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1. Your true nature is Bliss - realise it

Date: 14 January 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Sankranthi

The sun appears serene and peaceful.
The days have become shorter.
The sweet festival of Sankranti has come,
filling our homes with the newly harvested grain.
(Telugu poem)

Sankranti is the most important of all festivals. Practically, every day is a festival day for humanity. But people, out of their ignorance, have earmarked a few days as festival days and the rest as ordinary days. Many celebrate this festival without actually knowing its significance. On this day, in this part of the world, people pay their respects to cows and bulls. Bulls are decorated daintily with a variety of ornaments and clothes and taken round the streets. They are called gangireddhulu (sacred bulls). Not merely this, a symbolic marriage is performed between the cows and bulls. The person who takes round the decorated bull is called gangireddudasu. He wears a special dress on this occasion. The very sight of gangireddudasu fascinates children. The elder brother lovingly calls the younger brother to go along with him to see the sacred bull and its master.

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 the richly caparisoned sacred cow and bull and performs their marriage.
Let us see the marriage ceremony and offer our gifts
(Telugu poem)

He brings with him a cow and a bull and calls them Sita and Rama respectively. They are trained in such a way that they respond to his questions according to the movement of the stick in his hand. He asks the cow, "Oh Sita! Do you like Rama?" As per the training given, the cow shakes its head in disapproval. Then he asks the bull, "Oh Rama! Do you like Sita?" The bull also answers in the negative. In this manner, both of them disapprove initially and later on agree for the marriage. Then the gangireddudasu. performs the symbolic marriage of Sita and Rama.

The festival of Sankranti bestows immense joy on even animals and birds. It is a very important festival for farmers. This is the day he brings home the newly harvested crop and enjoys the fruits of his hard labour. Thus, right from a farmer to the king, everyone celebrates this festival joyfully. Names may vary, but this festival is celebrated by one and all irrespective of religion and nationality. It marks the beginning of the sacred time of uttarayana (sun's movement toward the north). It confers bliss on one and all.

Everyone aspires to attain bliss. In fact, that is the very purpose of human life. Life has no meaning if one cannot experience bliss. Bliss is your goal.

Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam, Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam

God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute, the One without a second, beyond the pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the mahavakya Tattwamasi, the eternal, pure, unchanging, the witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three gunas of sattwa, rajas, and thamas (qualities of purity, passion, and inertia).

In accordance with the tradition, the newly married sons-in-law visit their in-laws' house to celebrate this festival.

As Sankranti is the festival of festivals, Oh newly married bridegroom,
visit your in-laws' house, Come, spend your time in fun and frolic
with your brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law,
The entire household and neighbourhood will welcome you with love and
affection.
(Telugu song)

Even those who have not visited their in-laws' house for a number of years will be eager to go for Sankranti festival. The in-laws extend all hospitality to the son-in-law and make efforts to please him. They even go to the extent of borrowing money in order to give him new clothes and serve him delicious food. The entire household spends their time blissfully. But, today that spirit of Sankranti celebrations is not noticed anywhere. The son-in-law instead of giving joy to his in-laws, quarrels over petty matters with them.

Sankranti confers joy on human beings, birds, and animals alike. Not only Bharatiyas (Indians), even the people of other countries celebrate this festival, but with different names. This is the season when cool winds blow and the farmer brings home the harvested crop. He spends his time in a relaxed manner free from all worries and anxieties. There is a saying in Telugu: "One who is free from chintha (worry) will be able to sleep peacefully even in a santha (market place)."

Everyone should make efforts to overcome worries and enjoy everlasting happiness. This is the message of Sankranti. People may interpret it in their own way, but few understand its true significance. Amongst the variety of festivals, the womenfolk accord a special place to this festival. The happiness that one enjoys during this season is unique.

Man makes varied efforts to experience happiness. You can find few in this world who do not want to be happy. But one must understand that happiness cannot be acquired from outside. It originates from the heart. Heart is the source of bliss. The happiness we enjoy in the external world is only a reaction, reflection, and resound of the happiness within. Very few are to understand this truth. The apparent joy that one experiences today is artificial and temporary. Only the happiness that springs from the heart is permanent.

Students!

Behave so as not to cause hindrance to anyone. Festivals are meant to experience happiness and share it with others. Happiness cannot be purchased in a market, nor can it be acquired by worldly means. It should manifest from within. It is not the nature of Bharatiyas (Indians) to hurt the feelings of others for their own pleasure. One should respect others' feelings and act appropriately. One should share one's happiness with one's fellow people. Welcome the arrival of the bounteous month of Pushya and celebrate Sankranti in the true spirit by manifesting your inner joy and sharing it with others. The word kranti means change. It signifies a change from misery to happiness, from restlessness to peace, and from pain to pleasure. Sankranti bestows joy on everyone equally. That is why everyone eagerly awaits the arrival of Sankranti with enthusiasm. Even birds and animals are happy with the arrival of Sankranti. When the farmer brings home the harvested grain, birds partake of them and express their joy by chirping merrily. The neighbours congratulate the farmer for the rich harvest he reaped as a result of his hard labour.

Students!

It is most essential that you understand the significance of every festival and celebrate them in the true spirit. If we do not go deep into their significance, we are unable to enjoy true happiness. One should be prepared to sacrifice one's body to have the experience of eternal bliss. Body is a combination of five elements, and the mind is merely a bundle of thoughts. One should neither be attached to the body nor follow the vagaries of the mind. Drive

away the evil qualities of kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, and matsarya (desire, anger, greed, infatuation, pride, and jealousy) and manifest your inner peace and bliss. Instead of developing peace and bliss, man is destroying them. He is giving scope to unrest even in trivial matters. Neither asanthi (unrest) nor prasanthi (supreme peace) are acquired from outside. People say, "I want peace." Where is peace? Is it present outside? If peace were to be found outside, people would have bought it by spending any amount of money. But outside, we find only pieces! The real peace is within.

Whether you boil it hard or dilute it with water, milk remains white. White symbolises purity. In the constant manner of milk, your heart should always remain pure, bright, and peaceful in spite of trials and tribulations. Subdue sorrow, keep the evil qualities of anger, hatred, and jealousy under check, and manifest your innate bliss. When your desires are not fulfilled, you become angry. Hence, desires are the root cause of anger, and they should be controlled in the first instance.

Embodiments of Love!

Everlasting bliss is the goal of everyone. You should derive happiness even from what seem to be troubles. One need not search for happiness elsewhere. It is always with you and in you. You are unable to experience it because you have not understood the true meaning of happiness. You are under the illusion that happiness lies in money, wealth, and material comforts. Once you have the taste of true happiness, you will not crave for worldly possessions. True happiness springs forth from the depths of one's heart.

When milk is boiled in a vessel, its level starts rising gradually. The milk level subsides when you sprinkle a few drops of water over it. It is because of its association with water that milk loses its value. Likewise, man loses his value when he associates himself with bad company. One will always be blissful if one is in good company. Before making friendship with an individual, enquire into their character.

You may or may not be aware: I am always in a state of bliss. I have no worries or difficulties whatsoever. Some people ask, "Swami, do you have any worries?" I do not know what worry is. I have never experienced it. I am always blissful. You should always think of bliss. Then you will see bliss everywhere. The experience of bliss is sweeter than sugar, tastier than curd, sweeter indeed than honey. People feel sad when they are faced with difficulties and at the bereavement of their near and dear ones. But at no point of time do I feel sorry about such happenings. They come and go like passing clouds. Happiness and sorrow follow one another. When you contemplate on bliss, there will be no scope for sorrow.

Embodiments of Love!

There is love in each one of you, but you are directing it on worldly relationships. You have not tasted true love. Love God wholeheartedly. That is true love. People may come and go, but God neither comes nor goes. He is always present. When you are engulfed in sorrow, think of happiness. You will certainly experience happiness.

Bliss is very much immanent in the human being. Wherever we are, whatever be the position we occupy, our essential nature is bliss. People ask Me sometimes, "Swami! did You ever experience sorrow?" I am amused at this question. In fact, why should I experience sorrow? Should I feel sorry about the body? Not necessary. This body is always healthy and active. The nature of the human mind is fickle. The body is like a water bubble; mind is like a mad monkey. Don't follow the mind; don't rely on the body, since it is like a water bubble. After all, why should one feel sorry about the body and mind, which are transient? In fact, bliss is our essential nature which is permanent.

Embodiments of Love!

Cultivate love that will help you to experience bliss. "Start the day with Love; fill the day with Love; end the day with Love - that is the way to God." If you can achieve this, you will not be disturbed by sorrows and difficulties. The heart is the seat of bliss. True bliss flows from a pure and loving heart. Try to

experience such bliss. All other forms of happiness are momentary.

Embodiments of Love!

Children are always happy and cheerful. They do not have any inhibitions. When somebody smiles at them, they also smile innocently. They experience bliss that is the inherent nature of all human beings.

There is a difference between happiness and bliss. In common parlance, "happiness" is momentary. It comes and goes. Bliss is something that wells up from within. It emerges from the heart, as a result of one's union with God. If one feels separate from God, one cannot experience bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

You have to experience such bliss in abundance in the days to come. Let me remind you once again that neither age nor position nor for that matter anything in this physical environment can bring about such bliss. It is only a pure and loving heart that is the source of bliss. The holy festival of Sankranti signifies change or transformation of the heart. It is experiencing bliss arising out of the realisation of the changeless, Eternal Principle. Divinity is the only principle that is changeless. God is ever blissful. In fact, He is the Embodiment of bliss.

For example, this is a white cloth. Only when this cloth is dipped in or painted with colour does it acquire some colour. Similarly, your essential nature is bliss. If you are experiencing sorrow, it is because you have immersed yourself in sorrow. Wherever you are, you must always be happy and blissful. For example, people wish me, "Swami! Happy Birthday!" I would like to ask one question in this context. Is there real happiness in celebrating a birthday? I am always happy. Then, where is the question of celebrating a particular day in a year as "Happy Birthday"? This is only an expression in borrowed words. In fact, bliss is our true nature. We camouflage our true nature with

artificial expressions and feel satisfied as though it is real bliss. This is not the correct approach.

Embodiments of Love!

You are full of Love. In fact, your hearts are overflowing with Love. But, you are preventing your love from flowing and expressing it outwardly. Otherwise, love has no barriers and hurdles at all! Constantly contemplate on God. Then you will always be happy - physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Unfortunately, nowadays you are losing such a divine quality of bliss due to various desires. If you can keep these desires away from you, you will always be blissful. For example, this is a white cloth. Whiteness is its nature. But it acquires dirt because of constant usage. Similarly, your heart is always pure, bright, and blissful. But it gets polluted because of desires. Therefore, cultivate Love and keep your heart always pure. Then you will be blissful every moment of your life. But you have forgotten your innate nature of bliss and are always immersed in sorrow and unhappiness.

When someone enquires, "How are you?" you reply, "so, so." This is not the correct way. You must reply, "I am happy." It is possible that we may encounter some ups and downs in life. But they should not affect our essential nature, which is bliss. Did you observe Me carefully? How blissful I am! Not only now, I am always blissful and overflowing with bliss. In fact, you can also experience such bliss in My presence. However, if you approach Me with an evil mind, thoughts, and desires, you cannot experience this bliss. These are human weaknesses. You must, therefore, try to correct them.

Dear Students!

