself at that time. How can water be supplied to the city? There were, of course, a few places in the reservoir where rain water had collected as small cesspools. I saw some children drinking polluted water from those cesspools. I was also informed that the same water was being used for drinking and cooking as well. There were a few devotees travelling along with Me in the car.

They enquired, "Swami, when would this reservoir get filled?" For everything, there is a time, action, reason and duty, which shall go together. Keeping these aspects in view I told them, "I will not step into this city of Chennai for the next ten years. It is only after supplying water for drinking and irrigation purposes, and the people of Chennai started drinking pure water that I would visit Chennai again."

Ten years passed by. I fulfilled My promise of supplying drinking water to the entire city of Chennai. Besides, it is also being used for irrigation purposes. Accordingly I visited Chennai during January this year.

The Britishers who ruled this country prior to Independence, lived for 200 years in Chennai city. There were no proper roads or cars in those days. They used to go to far off places and hilltops on horse-back and search for water sources. Nevertheless, they could not solve the drinking water problem till they left this country. At the time of acute water shortage, the rich could buy water in tankers from private owners of borewells. But, what about the poor people? They have no money to purchase water.

One day, I was in Teynampet in Chennai city. Several people gathered there. They represented, "Swami, We have no drinking water." There were a number of small children in that gathering. It was a holiday for the primary school children on that day. They all surrounded Me and prayed, "Swami, We need

drinking water." I told them, "My dear boys, Surely you will get drinking water. I will arrange for the supply of pure drinking water from the river Krishna." I fulfilled My promise.

The Britishers promised to link the three rivers Ganga, Godavari and Krishna. But, they did nothing in this regard. The Godavari water is going waste by draining itself into the sea. Of course, the Krishna river is not going that way. Even now, there is copious supply of water in the river Krishna. Several dams and reservoirs are being built across the river Krishna. We had to spend a huge sum of two hundred crores of rupees to supply drinking water to the city of Chennai, as also for irrigation purposes. The people of Chennai are very happy that they are able to drink pure water now. During My recent visit to the city, I went to Teynampet once again. The people there expressed their feelings thus: "Swami, We are able to drink pure, sweet and refreshing water now. How can we express our gratitude to You? Words fail to express our sense of gratitude to Swami."

God can do anything, achieve any insurmountable task. But, foolish human beings fail to realise this truth. You teach a proper lesson to such fools. They have accumulated enormous wealth. But, they don't shell out a coin in charity to the beggars. I told those people, "You need not depend on the charity of others. God Himself who is the creator, can grant everything unto you. Hence, pray to Him for whatever you need." They gathered there to greet Me on My way and express their gratitude to Swami for this boon of sweet drinking water. I told them, "Drink this pure, sweet water and be happy. That would be enough, I don't need anything else". Now, the same water is supplied to every house and even small huts by laying pipes. All people are drinking sweet and pure water. I must tell you that My entire heart is filled with sweet water! The happiness of everyone is My happiness. This is the inner meaning of the prayer,

Lokah Samasthah Sukhino Bhavanthu
(May all the people of the world be happy!)

You also pray this way.

Drinking Water For Godavari Districts

Our next project was the supply of drinking water to the people living in the upland areas of East and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh. The District President of the West Godavari district, Dr. Bhaskara Rao is now here. They all worked very hard for completion of this project. It is very difficult to lift the water from the low lying areas to the upland areas. It is a tedious and expensive work. I assured them, "You do your job; I will look after everything else." I sent Ramakrishna, former Vice President of M/s Larsen & Toubro Company and Kondal Rao, former Chief Engineer, Government of Andhra Pradesh to inspect the progress of work. They were surprised to find that the work was going on at a brisk pace. They exclaimed, "Oh! To what great heights the water reached! It is a miracle. It cannot be expressed in words. It is only to be seen to be believed".

The people living on those hills and hillocks are not living like other human beings. They do not go down the hills and interact with fellow human beings living in plains, as they are afraid of them!

They expressed their awe at this huge water supply project thus: "Swami, we are living in the hills right above the river Godavari flowing in the plains. But, till today we did not taste even a drop of Godavari water".

Such people are now happily drinking sweet and pure water right in their homes, supplied by laying pipes up to their doorstep. Several of those people, especially ladies came all the way to Prasanthi Nilayam by walk to see this place and have My darshan. They spoke to the devotees here and expressed their sentiments thus: "How fortunate you are! Of course, we are also fortunate! We will also settle at the Lotus feet of Swami one day." Thus, we have supplied pure drinking water to several villages to the complete satisfaction of one and all.

They composed songs in their local dialect and expressed their gratitude to Swami, singing those songs. The theme of their songs was, "The water we drink is supplied by Sri Sathya Sai. We should not waste even a drop of that water. Come! Let us drink that water and sustain our lives." They set the song to a fine tune and sang it in a group, dancing all the time. Thus, those villagers are very happy that their drinking water problem has been solved permanently by Swami. They fill that sweet water in big vessels and carry them to their homes by means of a Kavadi (yoke). It is a beautiful scene to be seen. In fact, there is a lot to be learnt by the people of the towns and cities from those innocent and jubilant villagers. They are experiencing indescribable bliss and contentment in their lives.

Yesterday, Ramakrishna and Kondal Rao came to Me and represented, "Swami, You must surely visit those villagers. They are all praying and eagerly waiting for Swami's visit." I told them I would surely visit them. Very soon, I will visit Rajahmundry. But, there is no way I can go to those villages by car from Rajahmundry. Their places can be reached only by foot. The villagers pleaded with Me earlier, "We will not cause any strain to the body of Swami. We will try to take you to our places, without making you walk. We will carry Swami on our shoulders, if necessary." Thus, those villagers are very happy and eager to receive Swami in their villages.

On this holy occasion of Ugadi, we are launching a new scheme for rural development under the name "Village works". It is necessary that every house in every village should be kept clean. The houses are to be kept neat and clean both inside and outside. The children in these homes are also to be groomed into clean and healthy children. We propose to cover every village under this scheme. Of course, the project involves huge expenditure. But, we don't hesitate to incur the necessary expenditure. Money comes and goes. But, the help and good work we render remain. Hence, we must undertake this rural development project immediately. We are launching this scheme from today itself on the holy occasion of Ugadi. The elders as well as children, the poor and rich, all should work united for the success of this project. It is Seva that unites people. Both the villages and towns should join and work together in a spirit of unity. We are sure that very soon it will be a reality. We

are launching this scheme today itself. It is our wish that by the next Ugadi, all the villages are shaped and moulded into model villages. All of you, including children shall take part in this village service. You must consider it as Daiva Seva (service to God). "Service to man is service to God".

Develop Unity And National Interest

At present, we are at the individual level. We are working with an individual interest. This attitude must change. We must change. We must develop unity and national interest. The entire country must stand united. In a recent meeting held at Chennai, several Chief Ministers, Governors of States and several I.A.S. officers participated. Many people attended that meeting. All these people shared a common cause. Thus, you must all come united and participate in this village service programme. If all people work together, the entire world can be changed into a better place to live in. I am with you always, guarding and guiding you at every moment. Whatever you need, ask Me; I will provide. Like the rivers that flow and merge into the sea ultimately, whatever seva you do to anyone, reaches Me only. Hence, don't fear for anything.

Why fear, when I am here?

Do not hesitate to ask Me for whatever you may need. Surely, I will provide everything to you. Hence, make yourself ready to participate in this service, both men and women. Yesterday, a group of devotees from Mumbai had come to Prasanthi Nilayam. They are very rich. They represented to Me, "Swami, we propose to erect a Dwaja Sthamba in the name of Swami in the sea near Mumbai. It will be several hundred feet high.

We propose to arrange a beacon light on top of the Dwaja Sthamba, so that it is visible to all from long distances. It will have the divine name "Sai Ram" and will involve an expenditure of several crores of rupees. We will come

again to Prasanthi Nilayam after the project is completed and have Swami 's Darshan."

No doubt, the devotees of Mumbai are doing a lot of seva. Everything is good; but the city of Mumbai is very dirty. First and foremost, make the city free from pollution. Some efforts were made earlier in this regard, but they were not successful. The reason being, at high tide the sea is at a higher level than the city drainage system. As you all know, the water flows down only. Unless the drainage water in the city is pumped out, the city cannot be kept clean and beautiful. I am sure that a way can be found for tackling this problem. I am also sure that the people of Mumbai can certainly undertake this task. I told them in no uncertain terms, "You finish that work; I will surely come." I wish that the entire country of Bharat be made beautiful and the people lead a happy and peaceful life. "Lokah samasthah sukhino bhavanthu" (May all the people of the world be happy!).

Swami 's happiness lies in the happiness of all. He does not need anything special. Your happiness is My happiness. Hence, whatever work you undertake, let it be for the peace, welfare and happiness of all people.

More than anything else, the foremost requirement today is water for all. Water is life sustaining. You may live without food for a few days, but you cannot live without water. In future, there will be copious rains. No one need to have any fear of drought. In fact, I have come into this world to correct all these maladies. I will surely provide you happiness, by correcting and forgiving your faults. You must all live in unity and love.

We consider the Panchapranas (the five vital airs) are Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana. No; what I mean by Panchapranas is Sathya (Truth), Dharma (Righteousness), Santhi (Peace), Prema (Love) and Ahimsa (Non-violence).

Where there is Truth, there will be righteousness.

Where there is righteousness, there will be peace.
Where there is peace, there will be love.

Where truth and love go together, everything else will be added unto such a person. Very soon, the entire world will be united into a single unit. Students should strive to achieve that ideal. The senses are very strong in children. The physical, mental and spiritual strength in them is of a high order. You have to make proper use of that strength. I expect you not to misuse your senses. Only then can you do great service to the world. It is not enough if you simply go to one temple and do some whitewashing to its walls. It is no service at all. Every house must be kept clean. You can visit any house that is not kept clean.

In the earlier days, the Harijans used to live in houses built separately, at a distance in Puttaparthi. I used to visit their houses also. There used to be one person by name Nagappa in those days. His son-in-law Ramulu was educated up to 3rd form (8th standard). He knew about Swami and His divinity to some extent.

One day, he invited Me to have lunch in his house. I informed the matter to Subbamma. She was taken aback and tried to dissuade Me from going to his house saying, "Alas! Swami, will You go to the houses of Harijans? Please do not go." I insisted on going. I also told her to go along with Me. Subbamma belonged to the orthodox Brahmin community. Nevertheless, she decided to follow Me saying, "I will do anything for the sake of Swami." I was leading and she was following Me. Ramulu was walking in front of Me. By the time we reached that house, the entire area was filled with divine fragrance.

I enquired from the inmates of the house, "From where did you bring this fragrance." Ramulu replied, "Swami, we did not bring it from anywhere. It is emanating from You only." I stepped into that house. Subbamma willingly followed Me. She was then 62 years old. I was served with some rice in an aluminium plate. In fact, that is what they had. There were no stainless steel

plates then. Subbamma was served food in another aluminium plate. Subbamma used to have a feeling of belonging to the high caste Brahmins in the beginning. Later on, she changed her attitude on the advice of Swami. She decided, "Fie on me! I should not entertain such feelings of superiority." She happily dined in their house, along with Swami.

By the time we returned to the village after finishing our lunch in Ramulu's house, the entire village joined together and started heckling us saying, "Subbamma has become a Mala (low caste)." They issued a decree that none in the village should touch Subbamma. Subbamma responded by saying, "That is exactly what I desire. Let no one touch me. It is enough if Swami alone touches me. I have no children. I need not maintain any relationship with any family. Neither I need give my children in marriage to other families nor do I need bring their children into my house. It is enough if Swami is with me."

In those days, she used to cook food for every devotee visiting Swami, in Puttaparthi. In keeping with her hospitality, fortune favoured her and she used to reap rich harvest from her fields. Her fields were yielding rich crops two to three times a year. Those extra paddy bags could not be taken into her house. Hence, the bags used to be emptied into a specially built granary from above. Thus, Subbamma sanctified her life in the service of Swami. One day, I enquired from Subbamma what she needed from Me. She replied, "Swami, I have no desire for anything. Before I leave my mortal coil, if You can graciously pour a few drops of sanctified water into my mouth from Your divine hands, it would be enough." I assured her that her wish would be fulfilled.

Glorious End Of Subbamma's Life

Once I was returning from Chennai to Bukkapatnam, by car. Subbamma died the previous night. Her relatives were making arrangements to bring her dead body from her house to the cremation ground in Bukkapatnam. As soon as they saw Me, they ran towards Me and informed, "Subbamma died yesterday." I told them, "It is only your illusion. Subbamma did not die. She

won't leave her mortal coil till she had My Darshan."

So saying, I reversed My car towards her house. Subbamma's mother was still alive then. With an agonising heart she told Me, "Swami, she was remembering You all the while and was chanting "Sairam", "Sairam", till last night. She was enquiring from everyone, "Did Swami come?" The body of Subbamma was covered with a cloth. I removed that cloth and called her, "Subbamma! Subbamma!" To everyone's surprise, she opened her eyes. When God gives a word, He will not forget it under any circumstances. I told her, "You wanted that I should pour a few drops of water into your mouth during your last moments. Is it not? Here it is; have it." So saying, I dipped a basil (Tulasi) leaf in a tumbler filled with water and put a few drops of that sanctified water in her mouth. Subbamma then drank the water, held both My hands tightly and placed them reverentially on her eyelids. She took leave of Me saying, "Swami, I have been waiting to take leave of You finally before I shed my mortal coil. You have fulfilled my last wish, as promised. Now permit me to leave. Here I am going." I gave her permission and she merged in Me.

I have built a housing colony in memory of Late Subbamma and named it after her. Subbamma was a great soul. She used to go up on the terrace of her house and converse with Mother Easwaramma, every now and then. She used to tell her, "Easwaramma, You gave birth to Swami and I fostered Him. Hence you are Devakidevi and I am Yashoda." Easwaramma used to reply, "Subbamma, You served hundreds of Swami 's devotees by giving food and shelter to them in your house. Don't you deserve the fruit of that seva ? Surely you do." Before Subbamma left her mortal coil, she came to Easwaramma one day and pleaded with her, "I am leaving. You look after Sathyam well." Both of them shed tears. The next day Subbamma died.

The name of Subbamma's husband was Narayana Rao. He always used to sit near the Tulasi Brindavan in front of his house. When he took to bad ways, I composed some songs and trained a few children to sing those songs in front of his house in order to correct him. The children used to move in a group in front of his house, singing those songs, one of which runs as follows:

Don't seek the company of women of bad character;
Surely you will fall down.
Your caste people will not allow you into their houses;
Your relatives will discard you; if they see you;
Your friends will beat you with chappals if they see you in the company of
such women. (Telugu poem)

While the children were moving about in a group singing this song, he felt very much embarrassed. He called them inside and enquired, "Who taught you this song?" The children replied, "Raju taught us, Sir!" He thought, "Yes, it is true. Who else can know about my behaviour?" From then on, he shed his bad thoughts and bad habits. In those days, cartloads of mango fruits used to be brought into his house. He used to distribute those fruits to all the children, lovingly.

The wrist watches had just arrived in those days. If anyone in the village wore a wrist watch, he was considered to be a great person. Not only that. The gents in those days used to have a small insect-like moustache under their nose, as a fashion. Keeping in view these vainglorious fashion trends, I composed a song and taught it to the school children so that they may go about in the streets singing that song:

People wear some glittering white badge to the left hand with leather belt
tied to it.
What fashion is this, Oh Dear! What fashion is this?
Disgusting appearances are they; What fashion is this?
Long moustache is trimmed and shaved; Few hairs are kept under the nose
instead;
What fashion is this, Oh Dear! What fashion is this? (Telugu song)

Thus, I used to compose songs and make the children sing those songs in the village in order that people shed the craze for fads and cultivate noble thoughts. I used to bring about a transformation in one and all right from the children to the elders, by such methods.

From today onwards, you must all embark on a mission to bring about a transformation in the villages. It does not mean that the villages are to be transformed into towns and cities. In fact, I don't like such transformation. First and foremost, the villages are to be kept clean. Already, the towns and cities are stinking with filth. The people living there wear a neat pant, shirt and a neck-tie. But, their inner feelings are all bad. You must cultivate good thoughts and feelings, in keeping with the neat dress you wear. First of all, you try to bring about a transformation in your own self and then work for a change in the outside world.

Yesterday, three boys sang a nice Burra Katha about Easwaramma. They rendered it well. There was a wonderful description about Subbamma in that Burra Katha. I am very happy about it. In fact, it was such a unique story. No one has written such a story so far.

8. Develop Love And Lead The Life Of A True Manava

Date: 23 March 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ugadi

Students! Citizens of Anantapur!

THE words you uttered and the programmes you presented got imprinted in My heart. You have set an example to others and proved beyond doubt that people of Anantapur are endowed with immense potentiality and talent. It is My wish that all other districts should emulate your example. I do not have any other desire. I want to purify your heart and confer peace and bliss on you. That is the only desire I have. I do not have even a trace of hatred in Me nor do I have any enemies. All are Mine. It is My love that is present in all of you. I speak only about love and nothing else. I have immense love for the children. In fact they are My only property. If they come up in life, the entire world will prosper.

Maintain The Spirit Of Unity

You should always be united. You call yourself a Hindu. What does the term HINDU signify? H - Humility, I - Individuality, N - Nationality, D - Divinity, U - Unity. These are verily our five life-breaths (Pranas). Just as five elements, five senses and five life-sheaths constitute our physical body; these five principles constitute the very essence of spirituality. Hence you have to safeguard these five principles and stand united. Never give scope for differences of opinion even in trivial matters. If any differences were to arise, each should be prepared to forgive the other. All are the children of God. All are brothers and sisters. You should understand this truth and conduct yourself accordingly. There is love in everyone. It is only when man develops love in him can all be united. When we develop love and give up hatred, our innate power will manifest. Elders are bogged down by a number of worries which weaken their mental power. But the youth are endowed with immense power of mind and senses. They should develop it by putting the senses to sacred use.

We should develop the spirit of unity. Never think that you belong to a particular state and thereby give rise to differences. You should always think that you belong to India. This is what I told in Madras (Chennai) recently. Do not identify yourself with Vyashti Tatwa (individual principle). We should identify ourselves with Samashti Tatwa (societal principle) and cultivate unity. Never forget the feeling of nationality. Consider truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence as your Pancha Pranas (five life-breaths) and uphold the sanctity of the name 'Manava ' (human being). Where there is love, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is non-violence. One bereft of love cannot attain peace. Peace cannot be purchased in a shop. In the external world, you find only pieces, but not peace. Even if you were to ask a millionaire, he will say, "I have everything except peace of mind". One can attain peace only through love. Divine love is the basis for every thing. When we develop love for God, everything will be taken care of. If we do not have love for God, we will be giving scope to evil qualities such as anger, hatred, jealousy, etc. Man today has given up human qualities such as love, peace, compassion and is leading the life of an animal.

We should face all difficulties with forbearance.

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. The nectarous feeling in this country is the feeling of love towards 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 are not aware of the greatness of their cultural heritage just as a mighty elephant is not aware of its own strength. (Telugu poem)

Man is endowed with great power. The power that is present in us cannot be traced anywhere else. But we forget our innate power as we are immersed in evil qualities such as hatred and jealousy. We should never have hatred or anger towards any- one. Do not be perturbed if someone vents out his anger on you. Offer your salutation to him and remain calm and composed. Greet even your enemy with love saying, "Hello brother, how are you?" When you address him as brother, he will reciprocate the same brotherly affection. On

the other hand, if you tell him, "You are my enemy", he will continue to develop hatred towards you. All your feelings will come back to you in the form of reaction, reflection and resound. As is the action so is the result. Can you get the belch of pineapple when you eat a mango? No. The smell of your belch depends on the fruit you have consumed. Likewise, you will experience only love when you fill your heart with love.

Love Is The True Human Quality

Dear Children,

You should develop love right from this tender age. Here love implies not worldly love, but divine love. When you have divine love, you will not be affected by the 'deep wine' of worldly desires. Hence, develop divine love. My life bears testimony to the principle of divine love. Love is the hallmark of true humanness. One bereft of love cannot be called a human being at all. Hence, develop love and lead the life of Manava in the true sense of the term. Earn a good name.

The programme you presented today and the feelings you have expressed should be propagated to the entire nation. Unfortunately, these days none of the newspapers carry reports of such sacred events. They give wide publicity to all the trash of the tinsel world.

We should fill our heart with sacred, selfless and unwavering love. God is described as Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Shuddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam (God is attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). We should make efforts to sanctify our human birth. How can it be sanctified? Is it by indulging in conflicts and developing hatred? No, no. These are bestial qualities. Love is the true human quality. Hence, dear children! Develop love. Whenever there is difference of opinion among you, brush it aside. When you consider love as your life-breath, there will be no scope for bestial tendencies such as hatred and jealousy. Animals are living in forests without any hatred towards each other. Such an evil tendency is seen often among men who are

supposed to lead a civilised life. It is contrary to 1 human nature. Human life is meant to develop love, not to accumulate money. **"Money comes and goes but morality comes and grows."**Dear Children,

You are endowed with a pure heart and a steady mind. When you have the purity of heart, it is easy to develop love. In fact, your love can become as expansive as the sky. Never give up love under any circumstances. Swami is always in you, with you, around you, above you and below you. Hence, develop love. Very soon I will come to Anantapur. It is more than ten years since I last paid a visit to Anantapur. But now, drawn by the power of your love and Sankalpa , I will certainly come. Be prepared for My visit singing bhajans more and more and sharing your love with one and all. "Hari bhajan bina sukha santhi nahinâ!" One cannot attain peace without singing the glory of God.

There are many women who are endowed with bhakti and prapatthi (devotion and a sense of surrender). They should all come together and organise activities. They should keep their homes clean and mould their children along the sacred path. But today educated women are undertaking jobs. Such women will have little understanding of their responsibilities on the home front.

If women go out for jobs, who will take care of the home?

If women go out to teach others' children in schools, who will look after their own children?

(Telugu poem)

Firstly, you should teach your own children and put them on the right path. Only then can you be called a true mother. If you go to office neglecting your own children, they may take to wrong ways. Consequently, you will lose your peace of mind. Hence, take proper care of your family in the first instance. Respect your parents and in-laws. There lies the true meaning of ideal womanhood. Children, youth, elders, men and women, all should tread the

path of truth. Only then can you spread joy and bliss every where in our nation and to the world at large. It is not merely our home or our physical body that we have to safeguard. We have to protect our nation. After all what is this physical body? It exists today but may not live to see another day. Body is like a water bubble. Mind is like a mad monkey. Do not follow the body, do not follow the mind. Follow your conscience. Only then can you attain happiness in all respects.

Embodiments of Love!

Today your love has deeply touched My heart. My heart is filled with immense bliss watching you distribute various items to the poor and the needy. Aswattha Narayana and his family have extended all their support to this noble cause. Many people of the 1 town, professors and lecturers worked together with great enthusiasm. They have done much more than what they had planned.

(Addressing the beneficiaries Bhagawan said)

Ask Me whatever you require, I will certainly give you. Do not give up your studies for want of money. If you cannot afford to pay your monthly fees, ask Me. I will give you the required money. Your parents may be struggling to make both ends meet. Hence, do not trouble them for money. "Matru devo bhava, Pitru devo bhava" (Revere your mother as God, father as God).

Do not think that God is present in a distant land, far away from you. God can never be away from you. He will never forsake you. He is always in you, with you and around you. Have firm faith in this truth and be happy always. When you are alone, think that God is with you. Tell yourself, "I am not alone. God is with me." Right from this moment, develop such firm conviction. You will be free from all worries and anxieties. Develop sacred feelings in your heart.

9. Ever Remember The Name Of Rama

Date: 27 March 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Rama Navami

THOUSANDS of years have passed since the advent of Treta Yuga , yet even now everyone, right from children to elderly people, remember the name of Rama. The glory of Rama's name is such that it has not diminished even a bit with the passage of time. This truth should be recognised by all. Rama is the name given to a form, but the name of Rama is not limited to a form. Atma is Rama, and its true name is Atmarama . Therefore, wherever and whenever you remember the name of Rama, Rama is there with you, in you, around you.

The Name Of Rama Is Eternal

Embodiments of Love!

Rama is one, whether you identify him with the atma or with the form installed in your heart. Every year comes the festival of Sri Rama Navami . But we have not so far understood its true significance. You identify Rama with a form. But Rama is not limited to any particular form. It is the name that is latent in your heart. Many changes and variations keep occurring in the world, but the name of Rama is immutable, eternal, unsullied and everlasting. Rama was not an ordinary individual. He was verily God who incarnated on earth for the welfare of mankind. People call God by many names like Rama, Krishna, Easwara and Mahadeva. They are all the names of one God. You should recognise the glory of this name. Sage Vasishta said, "Ramo vighrahan Dharma" (Rama is the personification of Dharma). Dharma itself incarnated in the form of Rama. You should follow Dharma . Which Dharma should you follow? Do not follow the Dharma associated with your mind. Follow the principle of Dharma which comes from your heart.

Sita became the consort of Rama who was the personification of Dharma . Wherefrom did Sita take birth? Sita was born out of the womb of the earth. When King Janaka was ploughing a field in the process of the performance of

a Yajna , he found a box in it. When the box was opened, a small baby was found in it. Considering this as the boon of God, he took the baby home and brought it up with great care and affection. This baby was given the name Sita. Since she was the daughter of the King of Videha, she was also called Vaidehi. This name had great significance since it meant one who transcended the illusion caused by body attachment.

Once Sita was playing a game of ball with her companions in her house. There was a big box in the house of Janaka, which contained a huge bow. As her playmates were playing with the ball, the ball went under the box. It was not possible for anyone to move this box. Sita went there and put it aside with her left hand. Seeing that act of Sita, King Janaka decided that very day that Sita's power should be made known to the world. Thereafter he organised a Yajna and made a declaration: "Whoever strings the bow of Lord Siva, I will give my daughter Sita in marriage to him." Kings of many countries came there. All of them thought it was a great good fortune to marry Sita and to become the son-in-law of King Janaka. They came one after the other and tried to lift the bow but all of them failed in their attempt. In that assembly, Rama and Lakshmana were also present, accompanied by Sage Viswamitra. As per the direction of the sage, Rama went forward. Rama walked with great humility to the delight of one and all. His speech, His actions and His demeanour were full of sweetness. He went near the bow, lifted it with His left hand and bent it. It broke with a thundering sound. Everybody expressed their happiness with a loud applause. People thought it would be very difficult to lift the bow; but what is 1 difficult for Rama? His mere sankalpa (Will) could do any stupendous task. Viswamitra went near Rama and said, "Rama, today You have demonstrated Your divine power. Certainly it is not a human power. It is indeed divine." Everyone praised Rama and started garlanding Him. Then King Janaka brought his daughter Sita. As she came, Rama did not even look in the direction from where she was coming. Why? He did not want to look at her without the command of His parents.

King Janaka conveyed the good news to King Dasaratha at Ayodhya. He requested all of them to come after deciding the muhurtham (auspicious time) of the marriage. He said, "Your son has achieved success in the

competition organised by me. Therefore, all of you are requested to come prepared to celebrate the marriage of Sita with Rama." Welcome to all for Rama's wedding;

together we shall witness the joyous scene.

Many have gathered already,

decked up in all their finery.

With necklaces the ladies are adorned

of jewels pure and gleaming.

Rama shall tie the knot today

to beautiful Sita, oh what a fine match they make. (Telugu song)

The women of the kingdom came to participate in the wedding and joyfully sang the song: Come let us go and see the marriage of Rama and Sita,

The sight shall confer great merit.

Blessed are those who see this scene.

Oh come one and all, watch with joy the sacred marriage. (Telugu song)

In this manner when the women came from one direction, men came from another direction singing joyfully, "Come, let us go and see the marriage." Dasaratha along with his queens and his sons Bharata and Satrugna and his ministers arrived in Mithila with great enthusiasm. It appeared as though the entire Ayodhya had come to Mithila. King Janaka extended a royal welcome to them with great honour.

The name of the second daughter of King Janaka was Urmila. His younger

brother had two daughters, namely, Mandavi and Srutakeerthi. It was decided to give Urmila to Lakshmana, Mandavi to Bharata and Srutakeerthi to Satrughna in marriage. Everyone was happy that all the four pairs were going to be married at the same time.

When everyone was seated in their respective places, the marriage ceremony started. Sita, Urmila, Mandavi and Srutakeerthi stood in front of Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna respectively. First Sita put the garland around the neck of Rama. Thereafter, the other three brides garlanded their 1 respective bridegrooms. All the people joyfully hailed the occasion.

The Glory Of Rama

It is not possible to describe the leelas and glories of Rama. After the marriage function, all left for Ayodhya. On the way they heard a deafening sound. When they looked around to find out where the sound had come from, they were confronted by Parasurama in his fierce form. All of them were perturbed to think, "What is this great hurdle after the glorious celebration of the marriages?" Good and bad always follow each other. After experiencing great joy in Mithila, they were confronted with a great difficulty on their way to Ayodhya. Dasaratha and others became fear-stricken. Parasurama came forward and asked, "Who has broken the bow?" "It is I who has done it," said Rama.

"If that is so, let us see if you can break my bow," saying so he gave his bow in the hands of Rama. Rama broke even that bow with His left hand. Seeing that Parasurama offered his salutations to Lord Rama and went away. Experiencing the joy of victory, all of them returned to Ayodhya and participated in the festivities held in Ayodhya with great joy and enthusiasm. The people celebrated that functions with great joy to propagate the power of Rama and the devotion of Sita to the world.

Manthara became jealous to see all those festivities. You can find people like Manthara everywhere.

Manthara became very angry when King Dasaratha decided to crown Rama instead of the son of Kaikeyi; she started poisoning the mind of Kaikeyi by fabricating many false stories against Rama. Hearing this evil talk of Manthara, the mind of Kaikeyi changed. Though a queen, she was influenced by the words of her servant and became responsible for the exile of Rama. Afterwards she repented, realising it was the conspiracy of Manthara. In reality Kaikeyi loved Rama very much. It was Kaikeyi who taught many things to Rama. Rama also loved Kaikeyi more than His mother Kausalya.

Manthara pleaded with Kaikeyi: "Mother, I am your servant. From your very birth, I have nursed you and brought you up. Kindly fulfil a desire of mine. King Dasartha has decided to crown Rama. But as per the promise given to you earlier, he should crown Bharata. Rama should be sent on exile for fourteen years." Both Sita and Rama were ready for the coronation wearing yellow coloured silk clothes. All were waiting in the royal court to extend welcome to them. Meanwhile, Rama went to mother, Kausalya and said, "Oh mother! I am going to forest. Kindly permit Me." Then Kausalya asked, "Why my dear one, why do you want to go to the forest now, as this is the time of Your coronation." Rama said, "Mother! It is the command of My father that I should stay in exile in the forest for fourteen years; I have to uphold the promise made by My 1 father." Saying so, he saluted His mother and went to meet Sumitra.

Sumitra was the second wife of Dasaratha. Prior to his marriage with Sumitra, Dasaratha sought the consent of Kausalya. Kausalya replied, "Our kingdom needs an heir, doesn't it? Hence, you may marry a woman of your choice. I will also participate in the marriage." Dasaratha was very happy and pleasantly surprised. Such women are also there in the world who go by the wishes of their husbands!

Sumitra was one of great virtues. True to her name "Su-mitra" (good friend), she was the friend of all. She went to Kausalya and spoke words of great encouragement. "Dear elder sister, why should you worry? What do you think of Rama? He is Lord Narayana Himself. How does it matter to Him whether He is in Ayodhya, or in a forest? Wherever He is, He is always with us. For Rama,

Ayodhya and Aranya (forest) are one and the same." Kausalya was somewhat comforted to hear the words of Sumitra. Her mind also became peaceful. Sumitra added, "Dear elder sister, two sons were born to me, while both you and Kaikeyi gave birth to one son each. Do you know why? The reason is that both my sons will have the opportunity to serve their elder brothers; Lakshmana will serve Rama, and Bharata will be served by Satrughna. Therefore, pay attention to my resolve. Lakshmana will go to forest with Rama and will protect Rama as the eyelids protect the eyes. Therefore, do not have any fear.

Before proceeding to the forest, Lakshmana went to meet his wife Urmila. She had not come to know that Rama, Lakshmana and Sita were going to the forest. Sitting in her room, she was absorbed in painting the scene of the coronation of Rama and Sita. At that time, Lakshmana went there and called "Urmila" to draw her attention. "Yes, Swami ", said she, getting up suddenly from her seat. As she got up, by mistake the paint got spilled on the painting. Distressed at this happening, she exclaimed, "Oh! A beautifully painted picture is spoiled." Then Lakshmana said, "Urmila, here, you are worrying that the picture is spoiled. There, Kaikeyi has spoiled the coronation of Sri Rama which could bring about immense good to others." Lakshmana then informed her that he was going to the forest with Rama. Frightened at the news of Rama going to the forest, she asked Lakshmana, "What do you mean by saying Rama is going to the forest? A few moments from now He is going to be crowned. Is it not so?" Then Lakshmana apprised her of all that had happened. As she was endowed with a great spirit of sacrifice, she was not at all perturbed by the thought of separation from her husband. Overjoyed at the thought of her husband getting the opportunity to serve Rama and Sita, she said to Lakshmana, "Sanctify your time by serving Rama and Sita. Very few have such a great 1 fortune. Go happily." Saying thus, she bade farewell to Lakshmana.

Cautioning his daughter about the dangers of the forest, Janaka asked Sita, "Sita, you are going to the forest with Rama. Many fierce animals roam about in the forest and frightening sounds are also heard there. Can you bear all this without getting frightened?" Sita replied, "Where is the scope for any fear

of animals when Rama, a lion in the human form is there with me? Rama is Lord Narayana Himself. Therefore, I have nothing to fear." In this manner, Sita, Rama and Lakshmana put at rest the fears of everyone and proceeded to the forest. In the forest, Lakshmana protected Rama and Sita with great care and engaged himself in their service.

After killing Ravana, when Rama returned to Ayodhya along with Sita, the people of Ayodhya welcomed them enthusiastically hailing their return with great festivity Saying, "Rama has come. Mother Sita has come. Ayodhya is shining in the effulgence of their glory. This is a great day for Ayodhya." There were many great celebrations on their return to Ayodhya and the people were overjoyed to see Rama and Sita whom they revered as Lord Narayana and Lakshmi.

Sita counselled Rama, "Transform this kingdom into a kingdom of joy where everybody can lead their life happily. Even today people in every village, every house and every hut of Bharat worship Rama. It is a common practice among the people of Bharat to name their children as Rama and Sita. There is no change in the name of Rama and Sita even after the passage of thousands of years. The glory of these names is eternal and immutable. There have been wars in many countries, but not in Bharat. People may fight with each other due to their personal differences, but no war was fought in this country. Not only that, there will never be any war in Bharat. It is Rama Rajya . It is the land of peace. It is the land of love.

This land of Bharat has given birth to many noble women like Savitri who brought her dead husband back to life; Chandramati who extinguished wild fire with the power of truth; Sita who proved her chastity by coming out of blazing fire unscathed and Damayanti who reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity. This land of piety and nobility attained plenty and prosperity and became the teacher of all the nations of the world because of such women of chastity.

(Telugu poem)

Such great women took birth in the land of Bharat. Therefore, every day in Bharat is a festival and an occasion for celebration. You know, when a man's wife dies he immediately makes efforts to marry again. But the women of Bharat are not like that. Bharat is 1 befittingly called the teacher of the world. In this sacred land, Lord Narayana incarnated and redeemed the life of the people by showing them His divine play and divine glory.

The Atmarama In All Is The Same

Every individual is the image of the Atma . The same truth was propounded by Krishna: Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being). All of you are the embodiments of the Atma . You may be having different names, but the Atmarama in all of you is the same. Therefore, do not think Rama is somewhere else. Your heart itself is the temple of Rama. Therefore, constantly contemplate on Rama who is immanent in your heart. Rama is there with you, in you, around you not only in your waking state, but also in the dream and deep sleep state also. He is eternally with you. Rama is not limited to a particular form. He assumes innumerable forms. Though the forms are many, the Divinity in them is one. Therefore, whomsoever you see, offer your salutations to him, considering him as the form of Rama. Now Swami is being extolled as Sai Rama and Sai Krishna as He embodies the same principles of Dharma (righteousness), Prema (love) and Santhi (peace) which Lord Rama and Lord Krishna had personified.

Rama is immanent in everyone; Easwara is present in all; Rama is within you. In fact, you yourself are Rama. Establish this truth in your heart firmly and spend your time profitably. Then your life will be filled with everlasting bliss. Constantly recite the name of Rama.

Aeons have passed, yet the name of Rama has not been forgotten. Rama is not separate from you. You are not separate from Rama. You may call a person by his name, but it is Rama who is present in him. You may call Him Sai Rama, Sita Rama or Ayodhya Rama or any other name, but do remember Rama forever.

The value of an individual depends on his culture. One's culture is a very sacred aspect and has been inherited from our ancestors. We cannot interpret or understand culture superficially. It has a very deep meaning. It is the first duty of every individual to give up bad conduct in his daily life and improve his good habits. The deservedness by which you will be entitled to become useful citizens of the country should be acquired while you are students. In the entire life of a human being, the most important period is the period of being a student. A student is like the root for the tree of his life. Recognising such truth, you should happily lead the life of a student and learn good lessons from it. If you cannot see God because of your ignorance, as you cannot see the stars in the daytime because of light, do not say that God does not exist. What other truth can I convey to you. Good people always see only good. They do not find a fault at all. They keep on praising all that they see. There is another category of people who describe a fault as a fault and good as good. The third category of people always find only faults, and they never see good anywhere. A fourth category of people see even good acts as bad acts, and they blame all the people around them. The first three categories can be tolerated. The fourth category are so bad that even demons are better than them.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

10. Water Is The Gift Of God To Man

Date: 14 April 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Tamil New Year, Baisakhi, Vishu

Embodiments of Love!

AS mentioned by the speakers who spoke just now, I provided water to Chennai both for drinking as well as for cultivation purposes. But the repair work of the canal was done only up to the border of Andhra Pradesh. Not only was this work executed without any problem, but it was also done in such a nice way that not even a drop of water was allowed to be wasted.

Depend Only On God

Thus, the water of the river Krishna reached up to the border of Tamil Nadu very smoothly without any wastage. But there was wastage of water after it entered Tamil Nadu border as that part of the canal on the Tamil Nadu side was not repaired. It was envisaged that this work would be done by the Tamil Nadu Government, but it has not been done so far. Naturally, the people are worried as the work has not been completed. Therefore, I have decided to undertake this task (loud applause). The length of the canal to be repaired towards Chennai is about 25 km. The cost of repairing it is estimated at 30 to 40 crore rupees. There is no need for you to depend upon anybody else. It is enough if you pray to God. God can perform any task. Very soon, I will complete this work so that the water reaches the people of Chennai in full measure. Shortly, I will send the engineers there. As there are breaches in the canal on the Tamil Nadu side, a lot of water is being wasted. After the repair work is done, adequate water will reach Sathyamurthy Sagar. Thus, Sathyamurthy Sagar will be filled with Sathya Sai water (loud prolonged applause). I will do this work. This will ensure permanent supply of water to Chennai.

Everybody Has Equal Right On Water

Sai can do any work which nobody else is able to do. The remaining part of the canal will be nicely repaired with cement lining. You have seen for yourself how much water is being wasted now. Water is not anybody's property; it is God's property. People are fighting with each other for water, which, in reality, is the property of God. So, they have no right to fight. Water is God's gift to man. Everybody has equal right over it.

The name of this year is Sarvajit. What is the meaning of Sarvajit? It means victory in all fields, namely, business, agriculture, education, etc. Hence, we will also be victorious in performing this task. I will complete this work so that you have no inconvenience henceforth. I am prepared to spend any amount of money. The five elements are the gift of God; water is one of them. It is in the hands of God. You need not approach anyone else. You may inform Karunanidhi that I will surely do this work. Convey this good news to the people of Chennai also in this auspicious Sarvajit year. May you all lead a happy life! Constantly contemplate on God. This is your total protection. How can people have any problem when they have this sacred protection? Why fear when I am here? (loud applause) In this Sarvajit year, I will give water for Sathyamurthy Sagar. Therefore, you should have no worry. Have faith that God will not only provide food and water to you, but He will look after you in all respects.

Today is the sacred New Year day. It is an important day both for the people of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The people of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are recipients of My grace in full measure (loud prolonged applause). Hereafter, you will have no problems. Earlier, small children were suffering from many ailments by drinking polluted water. Now drink this sweet water, enjoy good health and lead a blissful and happy life without any problems. All of you who have come here should go back happily. You will have no dearth of anything in life. I have great love for Chennai. Where is Chennai and where is Puttaparthi? Did anyone come here and pray to Me? No. Sai Himself has come to you and provided water. My love for Chennai cannot be described in words. May you all enjoy good health by eating good food and drinking pure water!

The country does not merely consist of dust and land. It consists of people who live in it. Students should recognise that setting right the country means setting right the people and putting them on the proper path. The first natural outcome of education should be the ability to do some service to the country and re-establish the spiritual values in the country. We should thus show that, in this aspect, we have leadership of the world.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

11. Make Your Mind The Master Of Your Desires

Date: 06 May 2007 / Location: Sai Sruthi, Kodaikanal / Occasion: Easwaramma Day

Embodiments of Love!

EASWARAMMA day is held to commemorate the day when Easwaramma left her physical body.

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later, but the indweller has neither birth nor death.

The indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness.

(Telugu poem)

Understand The Importance Of The Mind

People are deluded by body attachment. Body is ephemeral, evanescent and impermanent. Whatever is born is transient only. Whatever is there in this world is bound to perish. Only one thing remains forever and that is the mind. But many people call it monkey mind. No, no. You belong to mankind and have nothing to do with monkey mind. The mind, in fact, is of the nature of the Self. You should make befitting efforts to understand its true nature. Only those who have control over their mind can be called human beings. There are many in this world who are highly educated. There are also many who have mastered various forms of knowledge and are engaged in mighty tasks. But they cannot be called human beings in the true sense of the term if they have no control over their mind. All kinds of good and bad thoughts occur in the mind. Keeping the mind away from all that is bad, you should accept only that which is good. Never allow your mind to associate it self with anything that is bad.

Goddess Lakshmi always chants "Narayana, Narayana" only. The principle of atma originates from Lord Narayana. You may say Atma or mind or hridaya ; they are all one. The atma means Narayana only. The mind is also Narayana. And so is the heart. Narayana is called Hridayavasi (indweller of the heart). We should give utmost importance to the mind. But many people do not give due importance to it.

One who considers his mind as the basis of his life is a true human being. One who leaves his mind to its whims and fancies is, in reality, a monkey and not a human being. You should make your mind the centre of your awareness. Leaving the mind to its arbitrary ways is like leaving your life principle itself. Hence, make your mind the basis of every aspect of your life.

(Here Bhagawan materialised a gold medallion).

This medallion has the image of Lakshmi at its centre with precious stones all around it. The precious stones represent the desires, over which presides Lakshmi who is true, eternal and permanent. You should make your mind the master of desires like Lakshmi.

Manah eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayo
(mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of man).

Everyone should try to know this truth.

As Are The Feelings, So Is The Result

At the time of My departure for East Africa, Easwaramma tried to dissuade Me from going, saying, "Swami ! I hear there are many fierce animals in those forests and the place is full of all kinds of dangers. Therefore, You should not go there. Whatever You will, all that will come here. Then, why do You want to go there?"

I told her, "I am not going to see the wild animals there. I am going in response to the loving prayers of My devotees."

When I went there, the devotees of East Africa arranged small aeroplanes. I went round the forest in one such plane. There were thousands of wild elephants in the Kampala forest. It looked as though the entire forest was full of elephants. I had taken bananas with Me and gave one each to some of them. All of them enjoyed eating it. Bisons were also seen in thousands. We saw lions lying on the road here and there. Even when we drove our jeep over their tails, they did not react. Even fierce animals will not harm us if our mind is good. They will attack us only when we try to harm them. When we look at them with love, they will also look at us with love.

Yad bhavam tad bhavathi
(as are the feelings, so is the result).

Our thoughts are the cause of their enmity or trust. As we went forward looking at the animals, we saw fifteen lions lying near a road. Some were suckling their young, some others were eating the meat of an animal brought by them. I said to Dr. Patel and others who accompanied Me, "When we do not harm them, they also do not harm us." Taking a camera from one of those who accompanied Me, I went near the lions and took their photographs. All of them were happy to see Me. You can see, none of the lions did any harm to us. When you approach them with the evil intention of harming or killing them, they will also try to kill you. We should never go to them with such wicked thoughts. In fact, we should not look at any being with evil intentions.

Do Not Develop Body Attachment

Meanwhile, Easwaramma kept thinking about Me with great concern and did not even eat her food properly, with the result that she became quite weak. I kept her informed everyday morning and evening by phone from Kampala,

saying, "I am quite all right." Hearing this, she used to be somewhat comforted. When I came from Kampala, she was very happy.

She came near My car and garlanded Me, saying, "Swami , You look very happy and healthy." She took Me inside and rotated a coconut in front of Me to ward off the effect of evil looks of others. She was beside herself with joy and said, "Swami , I never imagined that Your trip would be such a grand success."

She shared her joy with one and all in Puttaparthi also. Whenever we visited other places, on our return to Puttaparthi, Easwaramma used to describe to the people all that happened during these visits and exhorted them to follow the ideals set by Swami .

Once the Summer Course on Indian Culture and Spirituality was being conducted at Bangalore. At that time, Easwaramma had also come with Me. As long as she was alive, she always desired, "Swami , wherever You go, I should go with You."

She asked Me to give her a promise that I would not leave Puttaparthi. I gave her this promise. "Wherever a tree is planted, it should be allowed to grow there only. If it is pulled out and planted at different places, it cannot attain proper growth," she used to say and pleaded with Me, "Swami , You should always reside at the place of Your birth."

One day, after her breakfast, she had a cup of coffee. Suddenly, she shouted "Swami , Swami , Swami ." I said, "I am coming, I am coming, I am coming."