You should never feel dejected. Supposing you fail in an examination sometime, you should not feel dejected. Reconcile yourself that perhaps you did not write the examination well and therefore you have failed. But never

get depressed and dejected that you have failed in the examination. Similarly, enquire into yourself the reason for your sorrow. You will yourself realise that your own thoughts are responsible for the present situation. Hence, correct them. You will be happy once again. Sorrows and difficulties are like passing clouds. Never attach importance to them. Always be happy and cheerful. Peace and happiness are your qualities. In fact, your true nature is bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

Today is the holy festival of Sankranti. In fact, this year is particularly important than the previous year. Last month, several people suffered untold misery and suffering on account of a tsunami. It is only man's evil deeds that are responsible for such a calamity. Therefore, I advise you not to indulge in wrong actions and evil deeds. It is possible that more troubles may occur during this year, compared to last year. However, we must move forward unmindful of those troubles. These are all passing clouds, and you need not be perturbed by these occurrences. Be bold and courageous to face them.

The calamity of tsunami that occurred last month was, in fact, man-made. It was not Divine Will at all! But man feels that all such calamities are thrust upon man by God. Never! God always provides happiness to man. He has no anger or hatred. His nature is love. The question arises why there are these sorrows and difficulties in the world. Strictly speaking, happiness will not have any value without sorrow. Man cannot experience happiness without undergoing some difficulty or the other. Both happiness and sorrow are intertwined. One cannot exist without the other.

Pleasure and pain, good and bad co-exist; none can separate them.
You cannot find pleasure or pain, good or bad to the exclusion of the other.
Pleasure results when difficulties fructify.
(Telugu poem)

God does not cause pain to any living being in His creation. All sorrows and difficulties are man-made only. God is the protector of all living beings. He provides peace and happiness to one and all. Lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu (May all the people of the world be happy). This is the Will of God. How then can God cause sorrow to a human being? Unable to understand His Divine Will, you accuse God of causing sorrow. If you can fathom the Divine Will, you will realise that everything is only for your good. We are all Embodiments of Bliss. Day-in and day-out, you experience that bliss and share it with others. Then only it will increase.

Embodiments of Love!

This Sankranti is Prema Sankranti and Ananda Sankranti. Hence, welcome this Sankranti festival. Welcome God, who is the embodiment of Bliss.

God is not satisfied with the appellations like "Karunanidhi (the treasure house of Compassion)" and "Premaswarupa (Embodiment of Love)". God is always blissful. You should not pray to God to fulfil your umpteen number of desires. Just pray, "Oh! God! Share Your bliss with me. Make me blissful!"

Never deride God as nirdaya (one without compassion). Whatever God does is for our own good. Even the sorrows and difficulties you experience are for your own good. They are preludes to happiness and bliss. If you cultivate such positive outlook, you will always be blissful. Share your happiness with all. Contrary to this, man today is keeping happiness to himself and distributing sorrow to others. This is not what we should do. "Suppress your sorrow and manifest inner joy" - this is the spiritual sadhana one has to undertake. When you encounter any difficulty or sorrow or restlessness, do not mind them at all. Ignore them. You are always Embodiments of Bliss. If you constantly contemplate on this reality, nothing will bother you.

Embodiments of Love!

May this festival of Sankranti, which is a symbol of change, bring about a transformation in your heart and provide bliss to one and all, so that you may always lead a happy, prosperous, and cheerful life. In fact, the very name of a human being is anandamaya (full of bliss). Manavatva (humanness) is meant for rising to the level of Daivatva (Divinity).

Students!

All your dramas and playlets that you have enacted here are good. If you analyse properly, where does the bad lie? It lies in your mind. Do not think bad and share your bad thoughts with others. Bliss is the real food for a human being. One should always be hungry to partake of that food of bliss. Let your faith in God be firm and unshakable. It is only God's Love that is eternal. If you can secure that Love, all other forms of happiness will automatically come to you.

(Bhagawan concluded His divine discourse with the bhajan, "Hari Bhajana Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin").

Alternative	Link	to	Discourse:
http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html			

2. Elders are a source of wisdom and strength. Revere and respect them

Date: 10 February 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Bheema Ratha Santhi

Embodiments of Love!

The elderly couples who participated in the Bheema Ratha Santhi celebrations held today have experienced inexplicable joy and bliss. In this context, you must understand the underlying meaning in naming this ceremony as Bheema Ratha Santhi. It does not mean that all these couples must be physically strong and courageous like Bheema, the Mahabharata hero. Bheema was the son of Vayu (air), which is all-pervasive. The wind, by nature, is a very strong and powerful element, which can uproot even a mighty tree.

There are certain traditional rules for the performance of this Bheema Ratha Santhi. But there is no age restriction as such for this ceremony. By God's grace, everyone has sath sankalpa (good thoughts). Normally, married couples celebrate the Shastyabdha Poorthi ceremony when the husband attains the age of sixty years, hoping to lead a peaceful and happy married life. They also celebrate when the husband attains the age of 70 years. Generally, people believe 70 years of age as the deadline in the life-span of an individual.

But, there are other milestones like 80, 90, and 100 years also to be crossed in life. When an individual crosses these important milestones in his married life these blissful occasions are named and celebrated as Bheema Ratha Santhi.

Unable to understand and appreciate the importance of these holy occasions, the children in this Kali Age are sending their parents away when they cross 60 years in life, under the mistaken notion that they should not lead a married life and they are fit only to be *sanyasis* (renunciants). This is a serious

mistake. On the other hand, children should take greater care of their parents when they attain sixty years of age and beyond. Generally, children are under the impression that people beyond the age of 70 years are useless and a burden to the family as well as to the society. But the truth is otherwise. In fact, the enthusiasm, encouragement and mental strength increase after a person crosses 70 years. It is only after 70 years that the mental faculties and Atmic strength express themselves in full measure. Prior to that, they also behave like other human beings. They will not specially strive to set an example to others. The mental faculties, divine force, and will power in a person will manifest fully after 70 years and prompt him to set a new goal in life. As a result, such elderly persons will be contemplating upon and exploring the secrets of life. The divine force latent in these elderly persons is beyond the reach of the youth. It manifests in ever-so-many ways in their actions.

Today, we find several youngsters talking ill of their parents and making fun of them. This is a grave mistake. Instead, if one can analyse carefully their actions, every action of theirs will prove to be purposeful and divine in nature. If the youth of today wish to receive proper training to face the challenges in life, they must live with their parents and constantly observe the noble qualities that manifest in the actions of their parents. In fact, no one can match their systematic life and strict discipline. The blossoming of their intellect and the divine qualities in them will herald a new and meaningful life for humanity. You just observe their life closely and you will be thrilled at the changes it can bring about in your own life.

Embodiments of Love!

These days, we are ignoring these elders, considering them to be not useful to society. This is not correct. In fact, the strength and energy latent in these elders are not to be found in the youth. When you wish to undertake any new activity, it will become fruitful only when you take the guidance of the elders and walk in their footsteps.

Nowadays, a human being is unable to recognise the qualities of a fellow human being. The term *manava* (human being) means a person who can make the quality of humanness blossom. People generally tend to describe the physical strength of body, whenever a mention is made of Bheema, the younger brother of Dharmaraja, the Pandava King. But that is not the real strength.

The real strength of elders lies in their wisdom and noble thoughts. The ideals set by these elders for the younger generation are most valuable. Unable to understand their value, people ignore them as useless folk. Today, a lot of value is attached to the retired scientists. None can match their intelligence and passion for new inventions. But their services are not made use of properly for the benefit of society and are being wasted. The world can benefit a lot from these elderly people. There is immense power in these elders that can be harnessed for the good of society. Today, we are making an effort to reveal the strength and great spiritual power latent in the ancient rishis. These elderly people reflect those great ideals. Hence, we should not neglect them. Every thought that emanates from these elders is noble and most valuable. The youth cannot produce even a minute fraction of thoughts and ideas in comparison. Hence, we must nourish and nurture these valuable assets and take good care of them.

Unfortunately, nowadays the younger generation grudges even to provide one square meal a day to their elders. They think it is an avoidable expenditure. Do not by any means let this happen. Even if you put them on a sustenance diet, they will maintain the dignity and reputation of your family as if they are well fed. The concern and enthusiasm displayed by these elders in bringing up the children in a proper way is not found in others unrelated. In the ancient times, kings and nobles made use of the great wisdom of the rishis by seeking their advice regularly. Even to this day, the great treatises on spiritual and temporal matters compiled by the great rishis of yore are an authority to the younger generation. Unfortunately, they are not able to understand the great truths expounded in those treatises. It is Swamis advice that from now on we must popularise this great ancient tradition of Bheema Ratha Santhi. It has great significance and value for the coming generations.

The ritual of Bheema Ratha Santhi signifies nourishing and nurturing the quality of humanness by undertaking spiritually powerful and noble activities.

During the Mahabharata war, after the gruesome massacre of the young Pandava children, Arjuna tracked down Aswatthama, the perpetrator of the atrocity, and dragged him before Droupadi. Instead of cursing the evil doer and pronouncing the punishment for him, she fell at the feet of Aswatthama, the son of her husbands' most revered guru and said,

It is at the feet of your father Dronacharya that my husbands have learnt all that they know. Being the son of Dronacharya, was it proper on your part to kill my children? How could you have the heart to kill them, who were unarmed, young, quietly asleep, were not having any grudge against you and were not contemplating any harm to you?

(Telugu poem)

When Droupadi was praying like this, Bheema could not bear to see this. Exploding in anger, he roared:

This Droupadi is a stupid woman, for she pleads for this wretch's freedom. She feels no anger against this murderer of her sons.

(Telugu poem)

Meanwhile, Arjuna was seething with anger and was about to kill Aswatthama. Droupadi fell at his feet and reasoned with him thus,

Arjuna! Will my sons be revived by killing Aswathama? His mother too would experience the same kind of sorrow that I am undergoing now at the loss of my sons. Having studied the Vedas and Sastras, why are you not able to

maintain your tranquillity?
(Telugu poem)

Droupadi further pleaded with Arjuna to forgive Aswatthama for his heinous act. Arjuna replied, "You are preventing me from keeping up my vow."

To this, Droupadi said, "Tonsuring his head and removing the crown jewel from his head is equivalent to killing him." As per Droupadi's advice and as a token of punishment, Arjuna took the crown jewel from the head of Aswatthama and shaved off the hair with his sword.

In ancient times, the rishis. were not shaving off their hair, since the hair was considered very sacred and powerful, spiritually. This body (pointing to Himself) is nearly 80 years old. Still, the hair on My head remains very strong and powerful to this day. I will tell you more about the power of the hair on My head, later.

Once, Droupadi was alone as her husbands had gone out. She took out one strand of hair from her head and dropped it in the water, chanting some mantras. That single hair with the potency of mantras could bind all the hills around. Later on, a number of yogis assembled together and enquired as to how a single hair could bind all the hills around. They concluded that it was the strength of the hair of Droupadi, and her will power that could perform this stupendous task. It is difficult to comprehend such latent divine phenomenon. Unfortunately, today man is unable to realise his innate divinity. Man, who is heir to the humanness is forgetting the very quality of his humanness. He is cultivating demonic qualities.

Dear Students!

You have to avoid acquiring such demonic nature and allow your natural

humanness to blossom. Develop humanness and, from there, rise to the level of divinity. Always remember three things: unity, purity, and divinity. Unity implies the oneness of human race. When there is such unity in humanity, divinity manifests.