Then she asked Me to come quickly and I came to her immediately. She caught hold of My hands and placed them on her head and breathed her last.

Where was the need to keep the body which had no life in it? Therefore, I immediately sent her body to Puttaparthi. I sent Ramabrahmam with the body after giving him necessary instructions. Those who were present there said, "Swami , You should also go with the body."

But I refused to go. Summer classes were in progress and students had come from many countries. The students thought, there would be no classes on that day as Swami would be going with the body of Mother Easwaramma. But the classes were held as usual and I went to the second class. The students wondered, "How has Swami come! He was supposed to go with the body of Mother Easwaramma!" Why should I go with the body? The body goes as it comes. I did not come with her body; I came separately. Therefore, I sent her body to Puttaparthi in a car with the instructions to make a Samadhi for her.

Many people in Puttaparthi also wondered, "Why Swami has not come with the body!" The body comes alone and goes alone only. Everyone comes alone and goes alone.

Ekameva Adviteeyam Brahma
(God is one without a second).

After the completion of summer classes, I went to Puttaparthi. I told everybody there, "It is natural for the body to have birth, growth and death. All bodies are like that. Therefore, nobody should have body attachment."

(Here, Swami told the life story of Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar who fulfilled the noble desires of his mother and set an example of service to society. He also taught the lesson of humility and selfless service to an I.C.S. officer by carrying his briefcase from the railway station to the place where he himself was to deliver a speech.)

Easwaramma was happy that I ate only simple food. She would say, "Swami , You should let the world know about Your food habits."

I said, I would certainly do so. Right from those days, I have been emphasising on the need to have simple and Satwic food. When I am in Puttaparthi, I always eat ragi sankati (gruel made of a coarse grain) with

groundnut chutney. Sometimes, I take sankati with totakura dhal (a preparation made of a leafy vegetable) instead of chutney. I do not relish any other item. I do not touch spicy curries like kurmas, burmas, etc. I do not even like the smell of kurma . My only dietary requirement is sankati with chutney.

But when I visit other places, people in those towns do not know what sankati is. So, I eat whatever the devotees prepare for Me. I conduct Myself in accordance with the time, situation and circumstances. However, I never deviate from My practices; I strictly adhere to them. Let people think what they want. I never imitate the practices of others. In this manner, this body is entering its 82nd year. But none can say that I look like an 82-year-old person.

May you sanctify your time in the service of Swami! May you put into practice the principles of service that I have taught you! With this, I bring My Discourse to a close.

The human body is not an ordinary thing. It is like the temple of God. This body is also like a chariot for God. This chariot cannot be empty. In the chariot, the one who has the form of the Atma is the God. It is in this context that we say that God, who is ancient, because he is eternal, is living in this new human body. In this sacred and divine temple, the human body, the effulgent Atma is living. Like every river which flows to join the sea, the human life must also flow to join its ultimate destination, the ocean of Divinity.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

12. Only Love For God Is True Love

Date: 26 July 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: World Youth Conference

WE see a large number of living beings in this world. But none of them has the greatness, wisdom and discrimination of man. That is why it is said, Jantunam nara janma durlabham (of all living beings, human birth is the rarest).

Everything in this world is constituted by five elements. These five elements are present not only in man but also in animals, birds, insects and trees. But what is the use if man does not make proper use of these five elements? Today man is engaged in the pursuit of knowledge. How vast is this knowledge? It is as vast as an ocean. Similarly, man makes efforts to develop common sense. His common sense touches the height of the Himalayan mountains. In spite of all his knowledge and common sense, man's power of discrimination is zero. What is good and what is bad? What should be done and what should not be done? This power of thinking is zero in man today. That is why humanness has suffered a great decline. The value of humanness depends only on discriminatory power. Man may possess anything and everything, but what is the use if he has no discrimination? People keep on comparing themselves with others in many ways. But nobody is making efforts to know if his discrimination power is more or less. Today man is engaged in amassing wealth. But he does not use his knowledge of discrimination to know whether he needs that much money or not. Wherever we see today, we find people hankering after money.

You Are God Yourself

The mind of man is very powerful. But man's mind today is deluded. (Bhagawan showing His handkerchief) What is this? This is cloth. How does it take the form of cloth? It becomes cloth by weaving thread. But where does this thread come from? It comes from cotton. So, first cotton, second thread and third cloth. In the same way, you are not one person but three: the one you think you are, the one others think you are, the one you really are (loud

applause). The thread and cloth come only from cotton. Similarly, man is constituted by five elements. Krishna declared in the Bhagavad Gita : Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being). It means that we all are parts of the Divine. All of you are in search of God. But there is no need to search for God, because you yourself are God. When you have light in your own house, where is the need to go to the houses of others in search of light?

You develop the feelings of 'I' and 'mine' due to the delusion caused by body attachment. Body is, in fact, the cause of all attachments. But, how long does this body last? It is desired only so long as there is life in it. When the life principle goes out of it, the body is mercilessly put on fire. Then, to whom does this body belong? Therefore, you are not the body. You say, "This is **my** body, this is **my** hand, this is **my** leg, this is **my** mind, this is **my** buddhi (intellect)." Everything is my, my, my. Then, who is that 'my'? When you say 'my leg', you are separate from your leg. Then who are you? You are you only. In this way, man today is deluded by his attachment to his body and senses. But you are not the body, you are not the senses, you are not the intellect, you are you. You should realise, "I am I." That universal 'I' principle is only one. Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by many names). But the individual 'I' represents ego. When you cut this 'I', it becomes the cross which is worshipped by the Christians. It means, when you give up your ego, you become your true self.

You are not an ordinary person; you are God yourself. There is no need to search for God. Wherever you see, God is there. This cloth is God, this flower is 1 God, this table is God, everything is God. It is only due to your ignorance that you give scope to differences like 'I' and 'you'. You are not a separate entity. I am I. I am not Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Sri Sathya Sai Baba is the name given to this body. I don't have any particular name. Your body is the gift of your parents. This body is endowed with Pancha Bhutas (five elements), Panchendriyas (five senses) and Pancha Pranas (five life principles). These Pancha Pranas are prana, apana, vyana, udana and samana . They are the same in everyone. Therefore, you are not different from others. Those who are unaware of this spiritual principle become victims of ignorance and are

subjected to delusion.

Everything in this world is reaction, reflection and resound. Where does the resound come from? Here I am speaking. Where do My words come from? They come from My heart. You think that you hear with your ears. But it is not so. All your senses are, in fact, like decorations to your body; they cannot function on their own without the life principle within you. There is no need to search for God. Have faith that God is within you. When you have faith in God, you develop love. From love emerges peace; peace gives rise to truth. This truth is God. Truth does not exist separately. There is no need to search for truth. Truth has no form. Truth is truth. Who has created peace? Peace is peace. It also has no form. Love is love. It is not anybody's creation. **Love is God, Live in Love.**

Educare Is The Process Of Bringing Out Latent Values

What are the human values? They are Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa (truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence). They have no form. These formless principles are imprinted on your heart. All that we read and write corresponds to physical and worldly education. It cannot be called education in the true sense of the term. What is true is educare. Educare means to bring out our latent values. They are immanent in our heart, but we cannot see them. They have to be manifested through self-enquiry. True Sadhana lies in recognising and manifesting peace, truth and sacrifice that are present in our heart. You undertake various spiritual practices like meditation and Japa (recitation of God's name). What do you understand by Japa ? You think Japa means counting the beads of a rosary. But it is not so. All these spiritual practices are merely our imagination. They are all artificial, not real. Science teaches many things. It gives only that knowledge which we acquire through our senses. There can be no science without senses. We are leading artificial and mechanical life by acquiring this knowledge. It is not true life.

First and foremost, you must have faith. You can recognise your true form only when you have faith. From faith comes peace. Truth emerges from

peace. This truth is God. God does not have any separate 1 form. God manifests from the truth within you. You undertake many spiritual practices. In spite of all practices, you are unable to experience truth. Do not waste your time in unnecessary pursuits. **Time waste is life waste.** First of all, you should understand that truth is your goal. You will have no obstacles when truth is on your side. Your senses and mind are very strong when you are young. Your intellect is also very sharp. Being endowed with such great power, why should you feel weak and helpless?

Love is not your individual property. It is universal and belongs to all. Love is in everyone. Love is there in you, Me and everyone. We attribute various names to this love and try to experience it. You should not think otherwise. Today even school children develop a tendency for artificial love. But this is not correct. This artificial love makes man weak. This weakness can cause many diseases. Do not develop such love which gives rise to diseases.

The principle of love is the principle of divinity, nothing else. Accept that love which comes from God. Do not accept that love which comes from others. Your love for God is true love. Whomsoever you love other than that, it cannot be called true love. Man develops attachment to many people, but he is unable to experience true love. True love originates only from God. God is the embodiment of love. **Love is God. Live in Love.** You should experience only divine love, not worldly love. I will explain to you this principle of love in detail later. We have already exceeded the time limit. Therefore, I don't want to cause inconvenience to you.

It is very easy to attain God. If you ask which is the easiest thing to attain in this world, it is only God. You can attain God in no time without undergoing any strain. It is very easy to experience love. Love is very powerful. There is nothing in this world which can surpass it. When you look at it, love appears to be very small. But it is as deep as an ocean and as high as a mountain. It is inexhaustible and infinite. You should realise this principle of love. Nobody can describe the principle of love because of the limitations of the circumstances and experiences.

Students, boys and girls, you must get rid of this selfishness. You should attempt to promote in yourself an attitude of selflessness and divine love. If you want to get rid of selfishness, you should promote qualities like Sat, Chit, and Ananda. These qualities of Sat, Chit, and Ananda are not to be acquired from outside. They are naturally present in us. The quality of truth is present in us. It is not right for us to spend all our time in evil thoughts about others. It is always better to think of God rather than about others. Thus, the three divine qualities of Sat, Chit, and Ananda must be promoted. We should examine the manner in which we can promote these qualities. We must become people with good qualities. Through good conduct, such sacred ideas will begin to sprout in us. So long as we keep our attachment to the created world around us, we cannot get such good qualities. The eyes see bad things, the ears hear wrong things, the words are such that they criticise others. So long as we have such faulty vision and faulty talk, we can never develop good conduct. On the other hand, if our sensory organs are surrendered to God, we may get good conduct through the grace of God. While it is not an easy thing to acquire, yet by effort, man can achieve these qualities. Whether we receive praise or blame, gain or loss, sorrow or pleasure, we will have to struggle to get the grace of God by our good conduct.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

13. Always Be Happy And Peaceful

Date: 28 July 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: World Youth Conference (Valedictory)

The creation emerges from Truth and merges into Truth,
Is there a place in the cosmos where Truth does not exist?
Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.
(Telugu poem)

EVERY living being in this world, right from an ant to an insect, bird, beast, or an animal has emerged from Truth only! Those who realise this truth are real yogis. Devoid of Truth, nothing will move in this universe. And that supreme Truth is embodied only in one person. He is Sathyam

(Here Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba materialised a Lingam and showed it to all).

Who else can manifest such pure consciousness? Truth is omnipresent. When you think of it and contemplate on it, it can manifest in you also. Hence, you constantly contemplate on Truth. Why was this body named Sathya Sai? Truth alone manifests from this Sai. Whoever contemplates on Truth, Sathyam is present in the heart of that person. Hence, one should never forget Truth.

Dharma (righteousness) is the reaction, reflection and resound of *Sathyam* (Truth). In fact,

Sathyannasti paro Dharma
(There is no Dharma greater than adherence to truth).

Today, we are teaching several branches of knowledge in secular education. But, this is not true education. True education relates to the Truth that emerges out of one's heart. It has no name and form. What could be the form of Truth? What is the form of Dharma ? What is the form of Santhi (peace)? *Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema* and *Ahimsa* (Truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence) are all formless. One has to manifest these human values from out of one's heart. The kind of divine energy that is not present in a human being is not to be found in any other living being either. Hence, a human being is verily God. He is God in human form.

Everything In This World Is Divine

You all consider a human being as a mere human being. That is the reason why you are committing so many mistakes. You are not merely a human being. You are God, verily. You think that you are God and you will become God.

Yad bhavam tad bhavathi
(as are the feelings, so is the result).

When you think of bad, you will get only bad thoughts. All people in this world love someone or the other. However, there are differences in such love. The students love their fellow students. The ladies love other ladies. God is present in this lady as well as the other lady. Both are embodiments of Divinity. The one God is present in all bodies. We must love every human being. **Love all Serve all**, since God is present in all human beings. There is no place in this universe where God is not present. God is present in the sky, in the water, in the sound and in the light. Thus, everything in this universe is the embodiment of Divinity.

We forsake such omnipresent Divinity and worship God in the form of some

idol in a temple. No doubt, you can worship those idols. Nothing wrong in that. But, you must realise the truth that the same God in that idol is present in every human being, nay, in every living being. I don't say it is wrong to worship those idols. But, you yourself are God. Consider yourself as God first and then begin to see the same God in every living being. Your body is a temple. There is divine energy in that temple. However, a little discrimination is to be exercised in this context. You have to enquire whether this energy is God. In fact, the body is also God. God is immanent in every atom and every cell of the human body.

There is no place in this universe where God is not present. Hence, you do not entertain any doubt about the existence of God. Do not forget God. In fact, if you forget yourself, it amounts to forgetting God. Hence, do not forget yourself. It is for this reason that one is advised, "Always be careful." You must constantly enquire into yourself, "Am I forgetting God?" You must always be aware of your true nature and remind yourself, "I am I." If you are firmly established in that truth, there will be no scope at all to entertain any evil thoughts about others. Not realising one's own true nature, fools and ignoramuses think otherwise. God is present in all human beings. All the heads of all human beings in this world are God's own heads, verily. That is the reason why God is described as *Virataswarupa* (embodiment of cosmic Divinity). His is the cosmic form. Each one in that cosmic form is having a different form. However, God is immanent in every form.

Krishna declared in the Bhagavad Gita,

Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana
(the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being).

I alone am present in each one of you. You are not different from Me. Do not entertain any doubts or differences of opinion in this regard. Strengthen your love, that is the proper sadhana. If only the fruit of love in your heart is

ripened, the juice of that fruit can be shared with one and all. Hence, let that fruit of love ripen in your heart first. If only you fill your heart with pure love, that love can be shared with all. All people then will become embodiments of love. Then, there will be no scope at all for hatred and violence in the world.

Today, wherever you see you will find hatred and differences of opinion among people. In fact, they are not differences in the real sense. They may appear to be differences in the secular life. But, all are one from the spiritual angle. Strictly speaking, all are zeroes and only God is the hero. He alone is one. All others are zeroes standing next to Him. That is the reason why they acquire value. Remove that one, all will be reduced to mere zeroes! Hence, God is the only important entity in our life.

Consider The Mind Also As Divine

The mind alone is responsible for all the sorrows and difficulties as well as happiness of the human beings. Several people consider mind as very bad and call it 'monkey mind'. In My opinion, it is not monkey mind; it is 'mankind'. It is always kind. It is the mind that gives you joy and happiness. It is again the mind that causes you worry and sorrow. If only you can keep the mind in proper state, nothing can be bad. You consider the mind also as divine. Then you will always be happy.

Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwand-wateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhava-teetam, Trigunarahitam
(The Atma is the embodiment of eternal bliss, wisdom absolute, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tatwamasi, one without a second, eternal, pure, unchanging, witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three attributes of Satwa, Rajas and Tamas).

You call it Atma or mind or consciousness - all are one. We ascribe different names to the same principle, according to our convenience for reference. For example, this body has been given the name Sathya. This name is given to the body and not to Me. I am not the body. I am not the mind. I am not the intellect. I am not the Chitta. I am not imagination. Bhagawan is Bhagawan. You must develop such firm faith. It is possible that the minds of some people are susceptible to some disturbances due to changes in food habits and recreation. It is also possible that they may be influenced by some friends in this regard. Frequently, I will be repeating the saying, **"Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are."** Hence, I advise you to join the company of noble souls.

Satsangatwe nissangatwam, Nissangatwe nirmohatwam,
Nirmohatwe nischalatattwam, Nischalatattwe jivanmukti. (Sanskrit sloka)
(Good company leads to detachment; detachment makes one free from delusion; freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind; steadiness of mind confers liberation.)

It is possible that everyone can attain *Mukti* (liberation). But, when? The moment you establish yourself in the truth "I am Atma ", you will attain liberation. Always think, "Swami is in me." I am in Swami." However, there will be no use if you simply repeat, "I am Swami ", I am Swami ", with a fickle mind. Develop firm faith, "I am Swami," I am God; I am God."

It is only when you develop that firm conviction, you will attain Divinity which is

Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Shuddha, Buddha,
Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam
(God is attributeless, unsullied, final abode, eternal, pure, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness).

On the other hand, if your mind is polluted with bad thoughts, everything will turn out to be bad for you. Nowadays, even water is polluted. The human body will be afflicted with several diseases on account of this water pollution. It is therefore necessary that the physical body is also protected to a certain extent. What do you think of the purpose for which this body is gifted to you by God? It is only to make you realise your own Self. But, you forget this purpose and concentrate your mind on the physical body. After all, what is there in the physical body?

The body is like a water bubble.
The mind is like a mad monkey.
Don't follow the body.
Don't follow the mind.
Follow the conscience.

If only you learn this simple principle, your life will be sanctified. You need not pay heed to whatever people may say. Purity of consciousness is the fruition of knowledge. It is only when your consciousness is pure that you will attain wisdom. Purity of the mind is of utmost importance. Keep your mind pure, free from all kinds of pollution. Whenever evil thoughts enter your mind, remind yourself, "This is not good; this is not mine; not mine," and drive away those evil thoughts. Tell yourself, "These are all not my property; my property is good thoughts and good ideas only."

Constantly remember the truth that love is God. Live in love. If you can cultivate such positive and noble thoughts, everything will turn out to be good for you. There are several people here who are deluded by ephemeral things. No doubt, you are pure at heart. You have only pure thoughts. But, certain amount of pollution sets in now and then. You must ensure that it does not happen. That is sadhana for you.

What is sadhana? Is it sitting in meditation and doing *Japa* (recitation of God's name)? No. This is not sadhana. What do you think is the meaning of meditation? You think it is sitting in a lonely place and contemplating on the Lord's name. Not at all! Contemplate upon the pure thoughts in your mind. Contemplate on the Truth in you.

If you really wish to know the secret of sadhana, it can be explained through very simple methods. For example, make your mind steady and still for as short a period as eleven seconds. You can attain realisation even in such a short period. Realisation cannot be achieved by becoming restless like a clock. Just eleven seconds of stillness of mind would be enough. But you don't do even that. You can achieve a lot during this period.

Hence, do not trouble yourself unnecessarily. You are, at present, putting your body to a lot of trouble. You are wasting a lot of money too. **Time waste is life waste.** Money waste is an evil. Hence, do not waste money and time. **Time is God and God is Time.** Hence, whenever you find time, think of Swami. I will certainly appear before you. Not only that, I will even talk to you. I am receiving several letters saying that Swami has appeared before them and talked to them. You can also do such sadhana. Develop such unflinching faith in Swami. You will surely succeed in your sadhana. Several people have come here as devotees. They have, no doubt, deep devotion towards Swami. But, what is devotion? What is the hallmark of a devotee? This has to be analysed first. First and foremost, you have to develop faith.

Where there is faith, there is love;
Where there is love, there is truth;
Where there is truth; there God is.

Truth is God. You need not have to make any special efforts to know Truth. In fact, eleven seconds are enough to realise truth. You just contemplate in

your mind for a period of eleven seconds on Truth and you will be able to have God's darshan.

You are unnecessarily taxing your body by sitting for hours together in meditation. At the end, you are suffering from pain in legs and hands and back ache. Do not give scope for such painful joints. You ultimately land in a doctor's clinic who will diagnose your trouble as rheumatic pains. They are not rheumatic pains at all. They are the result of misguided sadhana. Stick to the time schedule of eleven seconds and you will have no pain.

In addition, you also have timely food. With regard to food, you have to know certain subtle things and observe some restrictions. You should not consume non-vegetarian food like meat and fish. In fact, foreigners are used to non-vegetarian food only. This type of food causes diseases like cancer. Hence, give up such food, totally. Not only that. They also like cheese very much. The more you consume cheese, the weaker you become. You should not also take milk in excess quantity. Too much milk is very bad. It should be in limit. The milk should be diluted with water in equal proportion. Same is the case with curd. It should not be thick. It should be semi-solid. Thus, you have to control the food you eat daily. Proper food at proper time is very much necessary for contemplating on God. If you thus take proper food and observe discipline in your habits, you are sure to have God's darshan at that very moment. You need not have to undertake rigorous sadhana for months and years. You can always be blissful. Bliss is the form of God.

You desire to have bliss. But, from where do you get bliss? From a shop in the market? Or by having a sumptuous meal with a variety of dishes in a hotel? No, not at all! Bliss has to come from within. You are, in fact, the embodiment of bliss. You were blissful at the time of your birth. But, once you started developing attachment with the world, you began crying. Hence, you have to reduce your worldly attachments.

You are at present having a lot of attachment with the world. Thereby, you are weakening your body. Ultimately you will end up in sorrow. Worry is a very bad quality. Hurry, worry and curry - these three together make the heart very weak. Hence, keep them at a distance. Whenever you are in

difficulties, you just assure yourself that these are passing clouds and will move away and therefore you will not be worried. Whatever comes, has to go. They are momentary. Same is the case with the human body. Hence, you have to give importance to the body only to the extent required. The body has to be maintained within proper limits. Otherwise, it will decay. You have to be very careful. Those who are engaged in sadhana and wish to have the *darshan*, *sparshan*, and *sambhashan* (vision, touch and conversation) with God, must follow My advice in this regard. You are sure to have His darshan and can even talk to Him.

Devotion is not merely performing certain forms of worship or undertaking religious vows or doing japa. Real devotion presupposes unshakeable love towards God, devoid of delusion. You have to cultivate such steadfast love towards God. Then you will certainly attain Divinity.

Since people are at present attached to the world, demonic qualities are growing in them. Both *kama* (desire) and *krodha* (anger) are the worst enemies of a human being. You must always be happy, smiling and loving. When you are smiling, love will automatically develop in you.

There are, of course, some people who will put up a 'castor oil' face. You must always be smiling and cheerful. God is always blissful. He does not at all worry for anything. Sorrow and worry are nowhere near God. You observe Me. I am always cheerful and smiling. I have no pain or suffering. I am revealing the truth. Sometime ago, I sustained an injury to My leg due to a mistake committed by the students. My hip bone suffered four cracks. The doctors examined Me and decided to put My leg in bandage. I refused. I came to the balcony by walk and gave darshan to the devotees. Even now, one of My legs is shorter by two inches. Several doctors including Dr. Pillay and his son from Singapore came and wanted to examine Me. They are specialists in the branch of Orthopaedics. Also several experts from America and other places came. They prayed, "Swami, please spare just five minutes for us to examine Your leg." I told them, "I will give you five hours for a spiritual purpose, if you wish. But, I don't give this body even for five minutes for a clinical examination." Even now, the students hold My body as I walk. I shout at them

saying, "I will not go, if you follow Me." Thus, I give strict instructions to the students accompanying Me. I am able to manage Myself. I have no pain or suffering in the least. I can walk in the normal way. I do not fumble while walking and can keep My normal pace.

I am maintaining the same body weight since many years. My body weight then was 110 pounds. There was neither an increase nor a decrease in the body weight even to the extent of half pound. I am always hale and healthy. No one need worry about My health. I will always be happy.

When you look at Swami from an external angle, you will think that Swami is perhaps suffering from severe pain. Not at all! I have no pain, whatsoever. Even if there is some pain, your love for Swami will remove that pain. It is enough if I look at you; all My pain is gone! I will be happy and cheerful. My pain, if at all there is some, has to be removed by your love for Swami and not by the doctors.

What could be the reason for people in such large numbers gathering here today? What does it connote? I am extremely happy that I am able to win the love of so many people. You also be happy, wherever you are. I am always happy. I am extremely happy to see you all here. This is your good fortune. This time, the people have all come here with intense love and devotion. That makes Me very happy and cheerful. I am very eager to come to the Sai Kulwant Hall by walk from tomorrow to give you darshan.

There is no medicine more efficacious than love. Your love is My medicine. That is the most powerful medicine. Equally, My love is a powerful medicine to all of you. Always be happy and peaceful. Live like members of the same family with love and affection. Do not be weighed down by petty difficulties and suffering. Do not give scope to any worry. Even if your wife or children suffer from any disease, do not get perturbed. Go back to your places with firm faith that everything will turn out to be good. Lead a happy and peaceful life.

(Here, Swami, showed the Linga He had created earlier to the audience and

enquired) Did you see this Linga? It is heavy. A much bigger Linga will emerge from Swami 's mouth. The Sivaratri festival is approaching.

Students, it is great ignorance to give up the bird in your hand and go after the bird in the bush. God does not exist in some separate place outside you. When you make an attempt to turn your vision and thoughts inward, you will see divinity within yourself. Although we may accept external actions as the first step, we should make progress to a higher step. On the other hand, if we always remain on the first step, when are we going to rise higher. It is only when we recognise the need to go higher, that our life can become purposeful.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

14. Exemplary Patriotism Of Subhas Chandra Bose

Date: **15 August 2007** / Location: **Prasanthi Nilayam** / Occasion: **India Independence Day - Sixtieth Anniversary**

MANY speakers have spoken before Me but none has said anything about Subhas Chandra Bose, who was endowed with many great qualities and capabilities. After passing his ICS, he came to India, joined the political movement and made a significant contribution to it in many ways. But, unfortunately, he had to leave the country as there was no unity among the Bharatiyas. Even while staying in overseas countries, he played a very important role for the freedom of India from the British rule.

Important Role Of Subhas Chandra Bose In India's Freedom Struggle

Lalita Bose, the daughter of his brother, once came to Puttaparthi. She regretted that her uncle Subhas Chandra Bose, having been born in this sacred land of Bharat, had to leave the country. She was happy that she was able to live in this country and have Swami 's darshan. She came to Brindavan, Whitefield also and stayed there for a few days. Later on, she followed Me in a car wherever I went. She used to play on harmonium and sing bhajans. She came to Ooty and Kodaikanal also when I went there. All the time, she was chanting 'Sai Ram' 'Sai Ram' She had no other thought except this in her mind.

Subhas Chandra Bose was endowed with great physical, mental and spiritual powers. But he never revealed his spiritual powers to anyone. He had a burning desire to make India a great and prosperous country. No other leader had such a strong aspiration for the freedom and progress of the country as Subhas Chandra Bose. He was the one who believed in action; not merely in speech like many other leaders. There are many great leaders in our country even today, but what is the use if they do not put into practice what they say? They say a million things but do not put into practice even one! I am very

much pained to see that today nobody remembers Subhas Chandra Bose who had done so much for the country. He was the one who dedicated his entire life to the country. Even when he was staying in overseas countries, his love for his motherland was uppermost in his mind. Rather, it went on increasing day by day.

He is verily a living corpse who does not declare with pride that this is my motherland, this is my mother tongue and this is my religion. (Telugu poem)

Subhas Chandra Bose strove very hard to put the country on the path of progress and prosperity. He demonstrated the ideals of love and forbearance. One who does not have love for his country is verily a living corpse! Only a person who upholds the good name of the country can be called a living person in the true sense of the term.

Attain The Independence Of The Self

Meanwhile, India attained *swatantrata* (independence). But this was merely 'swatantrata', not 'Swatantrata'. What is swatantrata ? It relates to the body, mind and intellect, while Swatantrata is related to the atma. Those who follow the atmic principle are truly independent. The same is the difference between 'swarajya' and 'Swarajya'. We should aim at achieving 'Swarajya', not merely 'swarajya'. When we follow the atmic principle, everything becomes good for us. Not only that, it will lead to the well-being and prosperity of the entire world. We should not merely be satisfied with political independence; we should achieve that independence which relates to the atma.

Subhas Chandra Bose strived to attain the independence related to the Self. Ultimately, he succeeded in his endeavour. Everybody should make efforts to know such noble souls. Subhas Chandra Bose was one of the few Bharatiyas of his times who attained 'Swatantrata' (independence of the Self) when others were pursuing their selfish ends. They harboured narrow

considerations and differences while Subhas Chandra Bose considered the entire country as one.

The principle of atma is the same in everyone. All are endowed with atmic power. Man is the embodiment of atma. That is why Krishna declared in the Bhagavad Gita,

Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being).

He said, "All are an aspect of My Divinity." When I consider you as part of My Being, you should also consider others as your own self.

Love All, Serve All.

You should not observe any difference between individuals, thinking one as a pauper and another, a millionaire. There are many millionaires in Bharat. But they are engaged in filling their own belly. They are not prepared to give even a morsel of food as alms to a beggar who stands at their doorstep saying, "Bhavati bhiksham dehi (mother, give alms)". What is the use of having such rich men in our country? They are rich only for name's sake but in reality they are the poorest of the poor. In spite of so many rich people in our country, righteousness and charity seem to have disappeared from it. Therefore, people of this country should pursue the path of charity and righteousness. Consider others as your own brothers and sisters. Rather, consider them as thyself. People just address others as 'brothers and sisters' from the stage, but who is actually putting it into practice? None.

Remember Noble Souls Like Subhas Chandra Bose

Today wherever you go, you see people hankering after money. People are striving to amass wealth but none is making efforts to cultivate love and righteousness. The earlier three speakers spoke about the world, but none of them spoke about the atma. The same principle of atma is present in everyone. It is present in you, Me and everyone else.

Daivam manusha rupena
(God is in the form of a human being).

It is not proper to show disrespect to anyone because everyone is the embodiment of God. You should lead your life with this conviction that all are your brothers and sisters. We can attain swarajya only when we develop such broad feelings. Till then, we merely have swarajya where 'swa ' means *swartha* (selfishness). But we should aspire for Swarajya, in which 'Swa' is related to the spiritual heart (*Hridaya*).

You are all performing Grama Seva and serving the poor. But first of all, you should achieve true swatantrata. Love, respect and help everyone. Only then can you be called a true Sai student. Everything can change but not the atma. Even a wicked person or a demon cannot bring about any change in the atma. Strive to attain such changeless and eternal atmic kingdom. Have self-confidence. Only then can you attain the natural state of a human being. This is your true and eternal state. I bring My discourse to a close with My good wishes and blessings that you may attain the kingdom of the Self and earn a good name.

I spoke only out of My love for Subhas Chandra Bose, though none invited Me to speak. Such persons like Subhas Chandra Bose should be born in Bharat again and again. India should attain its pristine glory again. Had Subhas Chandra Bose been alive today, he would have attained the highest name in history. There would have been no beggars in this country. But, unfortunately, the Bharatiyas themselves were responsible for his leaving the country. As a

result, they now face great difficulties. We should love and trust such noble souls. Love and trust are our true strength. We should never forget Subhas Chandra Bose. His teachings were full of noble thoughts and great ideals.

Unfortunately, people forget such good persons and remember the bad ones. It is a great mistake. Never forget good people. They are like precious jewels. I wish that you should always remember such noble souls. I bring My discourse to a close with My blessings to you all.

15. Discrimination Is The Means To Self-realisation

Date: **22 August 2007** / Location: **Prasanthi Nilayam** / Occasion: **21st Anniversary Of The School Of Business Management**

TODAY'S function is being held to celebrate the anniversary of the School of Business Management, Accounting and Finance. What is meant by business? Does business mean exchange of goods? No, it is not so. Truly speaking, the entire world is engaged in business. Right from the Prime Minister of the country to an ordinary worker, everybody is involved in some kind of business or the other and is following the working system appropriate to his occupation. Knowing fully well this reality, our students are making a mark for themselves in all fields of life.

Never Forsake Your Culture

Man is endowed with five senses of perception. The functioning of the five senses is also a type of business in which all the limbs are engaged. All the senses perform their business in the most appropriate manner with regard to the limbs they are associated with. Those who give proper direction to their senses so as to lead them on the right path are truly first rankers. Business which is done mainly by reading books, business journals and comparing Indian business with overseas business cannot be called business in the true sense of the term. Indian business should be concerned with Indian traditions and values. It should keep in view the interest and situation of the country. Other countries are making changes in their business ventures just to increase their power. We should not imitate them in any such manner. We should adopt those practices which are appropriate to our culture and traditions.

Taking only money into consideration in business is a flaw; culture has to be given utmost importance. Along with culture, the interest of the country should also be given high priority. True business is that which keeps in view, culture and country. Some people today ignore their culture due to the

influence of modern times. You should never forsake culture at any cost. What is meant by culture? We should understand and follow our ancient traditions and values. We should never ignore our culture in our business matters. We should enquire into the relationship between culture and country. Culture has its existence due to the country. True humanness lies in the integration of culture and country. Culture is not related to your worldly relations and practices. Culture is concerned with the feelings of your heart and your power to discriminate between what is good and what is bad. Hence, you should develop strong power of discrimination. This discrimination brings about many changes in the life of man. It is due to lack of discrimination that our culture has suffered a decline. And because of the decline of culture our country has become weak. Wrong cultural practices followed by the people are, in fact, the main cause for the weakness of a country. Today people do not follow the true culture of our country. Consequently, the Government also takes to wrong path. As you all know, different political parties today follow different cultural values and ideologies. But if they all work together for a common cause, the results are sure to be good.

Give Up Craze For Fashions

Once when I was a student, some political leaders approached Me and requested, "Raju, We understand that You write good poetry. We have arranged a meeting in Bukkapatnam where a large number of people are expected to come. We request You to please write a good song that can inspire the people." Those were the days of the Second World War. Adolf Hitler was marching forward to conquer various countries in Europe. He was trying to invade Russia. India was then under the rule of the Britishers. Taking the situation into account, I wrote a small playlet. In that playlet, I kept a rubber 1 doll in a cradle and sang the following song, rocking the cradle gently: Do not cry, my child, do not cry.

If you cry, you will not be called a valiant son of Bharat.

Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.

Did you get scared because the terrible Hitler has invaded the invincible Russia?

Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.

Do not cry, my child, do not cry.

For the Red Army is marching under Stalin.

They will put an end to Hitler.

Then what else is the reason for your crying?

Is it because the countrymen lack unity?

All the countrymen will unite and fight to win freedom;

Go to sleep, my child, go to sleep.

(Telugu song)

I used to compose songs and make the children sing those songs in the village so that people might give up their craze for fashions and cultivate noble thoughts. The wrist watches had just arrived in those days. If anyone in the village wore a wrist watch, he was considered to be a great person. Not only that, gents used to keep a small moustache under their nose as a fashion. I composed a song on these fashions.

Oh folks! What are these times that have descended on us!

People hang silver medallions from a leather strap on their left wrists - and call it fashion!

Grotesque appearances are made that cannot be seen by the eyes - and they call it fashion!

Long moustaches are cut to tiny patches under the nose - and they call it fashion!

(Telugu song)

Seeing all these fashions, I asked them, "My dear, why have you done this? Your moustache appears like two flies sitting on your upper lip. This is not good." New fashions do not become prevalent all at once. These are the result of imitation; people see others and start imitating them. Gradually, this imitation changes into fashion for a particular period of time. See the influence of fashion on women! They have given up the use of auspicious turmeric and kumkum (vermillion) mark on the forehead and have started putting a miniscule dot which is hardly visible. All these fashions keep changing. How long does a fashion last? It lasts only for a few months. Similarly, fashions of youngsters and adults undergo change within a short period. As you all know, earlier bell bottom pants became a fashion for youngsters; these were tight from above and loose below like the shape of a bell. This fashion lasted only for a short time. After some time, pants of the shape of a pipe tightly sticking to the body came into fashion. Recognising that it was not good, people thereafter reverted to ordinary dress. In this manner, many unnecessary fashions appear from time to time like clouds in the sky which come and go. I corrected the people when they took to such fashions. Man should live like a human being.

Unnecessary Changes Are Harmful

Today many changes are being made in the field of education also. Many meaningless changes are being made in the syllabus. Authorities may thrust such changes from above. But, do they prepare the teachers who are responsible for putting these changes into practice? No, not at all. What can the students learn from such teachers? First of all, qualified teachers are required. Our university is making great efforts to prepare such qualified teachers. If the teachers are good, the students will also become good.

Not only in the field of education, changes have now crept in to the area of

health also. Earlier, people used pitchers, plates and pots made of clay by local artisans. After some time, stainless steel utensils replaced the clay utensils. But now plastic pitchers, plates and pots have come into vogue. These plastic articles have exposed man to great dangers. The plastic bags and other articles have created enormous waste material which is not biodegradable. Even if you bury it underground, it does not decompose and remains as it is even after many years. Much land is being spoiled by this plastic waste. Vegetables grown in such land are harmful to man. In this way, many harmful changes have crept in to the life of man today. Therefore, we should not resort to unnecessary imitation and changes, particularly in the field of education.

Living In The Present Is Most Important

We should follow our indigenous system and experience the happiness of living in the present. Then our future will also become happy. Many people are worried about their future. Do not brood over the past; don't worry about future. Past is past; forget the past; do not think about it. Present, is important. It is not ordinary present; it is Omnipresent. Many people worry about their past and future and spoil their present. We should make proper use of our present. Sathya Sai colleges are the only institutions which teach the students to make proper use of their present, though the environment in these institutions may appear to be like that of a rural institution.

Future does not always bring happiness. And so far as the past is concerned, how much happiness have you experienced in it? Therefore, live happily in the present. Nothing is lost when you lose money. Acquisition of good qualities makes your mind steady. A steady mind is a good mind. It is the mind that brings about a change in the life of man. Even the parents do not know the mind of their children. The parents also should live in the present. What is the use of thinking about the past? 1 Presently, our students have achieved great progress in many fields and set ideals for all. What should we do in the present? Follow this maxim in the present: Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure. We should not worry about the past at all. Thinking about the past will not do any good to us. Therefore, we should lead

our life in the present and achieve all-round progress. You should realise the significance of the word 'present'. What does it mean? When you are in the class, you are present, otherwise you are absent. Absence will reduce your value. In every aspect of your life, present is important.

You achieve good results in all subjects when you are present. Therefore, all of you should think about only present. Today many elders have fond memories of past times, thinking, "Our past time was so good, but everything has turned bad in the present time. In those days, children respected their elders; they conducted themselves with great humility. They revered their elders and learnt good things from them. In fact, there was no need to go to teachers; the grandmother in the house taught many good things to children. In ancient times, all led a happy life." "Old is gold" is a proverb. True to this proverb, people in olden times were like pure gold. By their teachings, they helped the people to take to noble path. But today we have damaged this path. Therefore, we should repair this damage and restore the path again.

Love And Serve Your Motherland

Today, wherever you go you see people fighting with one another. There is neither unity nor purity anywhere; it is enmity everywhere. Anybody you come across, you will see him in anger. You talk to someone, he will talk against you. We should therefore drive away the evil qualities like anger, jealousy, hypocrisy, etc. We should never harm anybody; we should not cause pain to anyone. Help Ever, Hurt Never. You can achieve anything through unity. Therefore, you should always stick to the noble path of unity. Why Subhas Chandra Bose had to leave the country? It was nothing but enmity. When does enmity arise? It arises when selfishness overtakes you. Though he had to leave the country, he fearlessly kept serving the people wherever he went. Our country is in dire need of such noble people. Our professors also said, "Swami, our students are very good. They can bring about many good changes in society. Many parents today are sending their children to overseas countries. But, why should they send them out? Instead they can remain in our country and bring about changes in the community." Instead of earning 10,000 rupees a month abroad, it is better to be satisfied with 1,000 rupees in

Bharat. In overseas countries, even pure water is scarce. Life is full of difficulties. Half of your earning will go as house rent. All other things are equally expensive. A small banana costs ten rupees! Wherefrom can you get so much money? How can you bring up your children? 1 Impossible! In Bharat, your children would be happy and satisfied if you give them a simple food of rice and chutney . Forgetting this simple life in our own country, people want to go to foreign countries undergoing all sorts of difficulties.

I have never visited any foreign country except East Africa. Even in East Africa, I spent most of My time seeing wild life in the forests and observed the good qualities of wild animals. There I saw large herds of elephants; they looked very beautiful and majestic. I offered bananas to some elephants which they accepted very gladly and wanted more of them. Their ears were as big as a winnowing pan. When they swished their ears, mosquitoes sitting even at a long distance would fly away. There were many zebras and giraffes also. They were happily moving in the forest. None of these wild animals causes any harm to man. They will be inimical towards us only when we approach them with the intention of harming them. Otherwise, they will be friendly with us and follow us like pets. I saw a group of lions sitting at one place with their young ones. Even when we were very close to them, they did not show any feeling of enmity. In this way, all the wild animals behaved in a very gentle manner. Your evil qualities are reflected in the animals. If your feelings are good, the snakes will also not harm you even if you were to lie down by their side. Otherwise your own pet cow may gore you with its horns. If a person is angry with you, what is the reason? It is only reaction, reflection and resound of your own feelings. It is only the evil qualities of man which bring about a change in the gentle nature of animals, birds and beasts. Today there is hatred and conflict even between two sons of the same mother! What is the reason for this mutual hatred? Their evil qualities are responsible for this. We should never give room to such qualities.

Cultivate Unshakeable Faith In God

You are studying in a good college. You should uphold the good name of this college with your good conduct. If you want to earn a good name, you should

join good company. "Tell me your company, I will tell you what you are", it is said. As is your company, so you become. Hence, join good company. It is a great good fortune to be associated with good company. Therefore, you should join such good company and try to develop all-round goodness. Yesterday, the talks delivered by two of our MBA students were very good. Listening to them was a great pleasure to Me. We are very happy to have such good boys in our college. These two boys stood first in their class and were awarded gold medals. But you should not be satisfied with these awards and rewards. You should become good boys. Even the value of gold may diminish but not the value of goodness. Hence, you should cultivate goodness and earn a good name which will remain forever.

First of all, you should develop self-confidence. 1 If you have self-confidence everything will turn out to be good for you. Devotees like Dhruva, Prahlada and Radha led their lives with sacred feelings. Everything became good for them because they had good thoughts. Wicked Hiranyakasipu subjected Prahlada to all types of sufferings. He attempted to get Prahlada trampled by elephants. Prahlada continued to chant the divine name of Narayana. He was never afraid of elephants. He saw Narayana in elephants also. Hiranyakasipu threw him before snakes but he escaped unharmed. When he was pushed down from a mountain top and thrown into a deep sea, Lord Narayana held him in His arms and saved him. In this manner, one with faith in God will never be put to harm. Hence, you should develop unflinching faith. Your firm faith in God confers on you all types of knowledge. Where there is faith, there is love. Where there is love there is atma . Atma has no specific name or form. Similarly, faith has no form and divinity is also formless. Love is God. Live in Love. Truth is God, God is Truth. The entire creation has emerged from truth.

The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,

Is there a place in the cosmos where truth does not exist?

Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.

(Telugu poem)

Realisation of truth is sakshatkara (God-realisation).

Therefore, we should develop faith in this truth. No doubt, people do have faith but their faith is wavering. As is the faith, so is the result. If you have total faith, the results are bound to be good in all respects. When you are confronted with difficulties, you tend to lose your faith. You may lose anything but not faith. You should consider faith as your life. That is the path you should follow. You have a strong belief that your parents are your parents. Even if a thousand people tell you that they are not your parents, you will not agree with it. You must have such total faith in God also. God will go to any extent to help those who have such unshakeable faith in Him. Your faith in God should be total. We may have to undergo any number of difficulties and hardships, yet, our faith should remain firm. Ramadas worked as Tashildar (revenue officer). He prayed to Rama, "Swami , whatever revenue I have collected I have spent it in your service. He sang thus: Oh Ramachandra! I have spent ten thousand gold coins to adorn Mother Sita with a gold necklace and another ten thousand sovereigns to decorate Your brother Lakshmana with a gold belt. That crest jewel which adorns You cost me another ten thousand gold coins. Unmindful of my travails, You are flaunting the jewellery as if You got it with Your own money!

(Telugu poem)

The compassionate Lord Himself appeared before the king and paid the money due from Ramadas. Later on, Ramadas repented and prayed for forgiveness, saying, "Unable to bear the hardships of Your test I have spoken such harsh words. Oh Lord! Please forgive me." One can achieve anything in life with the help of God's grace. When you face all the tests of God with total faith and do your duty, you are sure to succeed. Do you know the depth of faith of overseas devotees? Many of them come to Puttaparthi and live in small hutments. Even then, they are very happy. It is not possible for anyone to describe their happiness which is the result of their unflinching faith. If you have such strong faith in God, He will take care of you wherever you are.

God is your sole refuge wherever you may be,

In a forest, in the sky, in a city or a village, on the top of a mountain or in the middle of deep sea.

(Telugu poem)

Study To Be Steady

First and foremost you should develop confidence. Mere acquisition of knowledge is not enough. Your knowledge may be as vast as an ocean, your common sense may be as great as the mighty Himalayas, but if you do not have discrimination, then everything is useless. It is enough if you have discrimination. Before you undertake any task, always enquire, "Is this good or bad, is this right or wrong?" You will come up in life if you develop this one quality in you. This itself is self-realisation. So, it is important to have discrimination first. Unfortunately, people use their discrimination to suit their self-interest. This individual discrimination varies from person to person. The same thing is viewed by ten people in ten different ways. You must adopt fundamental discrimination which is beneficial to society at large. Only fundamental discrimination will give you self-satisfaction which in turn will lead you to self-realisation. So, proper discrimination is of prime importance for self-realisation.

Students, you are like pure gold. You are all very good. But sometimes you encounter waves of disturbance and doubts in your lives. Many a time, your faith is shaken by some aberrations. Do not pay attention to these. They will go as they come. Come what may, you must remain fearless and steady. Your studies are meant to develop steadiness in you. Study to be steady. Keep this always in your mind. Look at these two boys. How happy they are! In fact, all the MBA students are good. It is not possible to say that one is good and the other is bad. Their singing also was so good. They are intelligent, virtuous and full of vigour. They will be an asset wherever they go. Such boys should stay back to serve the institution so that they can impart their goodness to others. There is nothing great in going abroad and earning a lot of money with your

academic qualifications. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows. You should develop such 1 morality. It is enough if you have morality. What can money do? Can you eat money? Unless you spend it to buy something, you cannot satisfy your hunger. Hence, money is not important, morality is important. Faith comes first, job next. Do not give up your sacred culture and love for your motherland. Subhas Chandra Bose never forgot his motherland even when he was staying in other countries. You should proudly proclaim, "This is my motherland." Do not tarnish the image of the sacred culture of your land. Be happy.