Once, I went on a countrywide tour. During that tour I went to the river Sindhu along with a saintly person. Linguists know that some people pronounce Sindhu as Hindu. I stayed in Goa in the Raj Bhavan when Nakul Sen was the Lt. Governor of that State. His wife's name was Indu. I slept in the front hall of the Raj Bhavan. Nakul Sen and his wife slept in their bedroom. There was a window in their bedroom from where they could see what was happening in the front hall. After I slept, Nakul Sen's wife saw through the window a brilliant light emerging from My body. Unable to bear the effulgence of that brilliant light, she tried to wake up her husband. Nakul Sen did not like to be disturbed at that hour. He admonished her not to disturb him and to sleep peacefully. But she insisted that her husband should wake up and witness that brilliant light emanating from Swami. At last, Nakul Sen woke up and had the divine darshan of that effulgence.

In the early years of the advent of this Avatar, a great devotee by name Karnam Subbamma used to serve Swami. Her devotion to Swami was unparalleled. In those days, caste differences were widely prevalent and observed strictly in Puttaparthi. Especially, the Brahmins used to keep distance from the Harijans. Since, Subbamma was an orthodox Brahmin, she used to meticulously observe these practices.

One day, I informed Subbamma that I would be visiting the Harijanwada. Subbamma felt very unhappy and tried to dissuade Me from going to that place saying, "Oh! Swami! Why should You visit that place?"

I asked her, "Why should I not go? Why should I not eat the food offered by the Harijans? I will certainly go there."

So saying, I started for the Harijanwada. However, since she was a great devotee of Swami and was very much attached to Him, she followed. The people living in the Harijanwada were very poor. They had no chairs or mattresses to make Me seated comfortably. They spread an old dhoti on the floor and requested Me to sit on that. In the meantime, I felt drowsy and fell asleep. Thereafter, a big sound emanated from My navel, as though the roof over the building was being blown off. The people in the house trembled in fear, on hearing that big sound. All of them ran helter-skelter. Thus, the divine power manifests from the bodies of the Avatars, saints, and yogis in many different ways.

Long ago, when I went to some African countries on tour, the devotees there presented Me with a comb made of iron. However, I had no necessity for it. I do not use a comb. If ever I put the brush on My hair, it will get stuck. My hair is so thick and strong. Even if one wants to pull out one hair, it is not possible. This is the nature of the hair of divine personalities. Not only Myself, every individual has certain divine powers, which he should try to nurture. Today, the youth are not making any effort to protect the God-given power. They are frittering away the divine power in ever so many ways. They waste a lot of power daily with the result they lose their energy and become prematurely old. Especially, the head is the seat of all power. Hence, one has to carefully protect the head.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

You are all men and women of noble qualities and strong in body and mind. But, unfortunately, you are frittering away your energies in vain pursuits. You become weak by wasting your energy. When I clench My fist not even ten persons can prise it open. Even at the physical level, the divine power is immeasurable and beyond description. All of you should try to realise this innate Divinity in you, not for the sake of the physical strength but to enjoy the divine bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

The divine power latent in a human being has no limits. Whether it is fine arts like music or any other human endeavour, when it is suffused with divine power, it reaches great heights. Hence, sanctify that divine power by dedicating all your efforts to God.

Alternative	Link	to	Discourse:
http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html			

3. Experience the All-pervading Divine Consciousness

Date: 09 March 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

The Lord of Kailasa has manifested his divine form
with the crescent moon adorning his head,
the cool water of the Ganga flowing between the matted locks,
with his radiant eye in the middle of the forehead, and
with the purple neck gleaming like the sheen of a blackberry.
He wears serpent bracelets and a snake belt,
his entire body is smeared with Vibhuti,
his forehead is adorned with a Kumkum dot,
his ruddy lips glow with the juice of the betel,
diamond-studded gold earrings dangle from his ears,
and his whole swarthy body glows with divine effulgence.
(Telugu poem)

No one seems to have made an effort to recognise the meaning and significance of Sivarathri. In fact, the very word Sivarathri reveals its meaning. "Siva" means auspicious and "rathri" means night. Thus, Sivarathri means auspicious night. Then the question arises: who is Siva? The divine consciousness pervading all the living beings is none other than Siva. This Sivattwa (divine consciousness) permeates not only human beings but the birds, beasts, and animals as well. In fact, every moment in our life can be taken to be Sivarathri. We need not wait for Sivarathri on a particular day in a year.

Embodiments of Love!

The Siva-consciousness is all-pervading. How can we limit it to a particular time and place? Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah

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

If we carefully analyse this aspect once, it will be obvious that all that we witness around is Siva consciousness, and nothing else. Siva does not mean a particular form with matted hair and tiger skin. Wherever we look and whichever form we come across - whether a child or an elderly person, whether an woman or a man - in every form, the Siva consciousness is resplendent. How can you describe that all-pervading Siva-consciousness or limit it to a particular time and place?

People display a particular dance form to portray the Siva Tandava (the cosmic dance of Lord Siva and Parvati). But this is only symbolic and does not portray the real Siva Tandava. How can one describe the transcendental Siva consciousness, which words cannot describe or the mind cannot comprehend?

Lord Siva is described by some as Mukkanti (the Lord with three eyes). All of you have only two eyes. But the Lord has a third eye as well. You are aware of only the past and the present. You cannot visualise the future. Only God can. Lord Siva, who can visualise the future with His third eye, i.e. jnana netra, is therefore referred to as Mukkanti.

God is described by different people in several ways. He is described to be donning several forms. Nevertheless, all those descriptions fail to describe Him in full. Each one describes God and ascribes Him a particular name and form, depending on his imagination. The nameless, formless God is omnipresent and all-pervading. He is Avamanasagochara (neither words can describe nor the mind can comprehend Him) and Aprameya (immeasurable).

Who can describe such Divinity? There is only one sign for Divinity:

Consciousness. In whichever form this divine Consciousness permeates, it will assume that form - it may be the form of a dog, a crow, a crane, or a human being. Easwarattwa, therefore, can be described as Divine Consciousness. This Divine Consciousness permeates all human beings, nay, even the insects, birds and beasts and animals.

One of the names given to this divine Consciousness is Sivattwa (Siva Consciousness). It is not therefore correct to describe Sivattwa by such appellations like Mukkanti, Trinetra, etc. Sivattwa means the all-pervading divine Consciousness. In fact, all the devotees sitting in this Hall are embodiments of Lord Siva. Sarvam Sivamayam (all that you witness in this objective world is a manifestation of Siva). It pervades all the three worlds - the earth, the space, and the nether world. It exists in all the three periods of time - the past, present and future. It is indescribable. Any length of time is insufficient to describe the Sivattwa.

Several people are worshipping such an omnipresent and all-pervading Divine Consciousness by describing it through different names and forms. Just as the all-embracing divine love does not make a distinction between living beings, so also the Divine Consciousness does not differentiate. It is only we who make distinction between people as my father, my mother, my brother, my sister, etc., based on our earthly relationships with them. In fact, every living being is an Embodiment of Divinity. God assumes all names and forms. You are God.

Once Parvati, the consort of Lord Siva asked Him, "How can people recognise the divine consciousness, which is said to be all-pervasive?"

Easwara replied that the same consciousness that is immanent in Him permeates all the living beings. He also explained that it permeates every cell even of her body. One cannot explain it; one has only to experience it. Once,

Parvati could not find her own son Vinayaka, although he was very much near Lord Easwara. She was searching for Vinayaka everywhere, except in the divine proximity of Lord Easwara. How strange! Similarly, man today is searching for God everywhere, not knowing that he himself is an Embodiment of divine Atma.

Lord Easwara never tended His hair. He left them in their natural position as matted locks. His matted locks, His third eye, His ash-smearred body - all were left in their natural position and colour. But they appeared differently to different people. Who can describe the colour and effulgence of Lord Siva's body?

Once, a controversy arose between Lakshmi and Parvati about the physical appearance of Lord Easwara and Lord Vishnu. Lakshmi, in the course of arguments enquired, "Parvati! How did you court this strange person, who does not keep His body neat and who smears the ash from the cremation ground all over his body?"

Parvati was offended. She retorted, "Amma! Your husband Vishnu reclines on the serpent, Sesha. He is blue in colour. Why don't you mend His ways and try to change the colour of His body?"

When they were arguing thus, Saraswati entered the scene. She tried to counsel them saying, "There may be some differences in their physical appearance. So far as I am concerned, I do not find any difference between them. The same divine consciousness permeates both these forms. I am able to realise it. Since you are not able to realise it, you are entering into argumentation. Hence, forget all the outward differences."

This type of transcendental nature is immanent only in Saraswati. All such differences in physical appearance are only in the minds of human beings,

but God is attributeless. It is the devotees who ascribe different names and forms and attributes to God. Based on their imagination, they picture God in different forms like the great artist Ravi Varma. As you think, so shall be the form of God. People describe the form of God as Rudra and Santhiswarupa. But God is always Santhiswarupa (Embodiment of Peace) only. He is always pleasant and smiling. To imagine such an Embodiment of Peace in a different form is only the making of the devotee. If at all there are any such illusions, one has to get rid of them.

One has to realise Divinity by cultivating love for God. Only love can bind God. Through such divine love, the oneness of God has to be realised. If the attributeless God has to be described, the description would be Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam Bhavateetam Trigunarahitam (One without a second, eternal, pure, unchanging, witness to all functions of the intellect, beyond one's imagination, beyond the three gunas (qualities) - sathwa (purity, serenity), rajas (passion, restlessness), and thamas (ignorance, inertia)).

You attribute differences to such an attributeless God and feel very happy. This is not correct. The oneness of God has to be realised. There shall be no confusion in this regard, though poets and artists like Ravi Varma portrayed God in different forms, giving expression to their imaginative skills. Whatever be the different forms of portrayal by poets and artists, God is only one. For example, Lord Vinayaka appears as only one, wherever you see. He has no attributes, whatsoever. One who has no gunas (attributes) is Ganapati. He has no leader above Him. That is why He is called Vinayaka. If you thus analyse, each name ascribed to God would reveal one meaning. Since He has no leader above Him, even Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheswara worship Him.

Embodiments of Love!

People today are promoting differences among human beings by attributing different names and forms to the nameless, formless, and attributeless God.

This is a serious mistake. Divinity is being divided by devotees. The oneness of God is not realised, with the result that futile arguments and counter arguments ensue. Whether it is Rama, Krishna, Easwara, or Vishnu, all these are only different names ascribed by devotees to God. But God is only one. These names are ascribed to God only for our own satisfaction. Divinity, however has no difference at all!

The best sadhana would be to realise unity in Divinity and worship God as such. You may, however, worship God in the form you like. There can be no objection to it. But the underlying unity between the different names and forms should never be forgotten. It is a misconception to think that Lord Rama may be angry if you worship Lord Krishna and vice versa. Such differences may be felt by devotees, but they are not in Lord Rama and Lord Krishna.

God does not entertain such negative feelings. It is only human beings who have differences and negative feelings. In fact, there is no possibility at all for negative feelings to enter divinity. He is all positive only.

Dear Students!

Do not ascribe any difference or negative feelings to God. You may worship God with whatever name and form you like. If by any chance you find any difference in divinity, it is the mistake of your negative feelings, not that of God. Hence, worship God with single-minded devotion.

Alternative	Link	to	Discourse:
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4. You Are All Amrutaputras - Sons of Immortality

Date: 08 March 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

In this supremely holy land of Bharat
tolerance is the towering quality of our character;
Of all the religious vows, the foremost is
Adherence to Truth, which is difficult to practise;
The sweetest and most respectable feeling in this land of
Bharat is the feeling toward mother;
Consigning to flames the moral fabric of our country
which ordains self-respect as greater than one's own life,
The dagger of unrestrained freedom has been given to people
imitating the Western way of life;
Alas! What can I say about the rulers of this land of Bharat?
Just as an elephant cannot realise its own strength
So are the Bharatiyas today.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

No one has been able to realise the uniqueness, greatness, and sanctity of this holy land of Bharat (India) so far. The culture of Bharat is nobler and holier than all other cultures in the world. This unique culture is pervading from the microcosm to the macrocosm equally. Unfortunately, nowadays, the Bharatiyas (Indians) have forgotten this great culture and are practising the alien culture. The great human values of sathya (truth) and dharma (righteousness) have declined in this holy land of Bharat. However, fortunately, none has been able to root out these great human values so far. There is nothing more sacred than Truth and Righteousness. They are like the two eyes of a human being. Unfortunately, today, people are losing the vision

in these two eyes and thereby becoming blind. Though the students of the present times are pursuing higher education and acquiring degrees, they are losing sight of these great human values. Instead of fostering such a sacred and noble culture and leading their lives in accordance with the principles laid down in this great culture, people are wasting their time in vain pursuits.

Only the practice of these great human values of sathya (truth), dharma (righteousness), santhi (peace), and prema (love) has made the country of Bharat the great spiritual leader of the entire world. Only when we foster these great human values are entitled to be called Bharatiyas in the real sense. Losing sight of even one of these values will not entitle us to the great name of Bharatiyas. The real thyaga (sacrifice) is leading a life of constant practice of these human values in our day-to-day lives. Our life must be a continuous journey from sathya to prema in the order of sathya, dharma, santhi, and prema. These values must enter the core of our heart and flow in every cell of our body.

The whole creation is from Truth,
In Truth all creation merges.
Is there a place in this universe where
The grandeur of Truth is not felt?
The entire universe is a manifestation of
Pure consciousness; know this reality.
(Telugu poem)

From the time a human being is born from their mother's womb, it is truth and righteousness that are sustaining and fostering them. The women of Bharat have undergone many ordeals in sustaining these great values amidst their household duties and domestic chores. Yet, they have continuously taught these values to their children. Swami knows too well how much suffering the parents of these children undergo in bringing them up. What the

students of the present times are expected to acquire is not education and high degrees but the essence of truth and righteousness.

One has to understand the real meaning of sathya and dharma. The word "sathya" consists of three letters Sa, Tha, and Ya. The letter Sa signifies the sathwic (pure, serence) quality; Tha, the quality of thyaga (sacrifice); and Ya, the qualities of yama and niyama (inner and outer sense control). Hence, the word "sathya" means fostering the sathwic quality with a spirit of sacrifice and by observing sense control. Unfortunately, today, we are losing sight of such great human values, which formed the core of Bharatiya culture.

Man today does not know what sathya and dharma are. Dharma is taken to be duty. This interpretation is not correct. This is only an English translation, rather inadequately expressed! The real interpretation of dharma is dharayati iti dharma (that which sustains is dharma). It sustains the human life. Sathya (truth) emerges from the hridaya nabhi (heart region) of a human being. Thus, when a person leads a life of sathya and dharma, they will become sacred. The Pandavas and Droupadi led such a noble life by following sathya and dharma. All your present difficulties and humiliations are due to non adherence to dharma.

One should obey the divine command with total faith and without any disputation for or against. Markandeya was born out of a boon granted by Easwara to his parents. Easwara asked his parents whether they wanted a virtuous son with a short life-span or a son not so virtuous but who would live long. The parents opted for a virtuous son. Accordingly, Markandeya was born. He was one of good thought, good behaviour, and good conduct. Easwara informed his parents that he would live only for sixteen years. Nevertheless, the parents were joyous, because they had been blessed with a virtuous son.

Years rolled by, and Markandeya entered his sixteenth year. Remembering

the words of Easwara, his parents became grief-stricken. His mother would often shed tears thinking of the impending death of her son. Markandeya could not understand the cause of her grief and wondered why she was shedding tears. One day, he found his parents steeped in sorrow. On enquiry, they revealed that his death was very near, as willed by the divine, and that was the cause of their sorrow.

Markandeya felt sorry that Easwara's will was not revealed to him till then because of which he had wasted the precious time allotted to him. He did not want to waste any more time. He had an early bath, went to the temple of Easwara, and started chanting the sacred Siva Panchakshari mantra, Namah Sivaya, with all sincerity and devotion. He lost himself in the contemplation of Easwara. He did not expect any reward for his prayers. He considered it as his primary duty to contemplate on God. The following day was supposed to be the last day of his earthly sojourn. Hence he remained in the temple.

Because he had not returned home, His parents went to the temple and sat at the entrance. They were shedding tears thinking of the impending end of Markandeya's life. As ordained by the Lord, Markandeya left his mortal coil the moment he completed his sixteenth year. His parents were in deep sorrow. As Markandeya left his mortal body in the external world, his jiva (soul) reached Lord Siva in the divine world.

The Lord was immensely pleased with the sincere devotion of Markandeya. He said, "Markandeya! Today marks the completion of your sixteenth year. You have come to Me in a happy frame of mind. You have bowed down to My Will with implicit faith and obedience. I am pleased with your devotion.'

As Easwara was speaking to Markandeya in this manner, Mother Parvati intervened and said, "Oh Lord! Why don't You send him back to his parents, since he has obeyed Your command implicitly." Easwara wanted Parvati also

to accompany Him. Together they restored life to the body of Markandeya.

The parents' joy knew no bounds when they noticed some movement in Markandeya's body. He got up and said, "My dear mother and father, Lord Easwara and Mother Parvati have brought me back to life."

Only God can save the life of a human being. Some doctors claim that they can give good medicines or perform surgery to save the life of a person. They make several promises thus, but they fail. Except for God, none else can save or prolong the life of a person. He only can interfere in the law of karma. With God's grace, one can achieve anything in this world. Dear students! You must strive to earn the grace of God right from your childhood. When you pray for His grace and strive for the same, you will be protected by God.

Embodiments of Love!

Today is the holy day of Sivarathri. Siva means auspiciousness. Where there is Siva (auspiciousness) there cannot be shava (inauspiciousness). This holy day of Sivarathri must be spent in the constant contemplation of God chanting the holy name of Siva right from early in the morning till you go to bed. The Lord's name must dance on your tongue. Divinity is eternal. It cannot be achieved so easily. Nobody has been able to explain Divinity so far, though some vague definitions like eternal, changeless, etc., have been given. The proper definition of Divinity would be Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam Bhavateetam Trigunarahitam (One without a second, eternal, pure, unchanging, witness to all functions of the intellect, beyond one's imagination, beyond the three gunas (qualities) - sathwa (purity, serenity), rajas (passion, restlessness), and thamas (ignorance, inertia)).

One of the names attributed to Lord Siva is Mrityunjaya, which means one who has transcended death. This is from the worldly point of view. But if one wants to understand the true and eternal nature of Divinity, one has to understand the relationship between Lord Siva and Mother Parvati. Once,

there was a slight difference of opinion between them about giving an appropriate name to their child. Parvati wanted to name the child by a particular name from among the several names of Lord Siva. Lord Siva, however, chose to name the child Amrutaputra. In fact, every human being is an amrutaputra (son of immortality). Even the Upanishads declare him so. The Upanishads reveal the true identity of a human being by addressing as Srunvantu Viswe Amrutasya Putrah (Oh the children of immortality! Listen).

Dear Devotees and Students!

You are also amrutaputra, not anrutaputras (sons of immortality, not falsehood). One who is an amrutaputra is not affected by change and death. You verily are the embodiments of the changeless, eternal principle.

Once, Mother Parvati was putting child Ganapati to sleep by rocking the cradle and singing a lullaby, "Oh Amrutaputra! Sleep my dear! Sleep. If you are awake, the whole world will be awake."

Lakshmidēvi, the consort of Lord Vishnu came there and witnessed the scene. She felt that it was rather a strange lullaby. She enquired about the name of the child and Parvati told her that His name was Amrutaputra. Lakshmidēvi further enquired from where got that name. Parvati replied that it was Lord Siva who gave that name to the child. One who had descended from Easwarattwa is Easwara Himself.

Embodiments of Love!

You are not reading the sacred texts of yore. Unless you read those texts also, you will not be able to understand what is being related to you. Dear Students! You are all amrutaputras. People would naturally expect that you should live up to that great appellation.

In fact, the names given to children by elders in our country have a lot of significance and meaning. They are not given just casually or for fun. In order to understand the underlying meaning and sanctity of these names, we must read the sacred texts like Puranas. Unable to realise the eternal reality of the values of sathya and dharma, you are taking to wrong ways. You are simply repeating the words sathya, dharma, santhi, and prema like a parrot. But you are not making any effort to understand the true import and significance of these great human values. All of you are amrutaputras, not anrutaputras.

Dear students!

Try to understand the true nature and significance of the names. It is a fact that nobody has ever seen Lord Easwara in person. People call Him "Kailasavasi" (the Lord who resides in Kailasa). Where is Kailasa? It is only when you contemplate on Him in the depth of silence that you can visualise Lord Easwara in Kailasa. Therefore, one has to practise mouna (silence). And that silence implies total stillness of thought and word.

Embodiments of Love!

You are all amrutaputras. Hence, constantly remain under that awareness. Proclaim yourself to be amrutaputras. Whatever name has been already given to you, prefix that name with "Amrutaputra". To consider yourself as anrutaputra is a great mistake and a misnomer. Hence, realise your true nature and call yourself Amrutaputra.

(Bhagawan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho".)

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

5. All are bound by the law of karma by

Date: 09 March 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Shivarathri

Everyone has to face the consequences of one's own karma.
Who made the bats to hang from the branches of a tree,
with their heads downward? It is their fate.
Likewise, nobody can escape from the consequences of karma.
(Telugu poem)

Every human being, insect, bird, beast, and animal, nay, every living being in this world, is bound by destiny. None can escape from the result of karmas, good or bad. It is natural for every living being to obey the laws of nature and the law of karma. For example, the bat hangs from the branches of a tree head downward. That is their nature. That is how they are born to live.

Every human being in this world thinks that he is undergoing suffering, even though he had not done anything bad. They feel, "I have not done anything wrong! Why then am I undergoing this suffering?" But the fact is otherwise. Whatever pleasure or pain undergone by a living being is certainly the outcome of the karmas (action) performed by it. Every human being performs karma and enjoys its fruit as a consequence. Nevertheless, it is not clear to them till today whether it is a natural consequence of their actions or by any unknown reason. Not only the human being, even bacteria, birds, insects, beasts, and animals are experiencing the consequences of their karma.

In support of this inevitable law of karma, I would like to narrate certain incidents that happened long ago. These incidents explain how certain births took place, just to demonstrate this truth.

There used to be a great devotee by name Subbamma in Puttaparthi. She was very rich. She had no children. Whatever she had, she used to give in charity to one and all with a feeling, "I am only sharing my god-given wealth with my fellow human beings." She was leading a pious and noble life with a sense of equanimity. She had, however, one desire. She used to pray, "Swami! At the time of my departure from this earthly sojourn, You should quench my thirst by pouring a few drops of water into my mouth with Your Divine hands." I promised her that I would do so.

Six years after I gave that promise to her, I had to go to Chennai once to fulfil My engagement in a devotee's house. That was the time of the Second World War. Once in every hour, there used to be an air raid precaution siren, and the streets would become empty in no time. I stayed there for three days and started My return journey straight to Bukkapatnam from Chennai in a car.

Meanwhile, Subbamma fell seriously ill and was taken to Bukkapatnam from Puttaparthi. That was her parental home. There she died. Her relatives started making certain sarcastic remarks, "Sai Baba gave word to her that He would pour water into her mouth at the time of her last moments. Did He come? Where has He gone?"