Students should decide for themselves what path they would like to take and what destination they would like to reach. They should guide their own conduct in consonance with that decision. They should regard service to the community as their main objective. Discipline and adherence to sacred work must be promoted by students. Discipline is the most important path for the students. They should respect their parents and their motherland.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

16. Eternal Truths Should Form The Subject Of Books

Date: 24 August 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Sri Sathya Sai Books And Publications Trust Office

ALL the former students who are working here are discharging their duties with steadfastness and devotion. It is because of their hard work that this Book Stall has made great progress. It is not enough if you merely bring out books; you should put into practice what is given in the books. You should understand and assimilate all the teachings that are contained in the books and practise them. *Pustaka* (book), *mastaka* (head) and *hasta* (hand) should be in harmony.

Reading Without Practising Is Useless

What the world needs today is service. You should love everybody.

Love All, Serve All.

This is what you are supposed to do. Whatever work you may do, do it with the feeling that you are doing the work of God. There is no place in this world where God is not present. He is all-pervasive. Never doubt that God is here and not there. He is everywhere. God is in you, with you, above you, below you and around you. Whatever happens is only due to the Will of God, and not merely by your own efforts.

(Bhagawan showing His handkerchief) Here you see a cloth. It may appear to be a cloth, but in reality it is not so; it is a bundle of threads. Further, the threads are made out of cotton. So, first cotton, next thread and then cloth. Similarly, you are not one person but three: the one you think you are, the one others think you are and the one you really are.

With regard to a book also, there are three persons involved in it: the one who writes it, the one who prints it and the one who reads it. Merely bringing out books is not important. It is more important that you should bring out good books which broaden the vision of the people in the wide world. We should not be narrow-minded; we should develop broad feelings. We should publish books which are essential for everybody. Money is not important; morality is important.

Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows.

We should develop morality. Many books are written, many people read them, but it is all useless if nothing is put into practice. We should put into practice at least one principle given in the books we read. There may be many items of food in the plate, but our hunger is not satiated by merely repeating the names of those items. Take at least one item and eat it. A large number of books have been written on Swami. But, are you putting into practice even one principle contained in them? No. What is the use of reading books if you do not put anything into practice? If you read ten teachings in a book, put at least one of them into practice. Only then will you derive the necessary strength and capability from your reading.

Writers And Publishers Should Have Purity Of Heart

Our Rajan is putting in a lot of efforts to develop the Book Trust. He is doing much more than what is expected of a person of his age. Students are also co-operating, thereby creating a congenial environment which is conducive for the smooth functioning of the Trust. You may consider any workplace, good results are possible only through co-operation. What sort of co-operation is required? It should be a co-operation which is based on heart-to-heart relationship between each other. Not only that, you should know each other's mind and develop perfect understanding.

All are one, be alike to everyone. All should work with unity. One may write the book, another may print it and yet another may sell it. But all should work in perfect harmony. When there is unity, there will be peace and harmony. How can you develop purity? Purity is not possible when there are negative feelings in your mind. First of all, there should be unity. Where there is unity, there will be purity. Where there is purity, divinity will manifest there. Therefore, first of all develop unity and purity. Then only can you attain divinity. Hence, you should all be united. What I see is not the pustaka (book) that you print; I see your mastaka (head). Rajan brings so many books and other publications to Me that are printed by the Trust. But these do not give Me any satisfaction. I see the purity of the heart of the person who has written the book. The taste of the food will be good if it is cooked in a clean vessel. Cleanliness of the vessel is very important. So is the purity of the heart. Therefore, make your heart pure and sacred.

Control Your Desires

Everything may change in the world, but the heart does not change. Here I am referring to the spiritual heart, not the physical heart. Spiritual heart signifies God. God has no specific form. He is referred to as atma which is present everywhere. But you cannot see it when it is clouded by your thoughts and desires. The moon is always present in the sky, but you will not be able to see it when it is covered by clouds. You cannot deny the presence of the moon just because it is covered by clouds. If you want to see the moon, you have to wait for some time. You will see it once the clouds move away.

Chandrama manaso jataha chaksho suryo ajayata
(the moon was born out of the mind and the sun out of the eyes of the Supreme Being).

The atma is shining like moon in the sky of our heart. But sometimes, it is covered by the clouds of our thoughts and desires. In some seasons, you find

thick clouds. When there are thick clouds, you are not able to see the moon. In the same manner, the atma is immanent in everyone. You are unable to see the atma because of the thick clouds of your thoughts and desires. So, you should control your desires. Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure.

You can experience immense happiness if you reduce the luggage of your desires which overshadow your happiness. When you reduce your desires, everything will become good for you. This is referred to as *vairagya* (renunciation) in vedanta. What is meant by vairagya ? It means reducing your desires. Do not go on increasing your desires day by day. As our body grows old, our life-span goes on decreasing with every passing day. Hence, it will be very beneficial for us if we reduce our desires. You can be always happy when you reduce your desires. You may read any number of books and listen to all kinds of sacred texts. But first and foremost, you have to reduce your desires. Only then can you derive benefit from them. Everyone has desires, but some are necessary and some are not. When we wake up in the morning, what is it that we do? We get up from the bed with a lot of desires.

Oh man! You struggle hard in life merely for the sake of filling your belly.
You acquire myriad types of knowledge from various fields.
Examine and enquire for yourself what great happiness have you achieved
by spending all the time from dawn to dusk in acquiring worldly knowledge
and earning wealth while forgetting God.
(Telugu Poem)

Develop Steady Devotion

Whatever you may do will be a mere waste if you forget God. **Keep God as your highest goal.** God is not present in a far off land. He is present everywhere. People may say anything, you may face any number of difficulties, but you should never forget God. Only when you have such pure,

steady and unwavering devotion can you be called a true devotee. You cannot call yourself a devotee if you have wavering and unsteady devotion. Your devotion should be full and total like an ocean which is ever full and does not diminish at all. On the one hand, its water keeps evaporating and on the other, rivers keep pouring water into it with the result it always maintains its fullness. Make your heart like an ocean. Do not allow it to be disturbed by the waves of your desires. Any number of waves may arise, but the ocean maintains its pristine state. Hence, keep your heart always pure, steady and selfless.

Our Rajan is straining hard to bring about changes in the publication of books. He brought out many good books on 80th Birthday. Do your work without any expectation. Whatever you do, do it as an offering to God.

Sarva karma bhagavad pretyartham
(do all actions to please God).

That is true devotion. Do not observe differences such as, "This is my work, that is Swami 's work and that work pertains to Mandir or public." All work is God's work. One who writes the book, one who prints it and one who reads it, all are one. Never entertain any feelings of difference. You can develop steady devotion only when you do not observe differences. Your devotion should always be steady. Devotion that is wavering is of no use. What happens when you have a wavering mind? Your entire life becomes unstable.

Do not give room to unsteadiness of your mind. Desires and thoughts may arise. But we should use our power of discrimination to determine, "Is it good or bad? Is it right or wrong?" When you know that something is right, follow it; never leave it. Your discrimination is like a signal. Never ignore this signal. When your inner self tells you that something is right, you should follow it scrupulously, irrespective of what others say. Let people talk whatever they want, but we should remain steady in our mind.

Greatness does not lie in bringing out books; understand the essence contained in them. Essence is of prime importance. There can be no book without matter. Similarly, there can be no matter without subject. What type of subjects should you select? You should select such subjects which are related to the heart. Ignoring those subjects will amount to ignoring the voice of the heart. Writers should write good books which are beneficial for readers. We should not print substandard books which create debasing worldly desires in readers. What is the fate of such books? Nobody reads them. Eternal truths should form the subject of books, which get imprinted on the hearts of readers.

We should perform actions without deviating from the path of *Sathya* (truth) and *Dharma* (righteousness). Sathya and Dharma are not different from each other.

Sathyannasti paro Dharma

(There is no Dharma greater than adherence to Truth).

Sathya and Dharma are one and the same. Without Dharma, there cannot be Sathya and without Sathya, there cannot be Dharma. They are interdependent and are like mirror images of each other. We can achieve anything when we follow Sathya and Dharma. When we make Sathya and Dharma as our goal, we will certainly achieve the object of our life. Today it is not possible to explain this subject in detail due to time constraint. I wanted to tell you something related to publication of books only. What type of books should you publish? You should publish only good books. You have listened to many discourses and read many books. Treasure all that you have heard in your heart and try to put them into practice.

17. All Avatars Are Embodiments Of Pure Consciousness

Date: 04 September 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Krishna Jayanthi

The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,

Is there a place in the cosmos where truth does not exist?

Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.

(Telugu poem)

ONE has to realise what is meant by Suddha Satwa (pure consciousness). You have witnessed the creation of Hiranyagarbha Lingas several times by Me. That Hiranyagarbha Linga is a symbol of pure consciousness. It is omnipresent. (Swami created a Hiranyagarbha Linga and showed it to all present.) Look, this is verily Suddha Satwa (pure consciousness).

There is no human being in this world, who is free from desires. Every human being has some desire or the other. There is no place in this universe where this pure consciousness is not present. It is therefore a mistake to limit that omnipresent pure consciousness to a particular form. All are embodiments of pure consciousness. It is present in all human beings in a miniscule form like an atom. The pure consciousness assumes different forms in different ages as avatars . It manifested as Narasimha, Vamana, etc., in the Kritha yuga . The same pure consciousness assumed the form of Sri Rama in Treta yuga and Sri Krishna in Dwapara yuga . Sri Rama was accompanied by Sita in Treta Yuga , who led the life of an ideal wife and set an example to mankind in chastity. Sita, in spite of the great difficulties she encountered while living in exile and spending ten long months in captivity in Lanka, never lost her poise. She steadfastly held on to Ramanama with single-minded devotion. She never wavered even for a moment. She gave up food and sleep totally and constantly contemplated on Ramanama . She could not visualise any other form except that of Sri Rama, who was Ekatma sarva bhutantaratma (one

atma that dwells in all beings). Even in birds and beasts, she was seeing only the form of Sri Rama. That one atmic principle is referred to as Hiranyagarbha , which is pure gold. Pure gold is always referred to as 24 carat gold.

God is always said to manifest 16 facets. Hence, He is referred to as Purna Tatwa (Embodiment of fullness).

Poornamadah poornamidam,

Poornat poornamudachyate,

Poornasyapoornamadaya, Poornamevavashishyate.

(That is full, this is full. When the full is taken out of the full, what remains is again the full.)

(Sanskrit sloka)

Desires Keep One Away From Divinity

During the period of Rama's exile in the forest, Mareecha, the demon, donned the form of a golden deer to entice Sita. Sita knew very well that a golden deer could not be found in the world. However, keeping with her role in the Divine drama of Ramayana she expressed a desire to possess the golden deer and requested Sri Rama to capture it for her. Rama then had to run after that golden deer, in order to make her happy. When Sita thus developed a desire for a worldly object, the very next moment she was separated from Rama, the Divinity. It is common knowledge that the more you develop desires for worldly things, the greater you become distant from Divinity. Less luggage more comfort, makes travel a pleasure. Therefore, we have to reduce our luggage of desires. Sita had all along reduced her desires in order to be in close proximity to Rama. But the moment she developed a desire for golden deer, Rama moved away from her. She could not bear the agony of that separation. Day in and day out, she was contemplating only on Rama and none else. No other thought developed in her mind. That is how she became a

great pathivratha . Finally when Rama killed Ravana and released her from captivity, He subjected Sita to a test, before taking her back into His fold. He directed her to enter the fire and come out unscathed. The god of fire appeared before Rama and testified, "Sita is a great pathivratha . She does not at all think of any other matter but constantly contemplates on Your name." Why did Rama put Sita to such a test? It is only to make the world know about her chastity. Later, when Rama returned to Ayodhya and started ruling His kingdom, a washerman engaged in a quarrel with his wife commented, "Sri Rama took back His wife Sita who lived for ten months in Lanka in the captivity of Ravana. I am not so foolish." The news reached Rama. Again Rama put Sita to test by forsaking her. He knew that she was a great pathivratha , but he took decision to make the world know about her chastity. There is no other individual who can equal the chastity of Sita. Rama wanted to prove the chastity and devotion of Sita to the world.

Krishna Was A Man Of Character

In the Dwapara yuga that followed, Sri Krishna performed several leelas . But, none was able to recognise His Divine nature. The gopikas were much older in age to Sri Krishna. At the time when Krishna was performing Divine leelas in the company of gopikas , He was a young lad of seven years. How can anyone attribute any bad motive or impropriety to such leelas ? He played with them just as any boy of seven years would play with his mother. Unable to realise this truth, people created several misapprehensions and branded Krishna as 'gopikalola' (one who indulged in pranks with the gopikas , the milkmaids). They tried to insult Him, attributing bad motives to His actions. In fact, Lord Krishna too manifested His divinity on several occasions through His leelas and established ideal humanness, like the earlier avatar . Sri Krishna always maintained His humanness. The gopis and the eight consorts like Sathyabhama were all meant to declare the divinity and glory of the Divine leelas to the world. They are not to be taken as ordinary women. Krishna Himself was a man of exemplary character and noble qualities.

God incarnates in several forms for the purpose of protecting His devotees and transforming their minds. In Dwapara yuga , He incarnated as Krishna in

answer to the prayer of Devaki and Vasudeva. He grew up in the house of Nanda and Yashoda and constantly protected them. He destroyed the demon Kamsa and fulfilled the yearning of Kuchela, his childhood friend and devotee. Kuchela, though a childhood friend of Lord Krishna, suffered acute poverty. He could not provide even a square meal to his wife and children. He, therefore, approached Lord Krishna on the advice of his wife to seek relief from poverty. But, the moment he saw 1 Krishna he forgot the purpose of his visit and told Him "Oh Krishna! I don't need anything. I am aware that you protect not only me, but the entire universe. You incarnated for the purpose of establishing Dharma and protecting mankind." He began extolling Lord Krishna thus: You are beyond all description and human comprehension. Is it possible to estimate Your glory and splendour? I have been waiting for Your grace. Oh Lord! Listen to my prayer and redeem me. You are the one who brought back to life the dead son of Your preceptor. You are the one who suppressed the serpent Kaliya, freed Vasudeva and Devaki and saved Droupadi from humiliation. You fulfilled Kuchela's desires, You made ugly-looking Kubja beautiful. You protected the Pandavas and saved the 16,000 Gopikas. You are beyond all description and human comprehension. Krishna, it is not possible for even Brahma to describe Your glory. I have been praying for Your grace.

(Telugu song)

Do Not Confine God To One Name And Form

God is Ekatma Swarupa (embodiment of one Divine Principle, which is indivisible). There is no parallel to Him. He dons all forms and He permeates all bodies. Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). Isavasyam idam jagat (the entire world is permeated by God). In fact, it is the weakness of human beings to confine Him to a particular name and form and start describing Him in many ways. Let us take, for example, the story of that Divine principle that incarnated as Sri Rama. 'Dasaratha' was the name of the father of Rama. What is the inner meaning of this name, Dasaratha? It means a human body comparable to a chariot, having ten indriyas (senses) as horses. Kausalya was the first wife of King Dasaratha. He had two other

wives, Sumithra and Kaikeyi. Kausalya gave birth to a female child, named Santha, who was given in adoption to a king. She had no further issues. The family custom in those days was that a husband cannot marry for a second time without the consent of the first wife. Dasaratha therefore took permission from Kausalya to take Sumithra as his second wife. The name Sumithra implies a good friend to one and all. She had a pure heart. She too could not bear a son for him. He therefore approached the King of Kekaya Kingdom with a request to give his daughter Kaika in marriage to him. The King of Kekaya kingdom, however, insisted on a promise from Dasaratha that the son born to Kaika shall be crowned as the King of Ayodhya. He asked, "Oh Dasaratha, You already have two wives. Now you wish to marry for a third time. For what purpose? Is it not for begetting a son who can rule the kingdom? Then, can you make a promise that the son born to my daughter will be made the king of Ayodhya?" Dasaratha hesitated to give a promise. He replied that he would come back to him after sometime. He straightaway went to his two wives and consulted them enquiring, "Will you both agree to the condition that the son born to Kaika whom I wish to marry now should be made the King of Ayodhya?" Will you both agree for this condition?" Kausalya and Sumithra readily agreed for the same. They informed King Dasaratha, "We will be happy if you beget a son who can rule the kingdom." Dasaratha then conveyed their consent to the King of Kekaya and married his daughter Kaika. He returned to his kingdom along with Kaika.

King Dasaratha subsequently performed the Puthra Kameshti Yaga , seeking to be blessed with a son. The Yajna Purusha who emerged from the Yajna Kunda handed over a vessel containing the sacred payasam (sweet pudding) as prasadam to be partaken by Dasaratha's wives. He instructed King Dasaratha to distribute the payasam equally between his three wives. He did so in consultation with the Pundits . Kausalya and Kaikeyi felt very happy to receive the payasam . Kausalya was the eldest wife of King Dasaratha and it was but natural that a son born to her should be the King of Ayodhya. Kaika too had a claim to the kingdom as a result of the promise made by the King to her father before marrying her, that her son would be the future king. However, Sumithra had no such claims. She took her share of the payasam and kept it on the parapet wall of the open terrace of her residence. She

wanted to partake of it after drying her hair, as she just had a head bath. There were no electric fans or dryers in those days, as of now. Meanwhile, an eagle descended from the sky with great speed and took away the cup containing her share of payasam . The eagle dropped the cup containing payasam on a mountain where Anjana Devi lived. She picked up that cup and consumed the payasam happily. As a result, Hanuman was born to her.

Sumithra was very unhappy that she lost her cup of payasam . She went down and informed Kausalya about the incident. Kausalya counselled her saying, "Oh! Dear younger sister! You need not feel sorry. I will give a part of my share of the payasam ." Kaika too promised to give a part of her share. Such was the love between the wives in those days. Kausalya and Kaikeyi then poured some payasam from their cups into one of Sumithra. All the three then went to the Purohit (chief priest) to seek his blessings. The Purohit blessed the three queens saying, "This is the most auspicious moment for you to partake of the payasam ." The three queens partook of the payasam as directed by the Purohit . King Dasaratha's first wife Kausalya gave birth to a son, who was named Rama. Kaikeyi too gave birth to a son and he was named Bharatha. Sumithra, however, had two sons, born out of the share of payasam given to her by the two queens Kausalya and Kaikeyi. She realised soon the reason for having two sons.

True to her name, Sumithra was a woman of noble qualities. She then decided that the son born out of the 1 share of payasam given to her by Kausalya, namely, Lakshmana should always follow Rama. Similarly, the other son born out of the share of payasam given by Kaikeyi, namely, Sathrughna should serve Bharatha. Sumithra called her two sons to her side and instructed them accordingly. From then onwards, Lakshmana became a constant follower of Rama, while Sathrughna followed Bharatha, with the blessings of their mother. Thus, all the four brothers were happily spending their time. Lakshmana could not leave the company of Rama even for a moment; so was Sathrughna's, yearning for Bharatha's company.

When Rama started to leave for the forest as per the command of King Dasaratha, Lakshmana was the first person to accompany him on his own

volition. Bharatha and Sathrughna were not present in Ayodhya then. Once when Rama and Lakshmana were walking in the Dandakaranaya, Lakshmana suddenly felt dejected and told Rama "Dear elder brother, Why this exile in the forest for us! Why should we leave Ayodhya and undergo so many difficulties in this forest? Come, let us get back to Ayodhya and lead a comfortable life there." Realising the reason for Lakshmana's strange behaviour, Rama held the hand of Lakshmana lovingly and said, "Lakshmana, do not be hasty in your conclusions. Come, come along with Me." So saying, He brought him out of that place by walking some distance. Then Lakshmana regained his poise. He realised his mistake and begged Rama to pardon him. Then Rama pacified Lakshmana saying, "Look, these are not really your thoughts. This is the effect of the place through which we passed just now. Several Rakshasas (demons) tread this forest. Their demonic qualities entered you. I know very well that your heart is very sacred and pure." Once when Rama, Lakshmana and Sita were living in the forest by the side of a river in a beautiful Parnasala surrounded by fruit-bearing trees, a golden deer started moving in the vicinity. Sita was enchanted by its beauty and developed a desire to possess that golden deer and keep it under her care. She requested Rama to catch that deer and bring it to the Parnasala . Rama obliged her request and went after the deer, leaving behind Lakshmana to guard her. The deer played hide and seek with Rama and took Him deep into the forest. When Rama found that the deer was eluding Him, He shot an arrow at it. The golden deer was none other than Mareecha, who assumed that form to draw Rama away from Sita. While dying, Mareecha, imitating the voice of Rama, cried loudly, "Ha! Lakshmana! Ha! Sita!" Sita heard these words and became agitated and asked Lakshmana to go and find out what had happened to Rama. Lakshmana tried to explain and convince Sita that no danger had befallen Rama and that He was safe. But, Sita was not convinced. She implored, Lakshmana to go immediately in search of Rama. She even used harsh words saying, "Oh! Lakshmana! Perhaps you wish to make me your wife when Rama dies." Unable to bear the words uttered by Sita, Lakshmana decided to go in search of Rama. But, before leaving, he drew a line around the Parnasala and told Sita, "Oh Mother, I am going in search of Rama. Both Rama and myself will not be available in the ashram to protect you. I therefore request you not to cross this line under any circumstances."

She agreed to it. The moment Lakshmana left that place, Ravana came there and begged for food saying he was very hungry. Sita felt very sorry on hearing the word 'hunger'. She decided that it was her duty to offer food to a hungry person. She therefore invited him to come in. But, Ravana was very much afraid to cross the Lakshmana Rekha . He dared not cross the line, but started shouting 'hungry, hungry'. Then Sita was constrained to cross the Lakshmana Rekha and come out to offer food to Ravana. Immediately, Ravana abducted Sita and took her away in his chariot.

By the time Rama and Lakshmana returned to the Parnasala , Sita was not to be found there. Rama then asked Lakshmana why he left Sita alone and came in search of Him. Lakshmana replied, "Oh elder brother, she talked very bad words to me. I could not bear those abuses. She accused me that I was entertaining the idea of taking her as my wife in the event of Rama's death." When Rama heard about these harsh words uttered by Sita, He was deeply hurt. He could not believe that Sita whom Lakshmana was treating as his own mother could hurl such abuses on him. He realised that Lakshmana could not bear such insinuations and only for that reason he left her alone in the ashram and came in search of Him. In fact, after Lakshmana left the ashram , Sita too was deeply distressed at her own behaviour towards Lakshmana, She wailed, Oh! Lakshmana! My brother-in-law dear!

I spoke bad words about you. Oh! Man of noble qualities!

Unable to bear those words and deeply hurt

Did you move away from me?

(Telugu song)

She begged to be pardoned for her unbecoming behaviour. But, alas! What had happened had already happened. The damage had already been done. Ravana abducted Sita and took her along with him.

Subsequently, Rama waged a battle against Ravana to retrieve Sita from his

captivity. A fierce battle was going on. One day, during the battle, Lakshmana fell unconscious. Hanuman then went on his mission to bring the Sanjivini herb, so that the life-restoring herb could revive Lakshmana. He could not locate the particular herb on the mountain and therefore he lifted the entire mountain and started returning to the battlefield. He had to pass over the city of Ayodhya on his way to Lanka. The residents of that city wondered who could be that monkey carrying the whole mountain? Bharatha was at that time pining alone, worried about his brother Rama and his life in the forest. He saw Hanuman 1 moving with the mountain in his palm in the sky and inferred that it must be a Rakshasa proceeding on a wicked mission. Seizing his bow, he shot an arrow aimed at Hanuman. Immediately, Hanuman fell down with a shrill cry 'Rama'! Bharatha ran towards him and learnt about the story of Hanuman's mission and its urgency. He informed Bharatha, "Oh noble one! Rama is engaged in a battle against Ravana, to release Sita from his captivity. Lakshmana fell unconscious in that battlefield. In order that he may be revived I am carrying this Sanjivini mountain to that place, as per the command of Rama. Since I could not locate the particular life-restoring herb, I am carrying the mountain itself." Bharatha repented for his hasty act and Hanuman set on his mission once again.

Sumithra, the mother of Lakshmana came to know about the incident. Though it saddened her for a while, she quickly regained her composure. Sumithra was a noble lady. No one has attempted to describe her qualities so far in the Ramayana . Not only she comforted herself, but she also counselled Kausalya saying, "Oh elder sister, You need not feel sorry that Rama is engaged in a battle against Ravana. Sri Rama is not an ordinary person. He is a great warrior, who can conquer the entire world and rule over it. Hence, Rama Himself will protect Lakshmana." Meanwhile, Lakshmana's wife Urmila also came to know about the incident and she was happy that her husband was under the divine care and protection of Rama. Urmila too was a noble and courageous woman. At the time when Lakshmana started to accompany Rama to the forest, she offered her pranams to Lakshmana and advised, "You do not waste your time thinking about me. You engage yourself in the service of Rama all the while. Do not neglect your duty in the least." At that time she was painting a sketch of Rama's coronation. Such was the nobility of

Urmila. Thus, Sumithra, the mother, and Urmila, the wife of Lakshmana were all great and noble women. It is only because of such noble women, the four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharatha and Sathrugna were happy and safe.

Hanuman took leave of Bharatha and the people who had gathered there saying, "Very soon Ravana will be defeated in the battle and we will all return to Ayodhya safely." Bharatha spread the news of the whereabouts of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita to all the people of the city of Ayodhya. Everyone was happy that Rama, Lakshmana and Sita were safe and they thanked Hanuman who brought the news.

Soon, Hanuman appeared in the sky over the battlefield carrying the Sanjivini mountain on his upraised palm. He touched the ground and with the help of the life-restoring plants, Lakshmana was revived. Thereafter Rama, Lakshmana and the Vanara chiefs assembled on the battlefield and discussed the strategy for defeating Ravana and his army. 1 During the battle, Ravana's son Meghnath too fought valiantly, but was killed later. Then came the turn of Ravana. On the advice of Vibhishana, Rama shot an arrow right below the navel of Ravana and he breathed his last, within two minutes. That was the end of the great Rama-Ravana battle.

The news of the fall of Ravana was conveyed to Sita by Hanuman. As per the command of Sri Rama, she was brought to the presence of Rama with all respect and reverence, by the vanaras . The vanaras had no opportunity to see her before. Hence, they were jumping over the shoulders of one another to have a glimpse of her. They prostrated before her and felt very happy. Now, it was time for her to meet her beloved Lord. She walked slowly towards Rama. When she came within a short range, Rama declared that she had to enter the fire and come out unscathed before she could be taken into His fold. As per Rama's command, the vanaras collected dry sticks and fuel for lighting and feeding the fire for the rite. The fire was lit. Sita went round the fire and before leaping into it took a vow saying, "Oh Receiver of sacred offerings! By thought, word and deed I have not dwelt in my mind on anyone other than Rama, my Lord. I am the daughter of earth and the chaste wife of Rama. If that be so, may I come out of this fire unscathed." So saying, she entered the

fire. Immediately, the fire god appeared there along with Sita and offered her at the feet of Rama, saying, "Oh Rama, You are the omniscient Lord. You know very well the pure heart of Sita. How then could you not recognise her purity?" Rama declared, "It is true that I am aware how pure and chaste Sita is. Yet, I have a responsibility to make her purity known to the world. It is only to prove her unblemished character to the world that I ordered her to enter the fire and come out unscathed." When Sita came out of fire unscathed, the gathering of vanaras and others there and the gods above expressed their joy by loudly clapping and sounding heavenly drums and trumpets. Sita bowed in reverence to one and all. Rama walked a few steps and brought her near Him by holding her hand. Thereafter, an aerial chariot (Vimana) by name Pushpaka was brought. Bharatha made Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Sugriva and Vibhishana seated in the Vimana and brought them to Ayodhya. The people of Ayodhya were extremely happy to welcome their dear Lord Rama and loving Sita, whom they did not see for 14 long years. They brought garlands to welcome them, but they were confused in locating Rama. Bharatha sitting in front as the charioteer resembled Rama in all respects, since for fourteen long years he constantly contemplated on Rama. Yad bhavam tad bhavati (as is the feeling, so is the result). Immediately, Bharatha drew their attention to the real Rama. The people of Ayodhya garlanded Rama profusely and welcomed Him to the city. They danced and sang in ecstasy, singing the song, "Rama! Kodanda Rama ! " 1 Finally, Sri Rama was crowned the King of Ayodhya. This is the story of Ramayana . The essence of Ramanama (the holy name of Rama) is unparalleled and unique. This is the only truth. Rama never went back on His word. His word is truth. His word and the path that He tread were very auspicious. The people of Ayodhya conscientiously followed the word of Rama and tread the path shown by Him and made their lives sanctified. You all know that the story of Rama dates back to thousands of years. In spite of passage of such a long time, people still chant Ramanama . There is no village in Bharath where there is no temple for Rama or the Ramanama is not chanted. The Ramanama is no ordinary name. It is so sacred.

Dear students! You might have read several stories. They are all stories only! But, the story of Rama is very sacred. Hence, you all chant Ramanama at all

times. This is the gift I would like to hand over to you today. Today is the holy Krishnashtami day. The chanting of Ramanama is very important on this day also. The divinity of Rama and Krishna Avatars is not different. Both the Avatars represent the same Divine Principle. Hence, you may take any name and chant that name constantly. You can also chant 'Ramakrishna'. Or, you can chant 'Sai Rama' or 'Sai Krishna', with love for Swami (Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba). You may pursue any type of education and acquire high academic degrees; yet, you should not give up chanting the divine name. You should not forget the divine name.

The mere chanting of the divine name is enough. It will take you across the ocean of samsara . It will relieve you of all the sorrows and difficulties. The Nama is like a bridge, crossing which you can go to any place.

Control of the senses is most important. In fact, this is the basic difference between a man and an animal. Only if man can control his senses, can he be better than an animal. One should not let his mind go uncontrolled. One should control and train the mind in such a way that it will be subservient to him. For the process, an amount of Yoga is necessary. Students like you should promote a healthy and sacred mind. Only if you are able to do this, will our country be able to move along a prosperous path. If you go along the wrong path, the motherland will suffer a thousand times more than what your parents suffer when you do not progress in your education. Every student should shape himself as an ideal example. It is not easy for man to live his life satisfactorily in this world. When a student is in a school, there will be a new lesson each day, and a new class each year. It will not happen that he will sit in the same class in all the years and learn the same lesson at all times. In the same manner, every sadhaka on the spiritual path should introspect and find out if his Sadhana is correct and improving day after day. If not, he should change his ideas and attitudes and improve himself. A sadhaka should not always remain on a dual path. As the first step, we should move on from a dual path to one which we call qualified non-dualism.

This is the duty of every sadhaka. To worship God with flowers and to offer incense to him is only the first step in Sadhana. A sadhaka who has good qualities and a sacred mind, will always grow in his spiritual stature as he moves along the spiritual path. It is the duty of every sadhaka to keep on improving from his first step. A sadhaka should not spend all his life in doing worldly puja to God and remain a beginner. He should strive to improve his mental attitude.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

18. Make Sathya And Dharma Your Steadfast Companions

Date: **21 October 2007** / Location: **Prasanthi Nilayam** / Occasion: **Dasara, Vijayadasami**

TODAY is the festival of Vijayadasami. All people celebrate this festival with great joy and enthusiasm. However, for some people this day brought sorrow, for, it was on this day that Sai cast off His 'old body'. The human bodies are, of course, merely material. Once a long-time devotee Lakshmibai approached Baba. Baba gave her two gold coins and told her, "Lakshmi, keep these two coins with you. Preserve them carefully." The date of Baba's departure from this mortal world was imprinted on the two coins. (Swami at this point created two gold coins with His Divine hands). Showing them to the devotees sitting in the Sai Kulwant Hall), Swami said, "Look, here are those two coins." The two gold coins gifted by Shirdi Baba to Lakshmibai represent Sathya (Truth) and Dharma (Righteousness) that help the spiritual progress of human beings. Swami frequently exhorts the devotees, "Lead your life's journey with the help of human values. Let your daily life be suffused with Sathya (truth), Dharma (righteousness), Santhi (peace) and Prema (love). Truth is atma. Dharma is the duty that we have to perform. Hence, discharge your dharma with truth. These two are in fact the sadhanas you have to undertake. These two only will protect you in every way. They alleviate all sorrows and difficulties. No human being, during the course of his or her life's sojourn in this physical world, should give up Sathya and Dharma (truth and righteousness). Truth has to be experienced in one's heart, while righteousness has to be reflected in one's deeds. These two are enough. No other sadhanas are required. The names Rama, Krishna, Govinda or Narayana are only names ascribed to God; but Divinity has no particular name or form. Truth comes first and righteousness next. If righteousness follows truth, all sorrows and difficulties will be removed. There are millions of people living in this world. But, the Divinity present in all is only one. This has been described in the Gita as Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being). There may be any number of people, but they represent only the number. Only one Divinity is present in all of them. And, that Divinity is the only truth. You may call Divinity by any name - Rama,

Krishna, Govinda, Allah or Jesus - but God is one and only one. Hence, realise the oneness of Divinity; contemplate on that truth; consider that truth as God and spread that truth to one and all. What we are expected to do is not giving alms or charity. Whatever activity we undertake, it must be suffused with truth. When people follow such a path, all will be happy. The entire universe represents only one truth. But, people express it in different ways. Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). Truth alone is permanent in this world; all other things are ephemeral like the passing clouds. Names and forms are not permanent. Truth alone is permanent. It is the changeless principle. Keeping such an eternal truth in your heart, whatever you do becomes Dharma .

Do Not Give Undue Importance To The Body

I must tell you one thing in this context. There are many youths in this assembly. They should not take it amiss. In the name of modernism, many youths are taking to perverted ways of living these days. This permissiveness is not limited to a particular country or society. It has become a global phenomenon, irrespective of caste, community, religion or country. Right from the primary school children to boys studying in graduate and post-graduate courses are afflicted with this mental aberration.

Love is God. Whatever activity you undertake with love, it becomes a success. Unfortunately, today, the term 'Love' is highly misused and misplaced and often misunderstood as relating to the body. No, this is not true love. It is fleeting and ceases with the bodily relationship. True love is heart to heart. It is changeless.

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later, but the indweller has neither birth nor death. The indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness.

(Telugu poem)

The body is not permanent. Hence, do not give importance to the deha

(physical body). The dehi (Indweller) is important. He alone is the embodiment of Truth. It is a serious mistake to ignore such an indweller. When you repose confidence in the Indweller and rely upon Him, He by himself will look after everything. We should never forget the dehi (Indweller), who is niramaya (free from all ailments).

When Shirdi Baba left His physical body, it was Vijayadasami day. During His last moments Baba told the people around Him, "Do not rely upon this physical body. It will fade away and wither out in a few minutes. Why do you treat such an ephemeral body as Truth? None should shed tears on this occasion. This is but natural in the case of physical body. Enjoy this physical body as long as it is alive. Thereafter, treat the passing away of this body as a dream." The physical body will retain its shape for a short period after death. Hence, people around the body of Baba kept it as it is for sometime, with the hope that Baba might come back to life as it happened on an earlier occasion. Meanwhile, one of the devotees, Abdullah, came there and reminded them, "We are forgetting all that Baba had told us. Baba's word is Truth. We have to follow it. Accordingly, we have to perform His obsequies, which is our duty." Thus, all the devotees discussed among themselves what was needed to be done and came to a conclusion. They shifted the body to the Wada (a stone structure built by a devotee called Booty) and buried (Samadhi) it there. Thus, the bodies are impermanent however long a person might live. The physical body is subject to certain limits. This body as well as all other bodies are bound by certain limits. Each body has its own limit. None can cross that limit. As the days progress, the limit approaches fast.

Embodiments of Love!

Please, therefore, treat love as your foremost concern. Establish Truth in your heart firmly. Whatever activity you undertake, do it with dharma (righteousness). It is truth that sustains dharma and dharma in turn will protect truth. It is for this reason that Lakshmibai kept with her the two gold coins given to her by Baba. She felt, "These coins are given to me by Baba. These are gold coins. These coins are very valuable; more valuable than diamonds. There can be nothing greater than these coins. I do not need

anything else. These two coins represent Sathya (truth) and Dharma (righteousness)." 2

Truth Is Your Very Breath

Truth and righteousness alone protect the world. We are undertaking several types of sadhanas in order that the world is protected. But, they are all pompous sadhanas only! You must install these two values in the heart and follow them at all times, day in and day out. Presently, you are just chanting these words by mouth. This is not enough. When you practise these values with all the sincerity at your command, you will achieve the desired results. There is no use repeating these words like a parrot. Even record player does such an exercise. One has to develop conviction in these values with all sincerity. Only then will they be imprinted in your heart forever. They always remain in you, with you. You have to put forth efforts to achieve such type of sadhana .

One day the daughter of Lakshmibai approached her and requested, "Mother, please hand over to me those two coins which Baba had given you sometime back." But Lakshmibai refused, saying, "No, I cannot pass on these coins to you. They have to reach the same Person who gave them to me and none else. I have no authority to deliver them to you. They will reach Baba, the embodiment of Truth and Dharma ."

Stick To Truth And Righteousness Always

You may chant any number of names; any number of mantras ; you may perform any number of yajnas and yagas . But, what ultimately remain are sathya and dharma . Follow these two. You are not separate from Me. You are all My amsas ! (parts), as declared in the Bhagavad Gita . Sathya and Dharma are following you since several births. Today, you are undertaking several sadhanas . In the end, they are all going waste. You chant the Ramanama saying, "Ram, Ram, Ram ." The japamala in your hand is rotating, but your mind is not turning towards Rama. It is only when your mind is fixed on the name you chant, your japa becomes fruitful. Whatever activity you undertake,

let it be truthful. Adhere to Truth always and under all circumstances. In fact, Truth is your very life principle. It is your swasa (life breath). Devoid of truth and righteousness, any number of discourses, Upanishads , Gita chanting, reading of spiritual texts, etc., will become a futile exercise. They may be useful for passing your time. Such exercises cannot sanctify your life. Truth and righteousness are the two most important sadhanas that will liberate you from this mundane world. You should always remember that you are an amsa of God. You should realise your relationship with God. This is the only relationship that will last forever; you may belong to any country or religion. But do not entertain any differences on that basis. All religions teach the same truth and will lead to the same God. Not a single religion (Matham) is bad, provided your mathi (intellect) is good. Hence, you have to keep your intellect in good condition. You have to understand religion in its proper perspective. Your mind may be changing constantly, but the matham 2 (religion) does not change. Hence, do not give scope for doubt in every aspect. Do not entertain any doubts. Keep only one thing in mind - truth and love. Truth is atma . What is the meaning of the word 'Myself?' It means atma . Follow your atma . That is your dharma . If you do this, you will not encounter any calamity. Everything will merge into this divine atma . Realise the Truth. Then your life will be sanctified.

Embodiments of Love!

May you all hold on to the two principles of Sathya (Truth) and Dharma (righteousness). Dharma does not mean charity. You have to follow the dictates of your conscience, which is based upon truth and righteousness. You are all embodiments of Truth! You are all embodiments of Sathya Sai! Remember this truth and march forward in your life's journey. Often times you worry, "Swami did not talk even once during these Dasara days." Today is Vijayadasami day. It was the day when Sai shed the old body. Today, Sai who has donned a new body is narrating to you incidents that happened while He was in the old body.

You should not join the bad company of friends. If you do so, you will also become bad. You must always move in good company. What is meant by

good company? sathya and dharma . Hence, you should always move in the company of truth and righteousness.

If you hold on to these two values steadfastly, your life will go on happily and smoothly.

Very soon, the entire country will become one, shedding once for all, all divisive tendencies. In fact, the whole world will become one; shedding the differences of nation, religion, caste, etc., and all the people will experience Divinity. All people will move like brothers and sisters. You address each other as 'brother' and 'sister'. You say 'hello' to one another. But, of what use it is if there is hollowness inside. You should always greet each other with a pleasant smile on your face. You should never exhibit your feelings with a wild laugh saying, 'Aha! â€¦!' You should put on a sweet and soft smile on your face. That is the real laughter. If you make a loud noise while smiling, it amounts to insulting others. You are very fortunate to be here. I have explained the real meaning of the two gold coins gifted by Shirdi Sai Baba to Lakshmi Bai. Several people tried their best to snatch those coins from her. But, she did not oblige anyone. She returned them to Baba saying, "These coins belong to You. I am giving them back to You. Neither my children nor anyone else has anything to do with them." The children are born. The relationship between a husband and wife comes only after marriage. If there is no bond of marriage, neither is there a wife nor a husband. If the husband and wife are not there, there is no scope at all for the child to be born. Thus, no one is related to the other. Each one is for himself or herself only! That is the 2 message conveyed in the famous "Bhaja Govindam" song composed by Adi Sankara.

Chit represents awareness. We use this awareness on several occasions to distinguish good from bad. If this awareness is not present, we will not be able to enquire into anything at all. Thus, this quality of Chit is also present in us in a latent form. Ananda or bliss is also present in us. This is evident from the fact that we sometimes feel happy. The sun and the moon are

brightly shining at all times but when there is a thick layer of clouds, we will not be able to see the sun or the moon. In the same manner, in the sky of our heart, divine qualities like Sat, Chit, and Ananda are always present, but when bad qualities like selfishness and ego are present, they act like the clouds and hide the good qualities. We should promote divine qualities like Sat, Chit, and Ananda.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

19. Akhanda Bhajan - Continuous Namasmarana Is The Goal

Date: 13 November 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Akhanda Bhajan

ONE has to understand what is meant by "Akhanda Bhajan ". There are two kinds of Bhajans - one is Khanda Bhajan and the other, Akhanda Bhajan . Khanda Bhajan is for a specific time, for example, the Bhajans held for a limited period either in the morning or evening. On the other hand, Akhanda Bhajan involves constant contemplation on God in the morning, evening or even during the night time. It is constant contemplation on God during all the three states - the waking, dream and deep sleep. It is "sarvada sarvakaleshu sarvathra Harichintanam ." Suppose you are watching a clock. There are three hands in the clock, namely, the second hand, the minute hand and the hour hand. The second hand is the longest; the minute hand is slightly shorter and the hour hand is the shortest of the three. When the second hand crosses sixty spaces, the minute hand moves forward by one space. When the minute hand crosses sixty spaces, the hour hand moves forward by one space. Which one of these three hands is important? Undoubtedly, the hour hand is important. On the same analogy, doing namasmarana and bhajan only in the morning and evening is like the second hand. The divine name is highly potent. Each one of the several names of God has one type of power specific to it. If you wish to make good use of this power and derive lasting benefit out of it, you have to participate in Akhanda bhajan .

The Uniqueness Of Ramanama

Once sage Narada approached Lord Vishnu and prayed, "Oh Lord! People speak very highly about the efficacy of Ramanama . Will you kindly explain?" Lord Vishnu wished to demonstrate the efficacy of Ramanama by an illustration. He therefore advised Narada, "Oh Narada" You go to a crow and utter the word 'Rama'. Let the crow repeat the name." Nararada went to a crow and said, "Oh crow, Your entire body is black, without a trace of whiteness. Hence, you chant the Ramanama just once." The crow uttered 'Rama', and immediately it fell down dead. Narada was sad that the crow died

just by its chanting the Ramanama once. He, therefore, went to Lord Vishnu and informed Him of the crow's death. Lord Vishnu then told him, "Don't worry. This time you go to the beautiful peacock that is just born and ask it to chant Ramanama once." As per the instructions of Lord Vishnu Narada went to the newly born peacock and said, "Oh Peacock, Your beauty and grace are enchanting to the entire world. You are very lovable and attractive. Please utter the word 'Rama' just once." The moment it uttered 'Rama', it also fell down dead. Narada again went to Lord Vishnu and reported about the death of the peacock after chanting Ramanama just one time. Lord Vishnu again advised Narada, "Oh Narada, there is a cow in the shed nearby, which has just given birth to a calf. You please go to that new-born calf and ask her to chant Ramanama once." Narada did accordingly. As soon as the new-born calf heard the word 'Rama', it also dropped down dead. When Narada informed the matter to Lord Vishnu, He again instructed him, "Oh Narada, this time you go to the King's palace where a baby boy is just born. You ask him to chant the Ramanama once." Narada was very much afraid to approach the newly born prince, since the crow, peacock and the calf died earlier just by listening to the word 'Rama' once. He pleaded with Lord Vishnu to spare his life, since the King would put him to death if something happened to the new-born baby by chanting Ramanama . But, Lord Vishnu insisted that Narada should obey His command. Narada went to the palace and asked the newly born prince to chant Ramanama once. The prince saluted sage Narada and informed him that by the mere chanting of Ramanama just once, he was transformed from a crow to peacock, from a peacock to a calf and from a calf to a human being as a Prince. He expressed his gratitude to sage 2 Narada for initiating him into Ramanama . Thus, Nama confers a human birth, which is considered to be a rare gift.

The human being is an embodiment of Divinity. You see any picture of God. All forms of God are portrayed with a human face. That is why it is said "Daivam manusha rupena ." (God assumes human form). It is only the divine name that confers human birth on a being. It is evident from the illustration narrated above that the birds and animals were able to get a human birth by listening to the holy name just once. Unfortunately, no transformation is taking place in the human beings in spite of repeating the divine name

several times. You should chant the divine name whole heartedly with full faith. Faith develops love towards God and that love towards God confers human birth. No doubt, man today is repeating the holy name; but not with love and steady faith. He is more concerned with how others are singing and whether their sruthi and raga are in order, etc. He is doing the namasankirtana with a wavering mind. There can be no transformation in him by such fickle minded namasankirtan, inspite of doing it for hours together. Namasankirtan has to be done with absolute concentration and steady faith like a yogi. It is said "Sathatham yoginah". One can achieve great transformation if the mind is steadily fixed on the divine name.