Subbamma's brothers and relatives made all arrangements for taking her body for cremation. In those days, it was not easy to procure firewood to cremate a dead body, especially in the villages. However, they procured some firewood and kept everything ready. While passing by the house of Subbamma, I noticed several people gathered there. I enquired, "Who is going to be cremated?"

Washerman Subbanna was there. He replied, "Swami! Subbamma is dead." I

enquired again, "Is it? When did she die?" "Three days ago, Swami," he replied.

I went into her house where her body was kept. Her relatives were about to take her body out for cremation. Her sister saw Me and started wailing. She told Me, "Baba! She longed for Your arrival. She yearned that You should pour water into her mouth before she breathed her last. At the last, she died without her wish fulfilled."

I told her that there was no possibility of such an eventuality and asked her to fetch some water in a tumbler. I put a basil leaf in the water. I removed the cloth that covered her face. Ants were crawling all over her body. I gently called her name, "Subbamma!"

She opened her eyes and saw Me. She held My hands and wept. She enquired, "When did You come Swami?"

I replied, "I came just now." I wiped her tears gently with a towel. I told her, "Subbamma! Look here." I then poured a few drops of the sacred water into her mouth and said, "Now, close your eyes peacefully. Subbamma drank that water from My hands and breathed her last. Thus, I kept My promise to Subbamma.

While this strange phenomenon was going on, all her relatives and the doctors who attended on her were watching the happenings with awe. They could not believe their eyes. They were wondering, "How come! Subbamma died three days ago. There was no breath in her body. How is it that she opened her eyes now and spoke to Swami? Perhaps it is a divine miracle of Sai Baba." Subbamma was constantly worried during her lifetime that Swami was always on the move visiting several places and perhaps her last wish

might not be fulfilled. But, I kept My promise made to her long ago.

At last, the dead body of Subbamma was cremated by her relatives as per their family custom. She was a Brahmin lady. I started returning to Puttaparthi. A bullock cart was kept ready for My return. Myself and the brother of Griham Ammayi (Easwaramma) sat in the bullock cart and were returning to Puttaparthi. His name was Chandramouli (Swami's physical body's maternal uncle). We saw smoke emanating from the cremation ground where Subbamma's mortal remains were being consigned to flames. Chandramouli enquired, "Swami! You were with Subbamma's dead body till now. Why did You not wait till the cremation was over?"

I told him, "Chandramouli! I am not a person who goes back on his word. I gave a word to Subbamma that I would be present by her side during her last moments and pour water into her mouth. That I fulfilled. I advised her to depart from this world peacefully. I kept My promise and I am now returning to My abode."

Chandramouli felt very happy. In fact, Subbamma was held in high esteem by the entire village. She was the head of the village, being the wife of the Karanam. The entire property of the village was in her name. However, since she came into the fold of Swami, she had no other interest in life, except Swami. Right from early morning till she went to bed, she was constantly engaged in Swami's work only.

On certain occasions I used to retire into the caves of the nearby hills without informing her. Poor lady! she used to go round the hills in search of Me. She used to pack upma, dosa, vada, idli, etc. in a tiffin carrier and come in search of Me. At last, when she found Me, I used to ask teasingly, "Subbamma! What did you bring for Me?"

She used to reply, "Swami! I brought the items of Your taste."

Then I used to tell her, "Give Me dosa." She then served dosa, in a plate and handed it over to Me. I used to tease her further saying, "Subbamma! I don't like this dosa,. Give Me idli, upma, vada, etc." Poor lady! She used to serve Me all those items. From morning till evening, she used to prepare a number of items and wait for Me. Yet, she was anxious to know what more did I need. Once I told her "Subbamma! You need not fear. I don't need anything. I have put so many questions to you asking for this and that to make your devotion and surrender known to the world."

Subbamma then requested Me, "Swami! I am happy that I have been able to serve You food. I am also happy that You ate these items with love and affection toward me. I will be happy if You can kindly put a small quantity of this stuff in my mouth with Your Divine hands." Then, I took a small piece of idli from the plate and put it in her mouth with a little chutney. She felt extremely happy. Thus, Subbamma experienced great bliss in the divine proximity of Swami till her last breath.

Chandramouli, who was a witness to My showering love and grace on Subbamma on a number of occasions, observed, "Swami! How compassionate You are toward the devotees! We don't have words to express Your love and compassion toward devotees, especially Subbamma." True! Words fail to describe Swami's love and compassion toward Subbamma. The devotion of Subbamma toward Swami surpassed even that of Prahlada.

People had by now realised that Swami had fulfilled the promise given by Him to Subbamma. They felt that Subbamma's life was sanctified. Taking a cue from her example, several elderly people used to visit Me with the request, "Swami! Please give a word that You will pour sanctified water into my mouth with Your divine hands at the time of my departure from this world."

I used to tell them, "My dear ones! All people cannot get this great boon. If you are destined to get it, you will certainly get it. I will come at the appropriate time and pour sanctified water in your mouth."

Kondama Raju used to observe these people coming to Swami with such requests. He also developed a yearning for this prapti (deservedness). One day, he approached Me and requested Me, "Swami! You are born in our family, in our lineage. You have upheld the honour and glory of our lineage. But I also have a request to make to you. I wish and pray that my birth in our family should be sanctified. I therefore request you to please pour some holy water into my mouth with Your divine hands during my last moments of life."

I assured him that I would certainly fulfil his request. He felt very happy, for he knew that once Swami had given His word, He would certainly stick to it. He lived for 112 years. Every morning, he would walk from the village to the new mandir (temple) to have My darshan. One day I asked him, "Why do you walk all the way from the village to the mandir and back. There may be cattle on the way and if they attack you, you will fall down and get injured, Won't you?"

He used to tell Me very boldly, "Swami! When You are protecting me and constantly standing by my side, which animal could attack me?"

One day, early in the morning he came to the mandir and had My darshan. He returned home and lay down. After a while, he told Easwaramma to go near Sathyabhama Temple and see whether Swami was coming that side. She went there, returned and told him, "Yes, Swami is coming in His car." Swami had a small car then.

Kondama Raju said, "Easwaramma! Get a tumbler of water and put a tulasi

leaf in it." She did accordingly. He held the tumbler in his hand and was waiting for Me. He knew that his end was near and that I had come there to keep My promise. None else knew this. Holding the tumbler, he said, "Swami! I am ready."

I replied, "I am also ready."

As I poured the water into his mouth, he passed away peacefully. Before passing away, he said, "What a great fortune it is to drink water from Your divine hands before departing from this world! Even King Dasaratha, who performed great penance and sacrifice, did not have such a fortune. My life is redeemed." Saying thus, he closed his eyes.

With this incident of Kondama Raju, it was once again revealed to the whole world that Swami would certainly keep His word, come what may! The lives of Subbamama and Kondama Raju were thus redeemed. I manifest My divine leelas in many ways to fulfil My word. I go to any extent to fulfil My promise. However, some devotees act contrary to their words.

I was taken to Kamalapuram for higher education. The elder brother of this body, Seshama Raju, was very intent on My pursuing higher education. Therefore, he took Me along with him to Kamalapuram and admitted Me in the school. In those days, I was struggling very much to pursue the education due to paucity of funds. Often times, I had to manage with empty pockets. Hence, I used to make use of My poetic skills to earn a few coins to meet My personal needs. In the same village, there used to be a businessman by name Kotte Subbanna. He used to run a provision shop in which some Ayurvedic medicines were also sold.

Once, a new Ayurvedic medicine, by name Bala Bhaskara, was introduced for sale in his shop. It was a new and very efficacious medicine. It could fetch him

a good profit if popularised. He therefore requested Me to shoulder the responsibility of making propaganda for his new medicine. I agreed to his request, but asked for some more information about the medicine. Then, I composed a song about the efficacy of the medicine and gathered a few children of My age to go round the nearby villages with placards in their hands and sing the song composed by Me. The song ran thus:

There it is! There it is! Oh, children! come, come!
There is the medicine Bala Bhaskara.
Be it an upset stomach or a swollen leg,
Be it a joint pain or flatulence,
Be it any ailment, known or unknown,
Take this Bala Bhaskara for an instant cure!
If you wish to know where it is available,
There is the shop of Kotte Subbanna.
It is in that shop that you can pick it up.
Come here boys! come here!
It is an excellent tonic
Prepared by the famous physician Gopalacharya himself,
Come here boys! come here!
(Telugu song)

By the time we completed our propaganda tour of the nearby villages, all the stock of medicines in Subbanna's shop were sold out. He felt very happy. Then he called Me and offered a pair of knickers and a shirt stitched for Me. But, I flatly refused them saying, "Subbanna! I did not compose that song for the sake of new clothes. I don't need them. I won't touch them. Please take them back. If you thus offer some money or articles in return for My services, I will not even step into your shop."

He realised My sincerity and strong feelings. From then onward, he used to

say, "Raju! I don't want anything in this world, except Your love."

Another incident had happened while I was studying in Kamalapuram. I attended a scout camp in a nearby village called Pushpagiri, where a big fair was being held. I was away from the house for a few days, and there was nobody to fetch water from a distant well for household purposes. Hence, the wife of Seshama Raju had to shoulder that responsibility. By the time I returned from the scout camp, Seshama Raju was angry that there was nobody in the house to help his wife. He was then drawing lines in a notebook with the help of a wooden ruler.

As soon as he saw Me, he shouted at Me, "Hey! Come here. There is no one in the house to fetch water for the last few days. Your sister-in-law had to attend to that job also, besides her normal domestic chores." So saying, he took the ruler and beat Me angrily. The ruler broke into three pieces. My hand was swollen and it was giving Me a lot of pain. I did not give a reply nor revealed the incident to anybody. I tied a bandage Myself to My hand with a wet cloth.

The next day, Seshama Raju's son died. He gave a telegram to Pedda Venkama Raju (Swami's father). Venkama Raju immediately rushed to see Seshama Raju. He started from Puttaparthi and reached Bukkapatnam and from there to Kamalapuram. The Griham Abbayi (Swami's father) asked Me why I had a bandage on My forearm. I tried to explain it away very casually, as if nothing had happened. I told him there was a slight pain due to a blister on the forearm and therefore I had put a bandage on it.

There was a lady belonging to the Vysya community in the neighbouring house, who used to make her living by preparing dosas and selling them. She tried to reason with Griham Abbayi, saying, "What! Venkama Raju! I know you are sufficiently well-off so as to get Raju educated at your place. Why should you put Him to so much trouble by keeping Him under the care of His elder brother at such a distant place? You do not know how much suffering the poor

boy is undergoing here. He has to fetch drinking water from a distant place carrying two big pitchers with the help of a Kavadi on his young shoulders daily." Thus, she narrated several incidents where I had to undergo physical strain and suffering.

Griham Abbayi was deeply moved on hearing My plight and immediately called Me and said, "My dear son! You start immediately and come along with me. Let us go back to Puttaparthi." All the family members loved Me. He therefore lamented, "I have come to know that the injury to your forearm was due to your elder brother's beating. I myself never beat You till date. You are undergoing so much suffering here. Come! Let us go back to Puttaparthi."

At the time when this incident happened, Griham Abbayi made a comment, which still rings in My ears even today: "Sathyam! If one is alive, one can make a living even by selling salt. I can no longer put You to such an ordeal. Can I not provide for Your living even with my meagre income?" So saying he shed tears. From then onward, He did not send Me with anyone. My formal education stopped with the high school. I did not attend any college. Nevertheless, I have been continuing My Mission as a Sathya Bodhaka (Teacher of Truth), making Puttaparthi My headquarters.

I composed a beautiful poem depicting the glorious history of Puttaparthi, which reads as follows:

Encircling which town the sacred river
Chitravathi flows in all its pristine beauty;
Around which town there are beautiful
Mango groves symbolising auspiciousness;
Standing guard on the four sides of which town
are the deities of Parvati and Parameswara constantly protecting;
Firmly installed in the midst of which town is the

effulgent Lord Vishnu in all His splendour;
That world famous town is Puttapuram or Puttaparthi
with its fresh water tank built by Chikkavadiyar
standing as an everlasting monument
to the glory of Bukkaraya.
(Telugu poem)

I built a residential colony in commemoration of the great love and devotion Subbamma had toward Me and named it Karanam Subbamma Nagar, which is next to Gokulam. I also purchased some cows and engaged some people to look after them. Some of these people were accommodated in a few of those houses in Karanam Subbamma Nagar. Thus, I made efforts to see that the name of Subbamma is remembered forever by devotees.

A few years ago, I started a project by name "Deenajanoddharana Pathakam" to adopt some orphan children to provide food, clothing, and education to them so that when they grow up they will be able to lead a life with honour and dignity. I am looking after these boys with all love and care. You must have seen these boys when they come for darshan every Thursday and Sunday. I also built living accommodation for these boys so that they may stay comfortably in those houses. Besides their normal education, they are now acquiring proficiency in extra curricular activities also. Thus, there are so many service activities that I have undertaken right from My childhood. If they are all to be narrated now, it can go for hours together.

Dear Students!

I have great love for you. I wish that all of you should come up well and earn a good name. I love such boys who earn good name. In fact, I give Myself to such boys. I will give you whatever you want.

Alternative Link to Discourse:

<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

6. Humility and Character are the Hallmark of Education

Date: 16 March 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam

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

Embodiments of Love! Students!

You have joined this institution to pursue your education. Firstly, make efforts to understand the true meaning of education. Humility and character are the hallmark of education. But, today, students do not develop humility. They are interested only in acquiring degrees. However, our educational institution is an exception in this regard. Few students come here with the sole objective of acquiring degrees. Most of them come here with the single aim of pleasing Swami by striving to follow Swami's ideals and attain exalted position in life. They give happiness to their parents by their good conduct.

Students!

Education does not mean mere acquisition of degrees.
Oh man!
Examine and enquire for yourself what great happiness
you have achieved by spending all the time from
dawn to dusk in acquiring knowledge and earning
wealth, unmindful of God.
(Telugu poem)

One may acquire a high academic qualification such as
M.A. and B.A. and attain exalted position,
One may amass wealth, perform acts of charity, and attain name and
fame,
One may have physical strength and enjoy a long and healthy life,
One may be a great scholar studying and preaching the Vedas,
But none can equal a true devotee of the Lord.
(Telugu poem)

Having entered the portals of this educational institution, you should try to understand the value and true meaning of education. Only when you understand these aspects can you be called truly educated. There is a lot of knowledge in pustakas (books), but what is the use if the mastaka (head) is filled with "mud"? Once you fill your mastaka with knowledge, you need not refer to pustakas any more.

Elders should evince interest in the education of their children. They should enquire as to what the children are learning in the educational institution and constantly monitor their progress. Modern students react to the queries of elders in a discourteous manner. They indulge in mere verbosity and confuse the elders.

Students should earn a good name in society and uphold the reputation and prestige of the institution in which they study. An educational institution is like a gigantic tree. Different subjects are like its branches and sub-branches. Virtues are like the fragrant flowers that you find on the tree. Faith is like the roots. When you water the roots of faith, you get the fruit of Ananda (Bliss).

At present, all educational institutions have begun to feel that character is very important for a student. The end of education is character. Character

does not mean good conduct alone. One should consider the fellow human beings as one's own brothers and sisters. One should develop bhava shuddhi (purity in feelings), which will ultimately lead to jnana siddhi (attainment of wisdom).

Our students are highly virtuous. I repeatedly say that they are My property. When I have such a property with Me, why should I worry about anything? I asked the boys who appeared for the GATE examination, "My dear ones! How did you write the exam?" They said, "Swami, with Your grace and blessings we have done well. You say that students are Your property. Having been blessed with the opportunity of being Your students, our only aim is to live up to Your ideals and bring a good name to the Institute." I was very pleased and deeply touched by their answer. It is heartening to note that there are such ideal students in our Institute. It is because of such noble students that the country has progressed and prospered. If there are no men and women of virtues, how can the world shine with all its brilliance?

Our students do not indulge in empty rhetoric; they are men of action. Their sincerity makes Me happy. I have come to impart such ideal education to the students and inculcate virtues in them.

In spite of his education and intelligence,
a foolish man will not know his true Self and
a mean-minded person will not give up his evil qualities.
(Telugu poem)

Modern education leads only to argumentation,
not to total wisdom.
What is the use of acquiring education that cannot
lead you to immortality?
Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.

(Telugu poem)

Once you acquire the knowledge of the Self, you would have acquired everything else. These words of wisdom are imprinted in the hearts of our students.

Embodiments of Love! Students!

You have proved your worth among lakhs of students and secured high ranks in the GATE examination (loud applause). The examiners were highly impressed with the intelligence and behaviour of our students. They wanted to know whether our students came from East or West, North or South. Our students replied, "Sir, we are neither from East nor from West, neither from South nor from North, we are the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning."

They are not satisfied with what they have achieved. They are striving hard to bring more and more laurels to our Institute. Wherever you go, you find our students leading exemplary lives propagating the ideals of our educational institutions.

Once someone asked our students what type of food they like to take, vegetarian or non-vegetarian. They replied in one voice, "Non-vegetarian food gives rise to evil thoughts and feelings; hence we would never touch non-vegetarian food." They are 100% vegetarians. Even the students who used to eat non-vegetarian food earlier become vegetarians once they join our Institute. Once someone tried to persuade one of our students to take non-vegetarian food, saying it contained a lot of good nutrients. But he did not budge from his stand. He said, "I don't want such vitamins and proteins. Even vegetarian food has all the vitamins and proteins that I need. I want to tread the path of truth, and non-vegetarian food is not at all conducive for spiritual progress. Along with secular education, I want to acquire spiritual education and propagate it to the world." Many such students are firm in their resolve to

spread the Sai ideals. It is because of such noble students that our institution has attained worldwide fame.

Students should develop good habits right from their childhood to enjoy good health and happiness. In this context, there is a poem that reads as follows:

Get up early in the morning at the crowing of the cock,
Have a bath after your morning ablutions,
Wear a proper dress.
Eat properly and moderately.
Go to school and study diligently.
Earn a good name.
Don't move out when it is raining,
And never go near the murky pools.
Take part in games,
Run and play.
If you abide by all these rules,
You will have both health and wealth.
(Telugu poem)

Students should exercise restraint over their food habits. Even birds, beasts, and animals observe certain regulations in this regard. Born as human beings and having acquired education, is it not expected of you to follow proper discipline with regard to food? Students who eat non-vegetarian food right from their childhood give up that habit when they join our institution. Even their parents are surprised at their transformation. When one of our students went home during vacation, his mother tried to serve him non-vegetarian food. He refused to touch it and requested his mother not to prepare non-vegetarian items in future. He explained to his parents the ill effects of consuming non-vegetarian food.

Non-vegetarian food is the cause of several diseases like cancer. You might

have read in journals and newspapers that most of the people in Singapore eat fish. Consequently, they are infected by several harmful micro-organisms. Similar instances were reported from various parts of Bharat. It is because of unhealthy food that people suffer from diseases. Many are under the mistaken notion that non-vegetarian food gives them strength, but in reality it makes them weak. Once you spoil your health by partaking of non-vegetarian food, you will never be able to regain your health even if you spend the rest of your life in forests eating fruits and tubers.

These were the answers given by our students when they were asked questions about their food habits. The explanation given by our students made such an impact on the audience that many of them became total vegetarians. As the food, so is the mind. As the mind, so is the man. Hence, one must necessarily partake of sacred and sathwic (pure, serene) food to lead a happy and healthy life. Of late, there is a growing awareness among the Bharatiyas (Indians) about the influence of food on one's mind. Consequently, people are changing their food habits for the better. Our body is made up of flesh. Why should you feed it again with flesh? Such unsacred food gives rise to unsacred thoughts.

Students!

It is not enough to observe regulations with regard to food alone; you should cultivate good habits also. You should participate in sports and games regularly. Take part in games that will help in the blossoming of your physical and mental faculties. Healthy food and good habits will take you to exalted position in life.

Dear Bangaru Students!

Truly, you are like gold. It is not possible to describe your sacred feelings. You speak from the depths of your hearts. The language you speak is not ordinary. It is Atma Bhasha (language of the spirit). You are leading your lives with sacred feelings. However, keep away from bad company. It is said, "Tell me your company, I shall tell you what you are." "As your company, so you

become." Hence, always keep good company. Be in the company of those who speak good words. Never utter harsh and unsacred words. If you use unkind words, people will treat you like an enemy. If you speak softly and sweetly, people will enjoy your company and talk to you for any length of time. When you are in the company of others, make sure that your body is clean and your mouth does not emit bad smell. You should take proper care of your health in every possible way. When your body is clean and healthy and when your thoughts, words, and deeds are pure, you will be loved by one and all.

Students!

Wherever you may go, ensure that you are presentable and acceptable in every way. Only then will you earn the respect of others. Always keep your mouth clean. Bad breath leads to various diseases. Not merely that, it will cause inconvenience to others. If your mouth emits foul smell, people try to avoid you. Hence, the moment you get up from bed in the morning, you should brush your teeth and clean your tongue thoroughly. When you keep your mouth fresh and clean, you will enjoy good health. Though I don't sleep in the night, I brush My teeth before going to bed. I brush My teeth at regular intervals so as to keep My mouth fresh and clean. That is why I don't have any health problem. I don't have any pain whatsoever.

You should take care that no food particle sticks between your teeth. Some people use a hard brush to clean their teeth. As a result, their gums start bleeding. But I use a very soft brush. Even now My teeth are so strong that I can crack a betel nut. My students are struck with awe and wonder when they witness My physical power.

Students!

It would be a shame for you to spoil your health and submit yourself to the hands of a doctor. Hence, each one has to take care of one's own health. One should never be dependent on others. This is what I teach My students quite often. Get up early in the morning, do some jogging and exercise so as to

keep your body fit. During examination time, students try to keep themselves awake in the night for late hours to study. They keep dozing with books in front of them. Such studies will take you nowhere. Do not force yourself to study when you feel sleepy. Keep the books aside and go to bed peacefully. You should study only when your mind is fresh and attentive.

Oh man!

Do not feel proud of your education and scholarship.

If you do not offer your salutations to God and

Do not contemplate on Him with devotion,

Of what use is all your education?

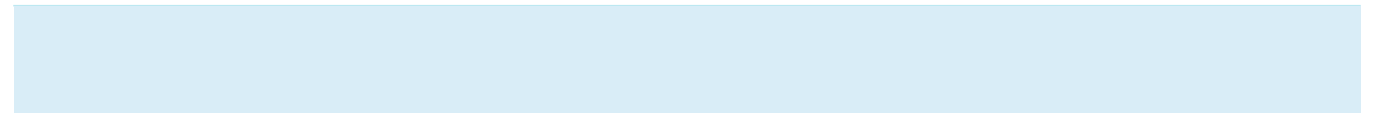
(Telugu poem)

Students!

First and foremost, take care of your health. Your education will prove as mere waste if you do not maintain proper health. Do not rest content with secular education. You should also acquire educare. Education is related to gathering outside information, whereas educare relates to inward transformation. Educare is that which makes the human values blossom from within. Whether you have acquired educare or mere education will become evident in your speech. A word of caution in this regard: do not talk loosely. Especially when you speak to elders, carefully frame your sentences and speak with all humility and respect. True education is not limited to textual knowledge. You should manifest the human values of truth, righteousness, love, peace, and non-violence. Truth should not be confined to mere words. It should be translated into deeds.

Students!

Having come here and acquired education of the highest standard, lead a life of virtues. Share your knowledge with others.



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

This is what you have to learn today. Always have a smiling countenance and be a good friend to others. A good friend is one who always has good thoughts, speaks good words, and performs good deeds. When you lead your life in such a manner, you will be an ideal person and a source of inspiration to others.

Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin".

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

7. Love and Unity - your true and eternal property

Date: 09 April 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ugadi

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

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.
The indweller in the form of the Atma is verily God Himself.
(Telugu poem)

The melodious songs and bhajans of the devotees from Hyderabad this morning was a joy for the ears and feast for the heart.

Divine love is the most precious thing in this world. No amount of extolling its virtues will exhaust its greatness as no living thing of this world can be devoid of the influence of love. Saint Thyagaraja sang:

From an ant to the Brahman, in Siva or in Kesava,
You do indwell in pure unsullied form of love,
Oh Rama, please be my protector too.
(Telugu Poem)

What is the form of an ant, and what is the form of Brahman? Brahman is infinite. On the other hand, the ant is a tiny creature. From the physical point of view, there can be no comparison between the form of an ant and the form of Brahman. But from the spiritual point of view, Divinity is immanent in both.

A hungry bear once went to an anthill and pleaded with an ant saying, "I am unable to bear the pangs of hunger. Please give me some food."

The ant could not control its laughter. It said, "How can a tiny creature like me alone provide food for you? I don't have sufficient food to satisfy your hunger. Wait, let me see what can be done." It is natural for ants to store food for six months in their anthills. It went inside and with the help of its fellows brought out some of the food that had been stored.

The bear wondered, "How could a tiny creature like an ant store so much food?"

If one has the desire and puts in the necessary effort, one can amass anything; it does not matter whether one is big or small. It is said, Jantunam nara janma durlabham (out of all living beings, human birth is the rarest). Ants, though tiny in form, are able to acquire food, share it with friends, and also store for future. But modern man, in spite of being endowed with intelligence, is frequently unable to earn food even for a single day. Is it not a matter of shame?

In this world, there is no being superior to the human intelligence. But humans are unable to make proper use of their intelligence. They conduct themselves in an unworthy manner because of their selfishness and self-interest. Humans do not lack for anything in their life. There is everything at their disposal. They lack the discrimination to make proper use of the resources available. They are not able to give up their petty qualities and rise

to a higher level. There is a lesson to be learnt even from ants. When an ant bites one's leg, one feels the irritation and immediately tries to kill it. But humans are not making efforts to kill the evil qualities within themselves, which are making their lives miserable.

Embodiments of Love!

In this vast world, no matter where you look, you cannot find any motive power more powerful and more valuable than love. Deep-rooted selfishness and self-interest are making man's intelligence perverted and leading him astray. When you give up selfishness, humanness will blossom in you and your latent powers will manifest. Your power of intelligence will become manifold.

Embodiments of Love!

Nowadays students are reading a wide variety of books. But there is little use in studying a pustaka (book), if the mastaka (head) is filled with rubbish. Students are filling their heads with useless information and in the process are misusing their energy. There is no point in going through a number of textbooks over and over again. They cannot save you from the cycle of birth and death. You should acquire such knowledge that will make you immortal. Present-day students have become proficient in bookish knowledge. They have the intelligence to answer any question from the textbook. But they are not making efforts to translate their bookish knowledge into practical knowledge.

One may acquire a high academic qualification such as M.A.
and B.A. and attain exalted position,
One may amass wealth, perform acts of charity, and attain name and fame,
One may have physical strength and enjoy a long and healthy life,
One may be a great scholar studying and preaching the Vedas,
But none can equal a true devotee of the Lord.
(Telugu Poem)

The knowledge one acquires should be utilised for the benefit of society. You should utilise your wealth and knowledge not for selfish purposes but for the welfare of others. God has given you the human body not merely to eat, sleep and enjoy worldly pleasures. Paropakarartham idam sariram (human body is meant to do good to others). The body is given to you so that you make proper use of your intelligence and power of discrimination and manifest your innate human values. Of what use is your education and intelligence if society is not benefited by them?

Presently, man is making new discoveries and inventions, but till this day he has not really understood the purpose of human birth. What is the meaning of the word manava (human being)? 'Ma' means ajnana (ignorance), 'na' means without, 'va' means varthinchuta (vrittih yasya sah) (to conduct oneself). Hence, manava is one who conducts himself without ignorance. But, these days, we hardly find anyone leading a life of wisdom in consonance with the name manava. In spite of being endowed with high degree of intelligence, people are frittering away their lives in vain pursuits. Before undertaking any task, one should enquire whether it would befit the title of a human being. One should accept everything as the Will of God. God has blessed man with intelligence, knowledge, and wealth so that he will work for the welfare of others. But man is acting contrary to God's wish and thereby ruining himself. Animals like bulls and buffaloes render service to man in a number of ways. But man lacks the spirit of service that even animals possess. Without understanding the purpose of human birth, man is developing demonic qualities and leading a miserable life. Vyashti (individual) signifies humanness and samashti (society) symbolises divinity. Hence, one can attain divinity only by serving society.

Embodiments of Love!

You may be highly educated and intelligent, but there is so much you can learn from ants, birds, and animals. These lessons of life cannot be taught in the classroom. Even teachers are not making efforts to understand the principle of divinity within. Education is not meant to merely eke out a

livelihood. You have to share your knowledge with others, give joy to one and all, and thereby rise to the level of the Divine.

Samatwa (equal-mindedness) is the hallmark of a true human being. Manavatwa without samatwa cannot attain divyatwa (divinity). Hence, develop samatwa in the first instance. Divine power is latent in every human being. But man is becoming weak because he is unable to realise his latent divine power. In order to manifest the divine power, one should cultivate sacred feelings.

Manavatwa has not come into existence in the recent past; it has been there since ages. Human being is born from the womb of the mother, but humanness originated from divinity and is present at all times. There is divinity in every human being. Because he is unable to recognise his innate divinity, man is forgetting his very human nature itself. What is the use of being human only in form but not in practice? Human birth will find fulfilment only when we practise human qualities.

All the sacred texts such as Upanishads and Sastras are meant to show mankind the path of redemption. Man should manifest his latent divinity by following their teachings. The sacred texts will bring out the hidden treasures of divinity from within. That is why Bhagawan has introduced the educare programme in the educational institutions. Education is related to worldly knowledge; it can be acquired by going through books. But educare is meant to externalise the latent divinity in man. Education has temporary benefits, whereas educare bestows everlasting happiness. One cannot become great by mere acquisition of education. One should practise educare and manifest the latent values.

Embodiments of Love!

Educare is the need of the hour. Only through educare can you realise divinity, which is present in every atom and every cell of your body. In fact,

you are seeing divinity every moment but are unable to recognise this truth. You can call yourself educated only when you recognise divinity which is all-pervasive. Secular knowledge is related to education, which can be acquired from outside. It is mere bookish knowledge, whereas educare cannot be acquired from books. No benefit accrues by gathering information from books. What is required is transformation and it is possible only through educare.

Acquisition of information that cannot lead to transformation is a mere waste of time. But man has developed a taste for such information, which is but a waste. Man's intelligence, knowledge, and power are all the gifts of God. They have to be nourished and made proper use of, through educare.

Truly, God has endowed man with immense potential. That is love. It is beyond all description and measure. There is no greater power than this. But man is giving up such power without realising its value. He is under the mistaken notion that love means physical and worldly relationship. True love lies in unification of two hearts. People utter this word repeatedly without actually knowing its meaning. Love does not hurt anybody. It always helps. Hence, consider love as your true wealth. There is no property greater than love in this world. You are misusing the God-given gift of love by diverting it on worldly matters and sensual pleasures. Your foremost duty is to make proper use of love by following the dictum, Help ever, Hurt never. There is no greater dharma than this.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is your only true and eternal property. But, you are diverting it on mean and worldly pursuits. It should be treasured in your heart and utilised for sacred purposes. You may share it with any number of people; it will never diminish. You are unable to understand and experience love in its true spirit. Love is the life-breath of every being. In order to understand love, you have to dive deep into the ocean of love. Love cannot be understood from a superficial level; you have to immerse yourself completely in love. Worldly

love is such that you can just taste it and give it up, but once you taste divine love, you will never give it up. Love is God, God is love. Hence, you cannot separate love from God. Live in love. That is the only way you can understand love and experience God.

Embodiments of Love!

It may be easy to give lectures on love, but it is difficult to understand it. Make every effort to experience love. If you understand the nature of your love, you will understand the love of others. Love is in you, with you, and around you. Once you understand love, you will become the very embodiment of love.

Students!

The more you understand the principle of love, the nobler you will become. Once you understand the principle of love and put it into practice, others will also try to emulate you.

In the epic Ramayana, not only the four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna but also their wives played important roles. They demonstrated great ideals to the world. People extol only Rama and ignore the model conduct of the others. In fact, each of them was as great as Rama Himself. You might have heard of Sumitra, the mother of Lakshmana and Satrughna. People do not attach much importance to her role in the Ramayana. In fact, her name does not figure prominently in the epic. She was a paragon of virtues. Her name, Su-mitra, itself signifies that she was a good friend to one and all. She shared her happiness with everyone. Kausalya and Kaikeyi had one son each, whereas Sumitra had two sons.

When we enquire into the reason, we can understand the mystery behind it. When Dasaratha performed the Putrakameshti Yaga, the Yajna Purusha appeared and handed over the vessel of sacred pudding to Vasishtha. Vasishtha gave the sacred pudding to Dasaratha, who in turn distributed it equally between his three wives. Kausalya and Kaikeyi took their share of the pudding to their respective puja (worship) rooms. Each of them was happy, thinking that her son would be the heir apparent to Ayodhya throne. But

Sumitra had no such thoughts. She carried her bowl of pudding to the terrace and placed it on the parapet wall while drying her hair in the sun. Suddenly, an eagle swooped down and carried away the bowl of sacred pudding. She immediately ran down and informed Kausalya and Kaikeyi about what had happened. Kausalya and Kaikeyi came to the rescue of Sumitra and shared their sacred pudding with her.

Kaikeyi gave half of her share to Sumitra. Kausalya did the same. In due course, Kausalya gave birth to Rama, Kaikeyi to Bharata, and Sumitra to Lakshmana and Satrughna. The sons of Kausalya and Kaikeyi were happily playing in their cradles whereas Sumitra's sons were crying all the time, day and night, without even taking food. Sumitra went to sage Vasishtha and told him about her predicament. Sage Vasishtha closed his eyes. His yogic vision enabled him to know the truth. He said to Sumitra, "Since you partook of the sacred pudding given by Kausalya, you gave birth to Lakshmana, who is an amsa (part) of Rama. Similarly, Satrughna is born out of the share of pudding given to you by Kaikeyi. So, he is a part of Bharata. Put Lakshmana by the side of Rama and Satrughna by the side of Bharata. Then they will rest peacefully."

Sumitra did as instructed by Vasishtha. The children became peaceful and stopped crying. Sumitra felt very happy at this and said to Kausalya and Kaikeyi, "Lakshmana and Satrughna are your gifts. My children will serve your children. Lakshmana will serve Rama and Satrughna will serve Bharata. It is my good fortune that my sons will serve their brothers." This was the basis of the intimate relationship between Rama and Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna.

Sumitra used to experience ineffable bliss, since her two sons Lakshmana and Satrughna were always in the company of Rama and Bharata. She was never depressed by the separation of her children. No one knows why certain things happen and for what purpose. As the four sons of King Dasaratha were growing, Lakshmana always used to accompany Rama and Satrughna would accompany Bharata. Both Lakshmana and Satrughna were mighty warriors.

Without them, there can be no Ramayana at all! Lakshmana was born to serve Rama and Satrughna was born to serve Bharata. Lakshmana was the Embodiment of Love. Similarly, Satrughna used to serve Bharata with all the power at his command. Thus, the four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna were inseparable. Hence, it is not correct to say that Rama was born to Kausalya, Bharata to Kaikeyi, and Lakshmana and Satrughna to Sumitra. Though their mothers were different, they always used to move about in the company of one another.

The four brothers Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna are parts of the same substance and facets of the same Divinity. Similarly, their mothers Kausalya, Sumitra, and Kaikeyi used to move always in the company of one another. There was no discord between them. The unity between the four brothers was in fact the sum and substance of the story of Ramayana. None can describe in full the glory of Ramayana. Each one attempted to describe the glory of Ramayana in their own unique style, with the result that a number of literary works on Ramayana have become available today.

Human nature is not limited to the mere form. It consists of the body, mind, intellect, senses, and, above all, the heart the seat of love. The Ramayana is a great story of intense interaction between these five aspects of human nature. It is not possible for anyone to fully describe the interplay of these factors in Ramayana, however much one may strive.

Once, Kausalya was engaged in some work. Meanwhile, Bharata came running and sat on the lap of Kausalya and started crying. Kausalya was a bit surprised about the reason for Bharata's agony. She tried to console him and enquired as to what made him cry. Bharata replied that they were playing a ball game, and each time Rama was purposely getting defeated in order to ensure the victory of other brothers. Thus, the unity, love, and affection between the brothers were such that they always tried to please others. They used to experience supreme bliss in the company of one another. Only Lakshmana could understand fully the nature of Rama, and only Satrughna

could understand fully the nature of Bharata.

The women in the Ramayana were also exemplary in nature. When Rama was going to the forest to fulfil the wishes and command of his father, King Dasaratha, Sumitra asked Lakshmana to accompany Rama. Immediately, Lakshmana followed him. He experienced great joy in accompanying his elder brother Rama to the forest. Similarly, Satrughna also experienced great joy in the company of Bharata and accompanied him wherever he went.

What does the name of "Satrughna" imply? It means the one who destroys the enemies.

Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Satrughna were ideal brothers. It is not enough to merely extol their ideals, but we must also try to experience that great bond of love in our day-to-day lives and share it with others. The great epic Ramayana is not a mere story. It also explains and expounds the Atma Tattwa. One has to experience that Atma Tattwa. with reaction, reflection, and resound. The Ramayana Tattwa has to be understood properly and translated into our day-to-day lives.

Embodiments of Love!

The Ramayana cannot be compared with other Puranic texts. It is not merely a great poetic work but a great treatise on human relationships between parents and children, between brothers, between husband and wife and between the king and his subjects. It is only when we are able to understand the significance of Ramayana in this larger context that the country will prosper with love and affection between the citizens.

In a few years time, nay, very shortly, the whole world will realise the greatness of Ramayana and try to emulate the ideals set in Ramayana. Today, we find a wide variety of nations, religions, and castes in the world. No. No. The situation will certainly change. Within a short span of time, the

world will realise the truth:

There is only one religion, the Religion of Love.
There is only one caste, the Caste of Humanity.
There is only one God, He is Omnipresent.

The greatest truth propounded by Ramayana is the oneness among humanity. When there is such unity, there will be mutual love between people. When that mutual love between different people develops, the whole world can experience great joy and happiness. Thus, only Ramayana can provide great joy to the entire humanity. Hence, let every individual chant the divine Name "Rama! Rama! Rama!"

Urmila, the wife of Lakshmana was a good painter. She was painting a picture to be presented to Sri Rama on the occasion of His coronation. Exactly at that moment, Lakshmana entered her room. She wanted to get up and look who was the visitor. In the confusion, the paint got spilled over the unfinished painting. She felt very bad. "How come this painting got spoiled when actually I wanted to portray the beauty and majesty of Sri Rama on the occasion of His coronation and show it to the world?", she thought.

Urmila had a very compassionate heart. She always entertained noble thoughts. She did not feel sad even for a moment when her husband Lakshmana accompanied Rama to the forest. She was always contemplating on Sri Rama during His exile to the forest. Not only she, the wives of Bharata and Satrughna, Mandavi and Srutakeerthi, were also engaged in constant contemplation of Sri Rama and praying for His return to Ayodhya. Thus, when they were in constant contemplation of Rama, their strength increased day by day.

If you analyse the underlying meaning of every incident in the Ramayana, all

of them point to only one principle, the principle of unity: unity between the brothers, unity between their wives, etc. Even in times of calamity like when Lakshmana fell unconscious during the war with the rakshasas (demons) in Lanka, Rama did not lose heart, and neither did Sumitra, the mother of Lakshmana. She was always confident that no danger would ever befall Lakshmana, since he was in the service of Lord Rama. Thus, during the entire period of 14 years of Rama's exile to the forest, all the brothers and their wives were always thinking and wishing only the well-being of Rama; so, were their mothers. Such was the nobility of their hearts.

Embodiments of Love!

Any amount of narration of the greatness and nobility of the characters in the Ramayana will not suffice and do justice to the cause. The story of Ramayana cannot be fully described since it is "His Story".

The stories of Lord Vishnu are amazing,
They purify the lives of the people in all the three worlds,
They are like the sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage,
They are like good friends who help you in times of need,
They are like shelters for the sages and seers doing penance in the forest.

It is therefore, very essential for every human being to emulate the ideals set by Lord Sri Rama in their day-to-day lives.

(Bhagawan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "Rama Rama Rama Sita".)

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

8. Understand the Spirit of Service

Date: 11 April 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Seva Dal Conference

Of karma born, in karma grown, in karma does man die.
So rules karma, all stages of human life as though it is
the very deity of human existence.
Of joy and sorrow, the master is karma.
(Telugu poem)

Of the denizens of creation human beings are the highest. It is said Jantunam nara janma durlabham (of all living beings, birth as human is the rarest). It is the human creation that has caused major changes in the world. Joy does not exist alone and is entwined with sorrow and vice versa, and the human being is the root cause for both happiness and sorrow.

Embodiments of Love!

Nowadays, man is unable to realise his true nature because he is giving importance to only the physical form. He has lost his reasoning faculty. Since he calls himself a human being, it is his duty to realise the uniqueness of humanness. A person cannot name himself a human being merely on the basis of his birth and educational qualifications. Actually, real humanness cannot be found in academic degrees. Even birds and beasts can be taught certain skills to perform wonderful feats imitating human beings. It is no credit to a human being deriving satisfaction simply by empty rhetoric, quoting scriptures, and relating to others.

Real humanness consists in practising ideals in one's life and setting an example to others. Man has no authority to teach ideals to others without

putting them into practice himself first. There is immense divine power in human beings. He is not simply a dehadhari (one who has assumed a human body). He is endowed with vijnana (higher wisdom), prajana (constant integrated awareness), and sujana (discriminatory knowledge). Therefore, he is expected to channel these higher forms of knowledge in the right path.

First and foremost, one has to understand the true meaning of jana (wisdom). Some people think that knowledge acquired by reading numerous books is jana. No, this is not correct. Real jana is the knowledge that emerges from one's own self and that is experienced and taught to others. Finally, this would enable the person concerned to be greatly benefited and enlightened.

One has to realise the importance of the term, "human quality" first. Human quality emerges from one's own self. It cannot be acquired by reading textbooks or listening to others.

Embodiments of Love!

You have come all the way from Kerala and assembled here to acquire jana and to know the real meaning of the terms prajana, vijnana, and sujana. Mere textual knowledge without practical knowledge becomes "allergy". On the other hand, when bookish knowledge is transformed into practical knowledge, it becomes "energy". You wish to know what real knowledge is: that which has been acquired by practice is the real knowledge. That alone would entitle you to the epithet manavatwa (humanness).

Embodiments of Love!

All that we teach to others must be supported by practice. Everything is reaction, reflection, and resound of one's own inner being. Every word we utter is the resound of the inner being. Reflection is that which is contemplated upon, experienced, and put into practice. The third aspect, reaction is, however, very important. Reaction comes out of action. Hence,

our actions must always be pure and sacred.

The three aspects reaction, reflection, and resound occupy a place of prominence in the life of a human being. Whatever man learns today comes under the category of resound, meaning that they are taught by the teacher from textbooks. This is bookish knowledge. Resound comes out of reaction, and reaction transforms itself into reflection. The unity of all these three aspects constitute humanness.

Hence, a human being should not waste his time by empty rhetoric. Every word he utters must be backed by deep contemplation and knowledge of its inner meaning. Only after that should he try to teach others. Unfortunately, these days, mere bookish knowledge is considered as true knowledge and a lot of time is spent in acquiring it. Real knowledge should emerge from the mastaka (head and heart). Therefore, one should cleanse one's head and heart and remove the impurities therein. Only then is it possible to understand things in the right perspective and acquire wisdom.

Exult not on your erudition, oh man;
Without humble prayer and devotion to your indwelling god,
All your learning is just a load in your head.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

It may be necessary for you to adapt yourself to new techniques and practices from time to time. At present, the world is undergoing phenomenal changes. All those changes may not be relevant to you. Nevertheless, you are required to acquire several branches of knowledge in the modern times to cope with the rapid changes in science and technology taking place all over

the world. However, they do not constitute real vidya (knowledge).

Real education is that by which one is able to realise one's own nature. Avidya breeds avidya. Hence, one cannot become great by pursuing secular education. One has to make efforts to distinguish between vidya and avidya. Vidya is that by which one can develop the power of reasoning and discrimination and realise the truth. On the other hand, avidya constitutes indiscriminate usage of words and vain argumentation.

One has to acquire practical knowledge as well, by which one can gain experience. This experience can be shared with others. Such practical knowledge and experience confer strength on a person. However, this strength is not to be construed as mere physical strength. It is like the electrical energy latent in a wire. Just as there is electrical energy in a live wire, there is latent energy in the human body, which manifests in different ways. It can be harnessed for different purposes like reading, writing, walking, talking, etc. However, it has no form. Nevertheless, it travels throughout the body of a human being from head to toe. By tapping this energy, an ajnani (ignorant person) can become a jnani (one of wisdom).

Embodiments of Love!

You are all students, and you continue to be so throughout your life. It is a mistake to think that you have finished your education and are now engaged in service activities. You are not servants working under somebody. In fact, you are leaders.

It is a mistake to confer doership on yourselves for any service activity undertaken by you. This should never happen. In fact, whatever service activities you are undertaking are for your own upliftment. These service activities must be undertaken with self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice, and ultimately for the purpose of self-realisation. Thus, the spirit of

service develops from the self. Service is not any way construed to be helping others. You may think that you are helping others by joining the Sathya Sai Seva Organisation and undertaking service activities. This is not correct. Also, you need not seek the help of others in these service activities. You can depend upon your own innate strength and energy. The power of your own self will help you in all your endeavours. In fact, you are the beneficiary of all your service activities and not others. Your own self will protect you in your endeavours.

Members of the Seva Dal!

You may think that you have come here for undertaking service. This service is not for