When a lead singer is singing a particular bhajan

song, other singers think of the next song that they are going to lead. Thus, their attention is distracted, with the result, they remain as ordinary singers or listeners only. The devotional singing of Bhajans will have no effect on them. It cannot transport them to a higher realm of Divinity. No doubt, the contemplation on God will sanctify a person to a certain extent. In order to attain purity, it is not enough if chanting of the divine name is confined to a limited period. It has to be a continuous spiritual exercise throughout one's life. Then only the divine name gets imprinted on one's heart.

Do Every Act As An Offering To God

You may attend to your daily routine. But, while attending to your duties in your own house or in the outside world, you must constantly remind yourself that "whatever I do, think or speak, everything belongs to God." The proper attitude should be, 'sarva karma Bhagavath preethyartham'. Take for example, the process of cooking. You add different ingredients to the items being cooked, in definite proportions and try to make them tasty. But the real taste comes only when the job of cooking is done as an offering to God. The food becomes divine when it is offered to God. On the other hand, if the various items are cooked with the attitude, 'I am doing this job as a routine; I am cooking these items for my family members to partake', it does not reach God. Hence, whatever work you undertake, do it as an offering to God

chanting the name 'Ram', 2 'Ram', 'Ram' . Even while you are walking, think that it is God who is making you walk since Divinity is present in a subtle form in every atom and cell in this Universe. Unable to recognize this truth, people think, 'I came by walk, I walked so many miles' etc. Such work comes under the physical realm, not spiritual. Hence, whatever you think, speak or do, consider it as God's command, God's work. With such an attitude it is enough if you chant the divine name 'Rama' just two times - morning and evening. Not only the name "Rama", any name you can take for chanting. Chant any divine name wholeheartedly at least once. That would be all right.

There is no use counting seconds and minutes while doing namasankirtan thinking, 'I have done namasankirtan for so many seconds so many minutes. It is enough if you chant the divine name just once, wholeheartedly. That is like the hour hand in a clock which carries certain value. Such heartfelt singing has become rare today. Some people participating in Bhajan say, "Today I am not well. I have a sore throat due to cough and cold. I am not able to sing." True, you may be suffering from cold and cough. But, you can sing within yourself, surely. Do it. That will give you sufficient strength. The divine name is very sacred. If you repeat it just once, even the dead will come back to life. Savithri lost her husband. But, by her soulful prayers she could bring back her husband to life. Those who could bring back the dead to life are to be found only in the country of Bharath and nowhere else. Though divine power is spread everywhere and is omnipresent, it manifests in a high degree only in Bharath. Those who are pure in their heart will always succeed. Whatever work you undertake, do it conscientiously. Develop purity of mind. If you undertake the work with that purity of mind and then pray to God, surely you will achieve the result. Meera did the same thing. She prayed to the Lord, "Swami , I delved deep into the ocean and could get the pearl of your divine name. Let not this valuable pearl slip from my hand and drop back into the ocean. Having been born in this world, let me sing the glory of the divine name constantly and make my life sanctified." The Gita says, "Mamaivamso jeevaloke jeevabhutas sanatanah" . You are all part of My Divinity. Hence, you all should follow Me. My love is divine and sacred. So shall be your love. If you follow this principle, you will automatically achieve purity. Where there is purity, there Divinity is. Everything is reflection,

reaction and resound. Since ancient times, you all are My own amsa (part). Do not ever forget this truth. If only you develop faith in this Truth, it will amount to reading the entire Bhagavad Gita .

Every human being follows dharma . From where did this dharma come? It has come from bhav a (feeling), which in turn emanated from viswasa (faith). It is only when viswasa is there, dharma is born. That faith is 2 truth. dharma is verily the embodiment of divinity. "Truth is God; Faith is God; Love is God; Live in Love." If only you cultivate these three, you can achieve anything. You may encounter any number of losses and difficulties in life. You may undergo a lot of suffering. But, you should never give up truth, faith and love. Loss, suffering and difficulties are like the waves in the ocean of life. They just come and go. But, the water in the ocean remains permanently. Hence, develop the faith of 'water', i.e., divinity. Your thoughts are like the passing clouds. Hence, keep your faith firmly fixed on God. If you develop love and faith towards God, there is nothing in the world that you cannot achieve. By faith and love, you can even change the earth into sky and the sky into earth.

The power of divine name is unparalleled. People often take it lightly. That is a mistake. One should not mistake a shining glass piece to be a diamond. The real diamond is altogether different. What is that diamond? 'Die mind'. God's name is the real diamond. Keep it safe and secure. Do not ever be bothered by pain and suffering, losses and difficulties. They just come and go. That is not your real nature. Your innate Self is strong, eternal and real (sat). You should not follow the fleeting and unreal waves, forsaking your own true and eternal nature. Unfortunately today people are following only the unreal and passing waves. If you hold on to such fleeting and unreal things, you will always be deceived. Once you seek refuge in the lotus feet of God, you should never give up. Wherever you go, the divine feet will protect you. If you install the divine name firmly in your heart, your life will become sanctified. That is bhakti (devotion). That is your sakti (power). That is mukti (liberation).

It is only for making people realise this truth that the sadhana of akhanda bhajan has been prescribed for devotees at least once in a year. The word 'akhanda' implies chanting the divine name non-stop for 24 hours. But people

will be just coming and going while the Akhanda Bhajan is going on. Such a Bhajan can be termed only as Khanda Bhajan . It is a piecemeal Bhajan . It is difficult to maintain continuity of the divine vibrations in such a Bhajan . You should ensure that there is no gap in between. During Akhanda Bhajan you may go home for any purpose, for example, to take food. But, you continue to do namasmaran a while attending to any work in your house. God does not wish that you should not attend to your personal and domestic chores. You may attend to all your needs, but constantly remember God while doing so. That is the essence of Lord Krishna's message in the Gita , "Mamanusmara yuddhyacha " (keep Me ever in your mind and fight till the end). In other words, He advised Arjuna that he must engage himself in the war, constantly remembering Him. War in this context does not imply merely killing one another by shooting arrows or with missiles. That is not a sign of greatness. There you discharge your 2 duty in the battlefield. If you do so, those who are destined to die will die.

You should always attend to your duties with a pleasant and smiling face. What is required is a smiling face. There is no use putting a 'castor oil face'. "Happiness is union with God." That is real Divinity. When you are confronted with some difficult situations, do not get upset constantly worrying, "Oh! How do I cross this situation?" For example, young people are often confronted with a "marriage worry". Such worry will only worsen the situation. Repose your faith in God. Think that it is not marriage, but 'my raise', i.e., an opportunity for your betterment. If you develop such an attitude, your life will be sanctified. Whoever does namasmarana, whatever be the name he takes and wherever he is, his life will be sanctified. He will be free from sin. You need not be too much concerned with raga and thala (tune and rhythm). There is only one Raga , that is Hridayaraga (the raga arising out of one's own heart). That is 'Soâ€¦!â€¦.ham', 'Soâ€¦!â€¦!â€¦!..ham'. Let your life be tuned to this raga of 'Soham '. Then, whatever activity you undertake, it becomes a success.

You are most fortunate to participate in this Akhanda Bhajan . During normal days, Bhajans are held in this hall both in the morning and in the evening. This is a great opportunity. Do not lose the opportunity of participating in the

Bhajan . If only you make good use of it, your life will be sanctified. The global Akhanda Bhajan is held only for this purpose every year.

The essence of good qualities, good ideas, and love should be offered to God as fruits grown by your own Sadhana. The world itself will be benefited by an individual who has good conduct. If fire starts on one tree in a forest, that fire will not stop after burning that particular tree. It will spread and burn out the entire forest. In the same manner, if there is one individual who has bad qualities, he will spoil the entire community in addition to ruining himself. On the other hand, if there is a tree which is full of good flowers, it will fill the entire area with good fragrance and spread it. In the same manner, if there is an individual with a high code of conduct, he will not only improve himself but will also improve the entire society around him through his good conduct. Our discipline should be connected with our whole life and not with one place and one time. To whatever place you may go and whatever the situation may be, you must maintain discipline. This kind of faith is true faith. Just as our breath always keeps going in and out, so also our discipline should become our breath and be with us wherever we go and whatever we do. Many people come and talk about God as if it is for exhibition. In reality, so long as your heart is not clean, God will have no place in your heart... Thus external show is not important. Whatever you want to do, you must do it from the depths of your heart. From ancient times, such external devotion in the form of ritual was promoted; and we are unable to show the real strength of inner devotion. Bhakti does not consist of having a photo for worship and giving it Arati everyday or shouting Baba, Baba. True Bhakti means that there must be a transformation in your behaviour. God is within you, around you, and in you. He is omnipresent. Recognising this truth, you must arrive at the result that you and God are one. This is the truth that you must realise.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

20. Oneness With God Is True Education

Date: 22 November 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Convocation - 26

FROM the time one gets up from the bed till he goes to bed again, why should one waste all his time in earning money?

Embodiments of Love!

It is not good to waste one's time and energy in vain pursuits without attending to one's ordained duties. Time is sacred and valuable. " Time waste is life waste". You are all students who have to lead others in future.

Every individual has some desires. But, students especially have to control their desires. This is their duty. No doubt desires crop up in your mind endlessly one after the other. But, it is the foremost duty of a student to control those desires. The word 'vidya ' (education) has its root in the word 'vid ', meaning light. It means that education shows us light. Education illumines our path to progress.

Understand The Higher Purpose Of Education

Dear Students!

You must stand as an ideal to everyone. It is only with this hope that we are bringing you up with great love. You all know that the educational institutions in the outside world charge money for everything. But, we are not collecting any money from our students towards fees. Education in the Sathya Sai institutions is totally free from K.G. to P.G. In fact, Education, Medical and Water Supply projects undertaken by the Sathya Sai Organisation are not revenue earning departments. On the other hand, we ourselves are incurring huge expenditure on students' education. Also, we are helping a number of destitute children in so many ways by providing them material support, free education, financial help, etc. You must realise this truth. Education is your property. Education is not merely to help make a living in the world. It is not

merely for making a decent living in the material world. Even the uneducated are able to live well in the material world. Then, of what use are your degrees like M.Sc., M.A., M.B.A., etc., This is not the purpose of education. Education may help one to earn a decent living in the outside world to a certain extent. But, that is not the be-all and end-all of life. There is a higher purpose to education - providing an inner life based the five human values, namely, Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence. These human values provide a secure, real and meaningful life to us. Sathya (truth) is the basis for everything in the Universe.

The creation emerges from truth

and merges into truth,

Is there a place in the cosmos

where truth does not exist?

Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.

(Telugu poem)

God is the creator of all living beings right from a tiny ant to a mighty elephant. Nothing in this universe will move without His Divine Will. Even tiny ants that you see are born out of God's will. The same truth has been explained in Saint Tyagaraja's famous Kirtan "Cheemalo Brahmalo Siva Kesavadulalo Prema Meera Velasi Unde Birudhu Vahinchina Rama Nannu Brovara" (Oh Rama, in Your pure and unsullied form of love, You indwell in all beings from an ant to Brahma as also in Siva and Kesava. Please be my protector too). No doubt we are aware of it, but once an ant bites us, we immediately kill it. On the other hand, when Lord Brahma appears before us we offer our pranams to Him with folded hands. Though the names and forms are different, the same atma permeates all living beings. One who develops faith in this Truth will not hasten to cause any harm to any living being. 2 Every individual develops desires to satisfy himself. He always chants 'self,

self, self'. Every individual repeats 'this is my body; this is my mind; this is my head', etc. who is 'my'? When you say 'this is my body', perhaps it may be true for today or tomorrow. But, where is your body day after tomorrow? What happens to it then? You are nourishing this body with great love and care. But, this body is not yours. It is a gift of God. In fact, everything in this universe is God's gift. For instance, this is a handkerchief. From where did it come? Has it fallen from the sky? No. It has come from cotton. From cotton came the thread and the thread is woven into a cloth. Hence, there can be no thread without cotton and no cloth without thread. Thus, everything in this universe has a basis and a source. Unfortunately today we are forgetting this fundamental principle. That is the reason why we are experiencing several difficulties.

When you hear the word 'God' repeatedly, you are tempted to enquire 'where is God?' God is with you, in you, around you, behind you. In fact, "you are God!" Develop that firm faith. The same God as atma thatwa permeates all the millions of human beings in this world, nay, every living being in the world. We are witnessing millions of living beings with different names and different forms in this Universe. Though the names and forms are different, the atma tatwa in them is only one. Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanthi (truth is one, the wise say it in different ways). Gold is one, the jewels are many. When the different ornaments are melted, what remains ultimately is gold only! Hence, Oh embodiments of Love! You try to realise the source and sustenance for all objects in this universe. You consider you are different from your father and mother. Again, you treat your mother as different from your father. No, this is not correct. Both father and mother are one. You are part of them. Hence, the question of difference does not arise. A man with dual mind is half blind. You should not have a dual mind. All the education you pursue is not for you only. It is for helping your fellow human beings, fellow living beings like birds, animals and insects. Then only the education you have acquired becomes meaningful.

Whenever you come across a person whom you consider as your enemy, say "hello". You must love everyone. Never hate anybody. You might have noticed that no one hates Swami and all people love Him. You may ask Me

whether there are people who really do not deserve Swami 's love. I wish to emphasise that all people deserve Swami 's love. I love everyone. I do not hate anybody. I do not cause trouble to anyone. I do not offend anyone. Since the feeling of ekatma bhava (one atma permeating all living beings) is so strong in Me, so many people love Me. The whole world loves Me and I love all. My word, My song and My divine leelas are all dedicated to your welfare. You must therefore try to understand My real nature. You develop faith in the atma tatwa . From faith comes love. When faith and love go together thus, your desires will be fulfilled. Both faith and love are most important for a human being. All others are like passing clouds which just come and go in between. You should not attach much importance to them. In fact, faith is the reflection of love. And love is the very form of God. Hence, Love is God, Live in Love. Truth is truth for all times - past, present and future. It will never change. That is why it is said "Truth is God". We should not think that God is present somewhere in a distant place. God is not separate from us. The entire universe is an embodiment of Divinity. You should therefore constantly contemplate on that Divinity who is none other than Unity.

Recognise The One God Immanent In All

Dear Students!

You read several books. However, all those books have been written with the help of only 26 letters. There are a number of lawyers. They carry books which are very bulky in size. But, all those books contain only letters ultimately. Health, wealth, happiness and bliss - the source and sustenance for all these things is only God. Good or bad, everything is God. You cannot find bad anywhere separately. Wherever you see, it is only good. But, you are not able to realise that good. You are confused. The bad, if any, is only a manifestation due to the difference of time. Today we partake a variety of tasty dishes. But, the next day they are transformed into excreta. Today's phala (fruit) is transformed into mala (excreta) tomorrow. Divinity is present in all things - both good and bad. There is no place or object in this world where God is not present. No one can say with any authority that God is "nowhere or only here". Several names and forms are ascribed to that

Divinity and a lot of confusion is created thereby. The reason for this confusion is based on how one relates himself to God at the individual level. We should therefore try to set aside this individual relationship at least to a certain extent. It is only for this purpose that we are pursuing many types of education. The moment the individual relationship merges into a feeling of oneness with God, what remains is only Divinity everywhere.

Religions are many but goal is one.

Clothes are many but yarn is one.

Beings are many but breath is one.

(Telugu poem)

There are several jeevas (individuals) sitting here. They have different bodies, but there is only one God immanent in all the bodies. Hence, whomever you see consider him or her as God. Whomever you love, consider them as embodiments of Divinity. You are all encountering several difficulties due to deha bhranthi (identification of the self with the body) and differences in feelings. You alone are the root cause for these difficulties. Both good and bad are the products of your mind. You may learn many subjects and acquire several degrees; but consider the atma tatwa as one 2 and only one. The same Truth has been explained in the aphorisms Ekameva adwittheyam Brahma (God is one without a second) and Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanthi (truth is one; the wise say it in different ways). You must preserve this truth in your heart safely and securely. You consider someone as your enemy. No, no; this is not true. It is only a change in your attitude and love towards him that made him your enemy. There is no change in him at all. Everything in this world is reaction, reflection and resound. However, reality is only one. If you develop such an attitude, you can experience any amount of happiness. You think "Swami is always cheerful and smiling. How is it possible?" Yes. I am always smiling. The reason being I treat all people as one. The happiness of all of you is My food. Hence, you also develop that attitude. The other day, the children put up a playlet. I felt very happy on

witnessing that playlet. The children put up the show unitedly. We use the words 'I' and 'We'. From where did the word 'we' come? It has come from 'I'. Without 'I', there can be no 'we'. Thus, 'I' is the one and only one entity. It is like a vertical wooden pillar. When another piece of wood is nailed across in the middle horizontally, it becomes a cross. It means that when 'I' (ego) is broken, it becomes a cross. We must always endeavour to keep 'I' as only one. You consider all people as your brothers and sisters. These brothers and sisters are not separate entities. All are one. If you thus make an enquiry, everything in this universe represents only the principle of oneness. If you establish this truth firmly in your heart, the same feeling will reflect everywhere. Suppose you love a girl. Who is that girl anyway? Yourself only. It means you loved yourself! The girl is not separate from you. When you treat her as separate, you refer to her as 'wife'. On the other hand, when you treat her as one with you, you become one. You realise this unity. What could be the reason for such great diversity in the living beings in the world? They are a manifestation of the divine principle Ekoham bahusyam (the one Divinity manifested as many).

Embodiments of Love! Dear students!

You must all become ideal men and women. It is only when you lead an ideal life, the whole society will become ideal. Do not entertain any differences of those people and these people. **All are one; be alike to everyone.** This you must remember always. Then only can you become ideal students. Otherwise, you remain merely as educated people. Who is an educated person in the real sense? One who has realised that all are one. Education implies only learning. On the other hand, Vidya is one that symbolises oneness. Vidya spreads the light of oneness with God. If you lose this enlightenment, you have to live in darkness.

Embodiments of Love!

Let your love be diverted towards God and it will confer bliss upon you. If you direct it towards worldly 2 objects and persons, it is likely to change every now and then. Whomsoever you come across, develop the feeling that they

are all your brothers and sisters. Once a gentleman was addressing a meeting. He started his speech with the address "Dear brothers and sisters". But, he made an exception in the case of only one lady. Someone enquired why? He replied that the lady was his wife. Strictly speaking, no exception need be made since he addressed all people as brothers and sisters. But, once he married her, she became his wife. If there is no marital relationship between them, all are one. I exhort you once again to lead your lives with a feeling of oneness and a sense of sharing.

Arjuna among the Pandava brothers won Droupadi in the swayamvara . When Pandavas returned along with Droupadi and told their mother that they brought home a fruit, instantaneously mother Kunthi advised them to share it equally among the five of them without being aware of the fact that they were referring to Droupadi. Accordingly, she became the chaste wife of the five Pandavas. Even Lord Krishna testified to her chastity thus: Droupadi dutifully obeyed the command of her husbands. She would never say to any one of them that she had no time to serve him. She was satisfied with whatever she got in life. She was the supreme example of chastity and none could match her in this respect. (Telugu poem)

The Pandavas shared and cared for each other and led a life of discipline and control.

Students Only Can Transform The Society

I am quite well. No one need worry about My health; not only My body, everything is all right. My mind does not waver. I have a steady and ever alert mind. The body may undergo some changes; but I am always My own Divine Self. People enquire, "Swami, You are always smiling! Did you not ever encounter sorrow?" No. Not at all Sorrow is nowhere near Me. Whatever has to happen will happen. If you go on worrying about it, will it be warded off? That will lead to much more worry. Hence, one should not give scope for worry at all. Once your mind starts worrying, it will never end. You worry, "Examinations are nearing; Oh God! How do I prepare myself" What is all this worry about? Why do you fear to write answers for those questions which you

already know? Surely you will fare well in the examinations. Do not develop any fear of examinations.

No one can measure the distance of the sky from the earth. That is the reason why it is said that the sky is blue. Similarly, none can describe the form of Divinity. In order to portray God, artists started using the colour of blue. In fact, God has no colour at all. If God were to be born with a blue colour, He would have been put in an exhibition as an object of wonder. Divinity cannot be changed. You may change; 2 but your Atma will never undergo any change. It is Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathanam, Nikethanam, Nithya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta, Nirmala Swarupinam (God is attributeless, unsullied, final abode, eternal, pure, enlightened, free and embodiment of sacredness). That is why it is said Buddhi grahya matheendriyam (the atma is beyond the ken of the senses and can be understood only by the intellect).

You earn a name for yourselves as good boys. Bring honour to your parents. Also, let the society be proud of you. If the society is to be transformed into a good society, it can happen only through the students. Today wherever our students be, the people say they are very good. I am getting the news. You try to live up to that name. I don't aspire for anything else. I will give you whatever you want. In fact, I have given Myself to you. May you all be happy! Do not quarrel with anybody. Do not abuse anyone. May you all live like brothers and sisters! That is the fruit of education. That is real education. In spite of his education and intelligence, a mean-minded person will not give up his evil qualities.

You must always conduct yourselves as good boys. First and foremost, make your parents happy. If you cannot make your parents who brought you up happy, how can you make Me happy? Hence, you all go to your homes and live happily with your parents. Then, I will also be happy. When people praise you that so and so is a student of Sri Sathya Sai University, it is a matter of pride to you as well as to the Institution.

The University Grants Commission in New Delhi did not recognise several educational institutions in the country for a long time, whereas the Sri Sathya

Sai Institute of Higher Learning was conferred the status of a Deemed University within the second year of its inception. Dr. Madhuri Shah was the Chairperson of the University Grants Commission then. She visited Puttaparthi then and put forward a proposal to make our Institute into a Deemed University. Several objections were raised to her proposal on the ground that it was still a nascent Institute in its second year and it would not be proper to confer the status of a University on it in such a short time. Dr. Bhagavantham was with us at that time translating My speech. He confidently said "this is impossible; impossible". I told him very emphatically that it was possible. The U.G.C. committee visited our Institution thereafter in the second year itself and unanimously recommended to confer the status of a Deemed University on Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. As per the committee's own admission, "This is the first college" to be conferred a Deemed University status within the second year of its starting. Later, Dr. Madhuri Shah came here to formally inaugurate the Deemed University. She openly said in a meeting "Dr. Bhagavantham, you said it is impossible to make it into a University in such a short time. How has it been possible now?" The Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, a Deemed University, has since been made into a full-fledged University with the combined efforts of all people.

All our students are men of noble character. They are well behaved and well educated. You may not perhaps know how famous is our Sri Sathya Sai University all over the world, especially in the United States of America. There are about 180 past students now working in America in different fields. Recently, they all came here in a group. They prayed to Swami , "Swami, we do not wish to go to our homes here. We will go back direct to America from here, after this visit." Such was their love and dedication to Swami and Sri Sathya Sai University.

Vairagya does not mean giving up your wife and children and running away to a forest. The removal of the bad qualities in you is the true meaning of vairagya. If you really want to get rid of the bad qualities in you, you must

make an effort.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

21. Love Is God; Live In Love

Date: 15 December 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam

Embodiments of Love!

PEOPLE think there are many troubles, difficulties and sorrows in this world whereby they are filled with anxiety and worries. But in fact there is nothing like this; it is bliss everywhere.

Brahmanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam (Atma is the embodiment of divine bliss, wisdom absolute, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the mahavakya tat twam asi , one without a second, eternal, pure, unchanging, witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three attributes of satwa, rajas and tama s).2

God And You Are One

The world is the creation of God. Right from man all living beings including animals, birds and even insects are the creation of God. As they are the creation of God, all of them have their origin in bliss. All these difficulties and troubles are only the imagination of man. Pleasure is an interval between two pains. There cannot be happiness without difficulties. These difficulties are meant to give you happiness, and not to make you miserable with more sorrows. Hence, whatever comes to us, we should consider it as God's gift and be happy. We should not consider that it has been given to us to make us suffer. Suppose you have pain in the stomach. What will the doctor do? If he performs an operation, it is not for causing pain to you. The pain that the doctor causes is to remove your suffering. Hence, one should bear difficulties and overcome his sorrows.

There are millions of living beings in this world. All of them have originated

from God. Therefore, the same God is present in all of them. People give many names to God as Rama, Allah, Jesus, etc., but God is only one. Atma is another name of God; it is the same in everyone. The real name of atma is love. Love is only one, but it is present everywhere and can alleviate all sufferings. One who is endowed with love is free from all sufferings. All of you have come from such a distant place like America. What for? You have come because you have love for Me (loud applause).

You can attain anything if you have love. God has no specific name. He is present in man in the form of atma . What does atma mean? It means love only. It is love that unites all. If you imbibe this principle of unity, then all will become one. When you attain this unity, you will have purity. When you have purity, then atma tatwa (principle of the Self) will manifest in you. Therefore, you must have unity to attain divinity. I and you are one. God and you are one. God is not anywhere separate from you. You should develop the feeling that you yourself are God. When you say, 'I', it represents unity. You cannot estimate the bliss that is derived from unity. All are one. It is the fickle mind that is unsteady and wanders arbitrarily.

Only one thing is steady. That is love, love, love. Love is God. Live in love. This is what we have to learn today. Same love is present in everyone. Mother loves her children due to this feeling of love. All are the children of God. Therefore, God loves all. He has no hatred. He is not the cause for your pain and suffering. God is not separate from you. Wherever you may be, God is present there. God does not forsake you. There is no place where there is no God. Wherever you see, God is present there. (Swami pointed to different things and said) This is God. This is God. You are all the embodiments of God. You have two eyes but you can see a large number of people with them. Similarly, God is one, but He can see all. Where is God? He is in you, with you, above you and below you. There is no need 2 to search for Him. It is because our vision is limited to physical level, that we see differences. We should not rely on the physical body. Body is like a water bubble; mind is like a mad monkey. In one moment the mind is here and in the next moment it flies away to another place. Manas, buddhi, chitta, ahamkara (mind, intellect, mind-stuff, ego) - all these are temporary like passing clouds. Only one thing is

permanent. That is you. Where is God? You should develop the feeling that you are God. This is the correct answer to the question, where is God. You may perform any number of spiritual practices like bhajans, japa and tapa, but love should form the undercurrent of all these practices. In fact, if you have love, there is no need to perform any spiritual practices. There is no use of performing all spiritual practices, if you do not have love. Fill your mind with love. "Prema mudita manase kaho Rama Rama Ramâ" (recite the Name of Rama with your heart full of love). Hence, give highest importance to love. Love is important. Love is God. Live in love. This is the spiritual practice that we have to undertake. Worldly relations are temporary. They are impermanent like passing clouds which come and go. They are your mental reaction, reflection and resound.

(Swami showing His handkerchief) What is this? This is a cloth. It is not merely a cloth, it is a combination of threads, it is not thread even, it is cotton, which is the creation of God. Everything has emerged from God like threads. You weave the threads as per your liking. But it is not your liking that is important; what is important is what God likes. There can be changes in the body and the mind. But love is changeless. It is permanent. Everything has birth and death but there is no birth or death for love. The birthless and deathless love is only one. It comes from truth. Truth is one. Truth is God. This God in the form of love is present everywhere, wherever you see.

Treasure Love In Your Heart

God is present in man in his breath. When you breathe, where does the breath come from? It comes from within. The breath itself is your God. What is its form? It is present in man in the form of Soham , which reveals your divine identity. 'So ' means 'that', 'Ham ' means 'I'. Therefore 'Soham ', means 'that I am'. 'That' refers to God who is present in man in the form of love. Therefore, man should treasure love in his heart safely. Other thoughts come and go like passing clouds. Only love is permanent and eternal. You should perform every task with love. Even if you come across your enemy, you should love and greet him saying, 'Hello, Hello'. Then he will also respond saying 'Hello, Hello' to you. This is the reaction, reflection, resound of your

feelings. Whatever good or bad you experience is the result of your own actions. Everything comes from within you. Hence, you should always remain immersed in love. If you have love, you can achieve anything and perform any task. It is love that is responsible for the entire creation and its functioning in this world. There is no greater God than love. Love is God. Whatever you do without love is a futile exercise. Hence treasure love in your heart. Everybody will be attracted towards this love. It bestows everything on you. It is love that creates, sustains and destroys. When you look at the world with your physical eyes, you see diversity in creation. But, in fact, everything is love. It does not change. You should be filled with such love. If you follow this principle of love, it will give you the fruit of all the spiritual practices.

People call God by many names such Rama, Krishna, Jesus, Allah, etc. But all names refer to the same God. If you call Him Allah, He responds. Similarly, if you call Him Jesus, or Zoroaster, or Rama, He will respond. All these names have been given by man. God is not born with these names. Original name of God is only love. You may refer to any dictionary; love is only one and not two. Man may have many physical relationships. You may consider someone as your husband, someone as your son and someone as your daughter. They are all physical and worldly relations. Who has established these relationships? It is you only. Since these are relationships acquired by you, they are subject to change. But love remains the same. With such love you may chant any name such as Rama, Krishna, Govinda, Narayana, Jesus or Allah. All these names refer to the same divinity. You may grind rice and prepare various dishes such as Dosa , Idli , etc. You may mix rice with sugar and prepare payasam (sweet pudding). But rice is the same in all these dishes. In the same way, only one God is present in the entire creation, and that is love. You should perform each and every task with love.

We call others as 'brothers and sisters'. At physical level they are separate. These relationships are of your own making. But never observe diversity. Brothers, sisters and all other relationships are one. You see an old man or a child, both are essentially divine. God is beyond all ages and all forms. Only love is His true form. The same love is present in all forms that you see. Hence everyone of you should develop love. You may call God as Rama,

Krishna or Sai. But it is only a difference in names. God is only one (loud applause). Love everyone wholeheartedly. Then only can you experience bliss. So long as you have love, you will not be devoid of bliss.

People today observe individual differences. There are three aspects of an individual. 1. The one you think you are. 2. The one others think you are, 3. The one you really are. At physical level you may be identified with your name, form and village. But in reality, you are only one. This is what you should realise. Recognise the unity of entire creation. Your worldly relations will also have some value when you recognise this unity. You may add any number of zeros with one, the value will go on increasing. If you remove one, there is no 2 value. In the same manner, you may chant any name realising the oneness of God. Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanthi (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names). The vedas authenticate the same truth. With love in your heart, you may go to any country, chant any name, perform any spiritual practice. Do not hate anybody. Help Ever, Hurt Never. This is what the devotees are supposed to do (loud applause). When you call yourself a devotee, you should not observe any differences "You are not mine, he is mine". This is not good. It amounts to hating God. You should think "God is in me, with me, around me, above me and below me". Wherever you see, the same God is present there. Develop this feeling of oneness. Then you will attain highest bliss.

You have come from different countries and you have different names and forms. But having come here, you are all one (loud applause). From today onwards, may you always remain in bliss for ever and ever. People say, "Today is my birthday." What is the meaning of birthday? It is the day of the birth of the body. Today it is born, tomorrow it may die. But you are eternal. You have no birth, no death. Be always happy. This is what I desire. Do not allow the differences of mine and thine come near you. All of you have sung the glories of the Lord in one voice. This unity is divinity. Where there is lack of unity, there is diversity. Hence develop unity. Where there is unity, there is purity. It is purity that attracts God. The white dress that you have put on symbolises purity. Differences are seen when you put on dresses of different colours. You should not give room to differences. Not only in dress, you

should observe unity and purity in your mind, feelings and thoughts. All are one. On returning to your respective places, lead your lives with unity, love and bliss. Your bhajan has made Me happy.

Consider bhajan as your bhojan (food) which satiates your spiritual hunger. You should partake the food of bhajan every moment, day in and day out. Right from the morning till night, you should constantly do bhajan in your entire waking time. This is Swami's teaching to you. Perform all your tasks, while contemplating on the name of God within you. God is within you, without you, beyond you, below you and behind you. Very happy.

Whatever God does, it is always for our own good. All His actions are intended for our good. It is necessary for us to recognise this truth and conduct ourselves accordingly. Young students, both boys and girls, should be prepared to enter the society and do the right kind of service. In the very first instance, you must try and understand the sacred nature of your country. As soon as one is born, one recognises his father and mother. So also, we should regard the dharma or righteousness and sacredness of our country. We should regard the history and culture of our country as our father and mother... Truly, one's motherland is more important than even the parents who gave birth to you. Students should recognise that the body is only a reflection of the country. The society is in a very degraded state. The sacredness of our culture is becoming tarnished. Students should come forward to revitalise the sacredness of the country.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

22. Anything In Life Can Be Achieved With Faith In God

Date: 26 December 2007 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Christmas

A man with anger cannot achieve anything

He commits mistakes and indulges in sinful deeds

He is despised by everyone

Love is God and God is love

Devoid of love, humans cannot exist.

(Telugu poem)

IT is lack of love that is responsible for all the differences, arguments and conflicts in the world, especially in the present times. Many people say that the world is afflicted today with sorrow, losses and difficulties. I do not subscribe to this view. I tell you, they are all our illusion only. In fact, there is no unrest or sorrow in this world. I just see peace, peace and peace only everywhere. When there is peace in our heart, we will be able to witness peace all round. Unrest, sorrow, anger, etc., are the reaction, reflection and resound of the state of our inner being. Sorrows and difficulties, anger and unrest are of our own making and creation. They are not natural phenomena in the world.

Brahman Is Our Real Name

When someone enquires your name, you give some name. (Swami at this point enquired the name of one student sitting in front of Him. The boy replied "Vikas"). In fact, that is not his real name. Similarly, you enquire from each one and they give different names. However, if God were to mention His name, He will say Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman). In fact, all of us should

repeat the same name since we are all embodiments of Divine Self. All our names are given to us by our parents. We are not born with any particular name. Those who cannot realise this truth cannot lead a happy life.

Embodiments of Love!

Actually love is another name of Brahman . In fact, love, atma, prema, aham or brahman - all these names carry the same meaning. There is nothing in this world except love. But, unfortunately we are not able to understand what love is. We consider Love as relating to the world. We consider it to be physical. In fact, it does not at all relate to the physical realm. It is truth, verily. "You are not one person, but three - the one you think you are; the one others think you are and the one you really are. "What others think is all imagination. The Self within you is the only truth. Who is this Self? That is "I". This "I" is the same in all. The Christians worship the Cross (â). The cross is a symbol exhorting people to get rid of ego. No one is different from you. Hence, you must always bear the truth that all are one (I). Those that are born out of karma , grow and perish ultimately (namely the physical bodies) are unreal. Hence, you are always Brahman in accordance with the Vedic declaration Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahma). It is only when you consider yourself to be Brahman that you can realise this truth. Till then, you will be confined to the different names like Ramanna, Krishnananna, etc., that have been given to you by your parents for the purpose of identification. Surely, you did not come into this world with any name. When someone enquires from the parents about the name of their newly born child, they may reply that no name has been given to the child yet. It is thus clear that all the names given to us are by someone only and not innate. They are for the purpose of identification of the concerned individuals. There are millions and millions of people inhabiting this world, but none seems to have realised the truth that they are God. Unfortunately, today we are leading our lives with names given to us by someone.

What is Brahman ? "I". Brahman is neither born nor has it 'death'. That is the only truth, other events come and go. For example, I have Willed to create this chain (Swami with His Divine hand created a gold chain).

This has been created by My Divine will. It was not there earlier. Thus, all things and beings in this world are born out of sankalpa (will). Hence Divine sankalpa is the cause for all creation. In addition, the maya also plays its role. When Maya and Truth come together, creation takes place. Without maya , there can be no creation. The maya is like a shadow to a human being. But, this shadow deludes us. At sunrise, our shadow is long. As the sun gradually rises, the shadow falls under our feet at mid-day. Thus, the shadow grows and shrinks. We should not therefore mistake the shadow as our basis.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is the foremost quality of a human being. And faith is the basis for that love. The spelling of the world love is LOVE. Here 'L' stands for 'Lord'. Thus, Love is born out of the Lord (God). The entire creation is a manifestation of God's love, be it a tiny ant or a mighty elephant. Everything is the creation of God.

Not even a blade of grass will move without divine Will,

People who do not realise this truth, get carried away by their pride of intelligence and discrimination.

But no one, however great may be, knows what lies ahead for them in future.

(Telugu poem)

God Is The Source And Cause For Everything

How did this blade of grass come into existence? It is nothing but God's will! Similarly, every human being is born out of Divine will only. There can be no creation without God. When you look at the earth during summer it looks parched. But, with the onset of rainy season, the earth looks green with various plants. From where did they come? From the rain. The rain came from the clouds. The clouds are caused by the sun. And, the sun itself originated from God. Thus, the entire creation has its origin in God. There can be no air,

sun, rain or plants without God. Knowing this truth, we still tend to forget God. On the other hand, we remember everything else. This is not correct. You should never forget God. If you forget God, it amounts to forgetting everything. For, God is the source and cause for everything. Unfortunately today, we are forgetting the fundamentals or root cause for the entire Universe. If there is no foundation, there can be no walls. If there are no walls, there can be no roof. You cannot live in a house that has no roof. Hence, first and foremost the foundation is very important. Based on the foundation, the pillars are raised and finally the roof is laid. Based on this analogy, self-confidence is the foundation, self-satisfaction is the wall, self-sacrifice is the roof and finally self-realisation is life. Thus, there should be a foundation for everything. That is fundamental truth. We are forgetting this fundamental truth.

Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary. When Mary was carrying him in her womb, Joseph and Mary were required to travel to Bethlehem to take part in a census ordered by the Roman Emperor. They had to travel all the way riding on a donkey. It was an arduous journey. When they finally reached Bethlehem, it was night. There was no place for them to rest and they were tired. Joseph searched and searched for a resting place, but could not find any. Finally, he went to a cattle shed and knocked at the door. He explained to the inn keeper that Mary was about to give birth to a child. The inn keeper reluctantly gave them a place in a corner to spend the night. The same night, Mary gave birth to a baby boy. A makeshift bed was arranged for the newly born child with some old clothes and dry leaves.

The boy was named Jesus. He was happily growing under the loving care of mother Mary. When he grew up as a boy, Joseph and Mary had to travel to Jerusalem to participate in a festival. Jesus got lost in the crowd and could not be traced inspite of an intensive search. The parents were very worried. At last, Jesus returned to his parents. When enquired where he had gone, he replied that he went to hear the discourse of a priest in a nearby temple. The priest had taught him "You alone are the truth; remember this." Constantly contemplating on this teaching, Jesus thereafter wandered and wandered alone for a long time and later came near a river, where some boatmen were

sitting. The first among them seen by Jesus was Peter. Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Peter. He is my father" (pointing to an old man sitting nearby). The old man was making fishing nets. Jesus made friendship with Peter. Peter complained to Jesus, "We went in search of fish for the whole of yesterday, but could not find even one." Jesus then told him, "You go to such and such place. You will find fish in plenty." Jesus also accompanied the boatmen in this exercise. As foretold by Jesus, they could catch plenty of fish. The boatmen wondered, "How great Jesus is! He knows everything." From then on, they treated Jesus as their preceptor.

Though he was young in age and form, he was old enough in wisdom. Hence, all of them were meticulously following his words. The entire community of fishermen there treated Jesus as their Master, with great reverence. Even great Masters appear to be ordinary human beings in the first instance. As they gradually reveal themselves, people will realise their true nature and flock round them in large numbers. Same was the case with Jesus. The fishermen could become rich with a bounty of fish, with the help and guidance of Jesus. As they became rich, jealousy grew among the others. They vied with each other in seeking his help and guidance. Some people, however, became jealous of Jesus' popularity and considered him as their enemy. They reported to the chief priest that Jesus had no miraculous powers and that he was deceiving people. Jesus was summoned and questioned, "How did you acquire these powers?" Jesus replied, "All this is Divine Will". Jesus was moving about with his disciples preaching his doctrine of love and moral principles. Jesus was questioned, "Who are you?" He replied, "I am Jesus." Vexed with the attitude and teachings of Jesus, a death sentence was passed against him. He was to be crucified. The Governor, a kind-hearted person, however, did not want Jesus to be awarded a death sentence. He lamented that Jesus was a great and noble man and he was being crucified for no fault of his. He told Jesus, "You are a great man. These stone-hearted people are trying to kill you without any reason." Jesus replied "I am happy that at least you have realised that I am a good person." Finally, at the time of his crucifixion, his mother Mary came near him and started shedding tears. Jesus consoled her saying, "Why do you cry, mother? The body is like a water bubble. Let them do whatever they wish with this body. You think these

people are trying to kill me. I have no death. None can kill me." Mary then told him, "Are you not the son of this body?" Jesus replied, "Of course! I am related to you at the physical level, as a son. But, 'I am I' only. You are all like children to me. You are all embodiments of Divinity." Thus, Jesus attained the highest level of spirituality, having gone through all tests. Jesus was not merely a human form. He was the Embodiment of Divine Self, verily. But, some people could not realise his Divinity, as at present. Even now some people only have faith in Divinity while others do not have. Some extol Divinity, whereas some others criticise Divinity. All depends upon their faith. If you consider a stone as God, it becomes God automatically. Jesus underwent several trials and tribulations during his time. He became the Saviour and Messiah of the poor and forlorn. He helped them in many ways. Once while he was crossing the desert, a poor woman approached him begging for food. He gave her bread saying, "Take this." When someone enquired where bread came from, Jesus replied that it was Divine will. There is nothing greater than Divine Will. Everything is God's will. The foremost duty of a human being is to realise the will of God and submit himself to that Divine will. Those who developed faith in the will of God were protected, while others were not. Hence, faith is the basis for everything. People today are blind, having lost their both eyes of faith. Faith is the basis for all creation. Where there is faith and love, everything else will be added unto such a person. Hence, first and foremost, one has to develop faith. Many people have faith, but they lack love. Faith devoid of love has no use. Love and faith must be together like mutually attractive magnetic poles.

Preserve Your Faith

Embodiments of Love!

First and foremost, develop faith. There can be no life without faith. Sometimes faith is also termed 'Self'. Without Self, you cannot help others. Only when there is faith can you achieve anything in life. Even now, there are several people who have progressed in life with firm faith in Jesus. Some people develop faith when their desires are fulfilled. If their desires are not fulfilled, they lose faith. This type of attitude is not good. Keep your faith firm,

irrespective of whether your desires are fulfilled. Preserve your faith carefully. Faith can work wonders. It can make a blind person see; a dumb speak. Do not at all doubt the power of faith. Some incidents happening in this world may shake your faith in God. But, if you hold on to your faith firmly you can boldly face any situation. Even now some people consider this body (referring to Himself) as an ordinary man. If that were to be so, how could all these superhuman tasks be achieved? No, no; it is a mistake to think so. 'This' body may appear to be a mere physical entity to you. It is the fault of your own vision; not Mine. There is something wrong in your perception. It is a mistake of your vision, not Mine. Hence, correct your vision, develop right perception. If you are alright, I will be alright (loud applause). You are all in Me. This is the fundamental truth.

I am getting some things done, making you as My instruments. For, I require some instruments to carry on My mission. Hence, I am moulding you as those instruments (loud applause). By imparting education, knowledge and wisdom, I am developing you all as My instruments. Hence, may you all lead purposeful lives with firm faith in God! You think that education and academic degrees have helped you to come up in life. This view is not at all correct. How many educated people are there in this world? Of what use are they to the world? In fact, the world is not benefited by the educated class. More harm is done to the world than good, by such people. More than education, the spiritual life will protect a person in every way. Devoid of spiritual outlook, all your education and academic degrees are a mere waste. Their value is zero. Hence, fill your lives with devotion to God and develop the outlook "I am not this body. This is a vesture taken upon by Me. There is God inside who is conducting my life." God is "in you, with you, around you, above you, below you" (loud applause). Develop full faith in Divinity. Then you can achieve anything in life.

Dear students!

You are like fully ripened fruits. But, the fruits must contain sweet juice. Without that sweet juice, it cannot be a fruit. You must all have the sweet juice of love. If there is no sweet juice, people will just bite the fruit and throw

it away. Hence, fill your hearts with the sweet juice of love. Whatever be the name and form, develop faith in God. God has many names; but God is only one. The ornaments may be many, but gold is one. Do not lose sight of the gold. Without gold, you can not make ornaments. Develop faith as your foremost quality, irrespective of whether it brings you the desired results. Add love to that faith. "I am you and you are Me; I and you are one" (loud applause). Ekoham bahusyam (the One willed to become many). Whoever realises that oneness, achieves total bliss. Every student should develop faith in God. I am sure that students have joined this Institution not merely for acquiring education and academic degrees. They came here to learn Swami's teachings. If you follow the teachings with firm faith in Swami, you will achieve success in all your endeavours. You should have faith in Swami's teachings; love them, adore them and follow them. (Bhagawan sang the bhajan "Hari bhajan bina sukha santhi nahi â" and continued His discourse.)

When you do bhajan , you experience peace and happiness. Hence constantly do namasmarana in your heart. You may not be able to do japa, dhyana or yoga ; but do namasmarana . There is no easier path than namasmarana to be in communion with God. Children, adults or elderly people - all can do it. Hence, continue to do namasmarana throughout your life. You may study and acquire degrees; but do bhajan also. Do not consider Jesus as an ordinary mortal. See God in Him. You often refer to someone and say "He is a man" or "she is a lady". No, no. This is not the correct way of identification. Gents or ladies - "all are one; be alike to everyone." Lord Krishna in the Bhagawad Gita declared, Mamaivamso jeevaloke jeevabhuta sanathanah (the eternal atma in all beings is a part of My Being). You are all parts of Me. I and you are one. You are not different from Me. I am in you, with you, above you, below you and around you. Develop that spirit of oneness and lead your life. I hope I have made Myself clear. The moment you go to your places, do not think that Swami is there, while I am here. Always develop the feeling "He is with me, in me, around me, above me and below me." All are one (loud applause).

Truly, the essence of the right type of education is that it should give you

the ability to stand on your own legs. Good education is to enable you to get rid of servitude in all aspects. The very object of correct education should be to enable you to have a vision of your divine self. When man loses his ability to sacrifice and his ability to conduct himself in a selfless manner, the education he receives will become utterly useless. So long as we depend only on economic prosperity, this will be our fate. What cannot be achieved through work, what cannot be achieved through wealth, can be achieved through sacrifice.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba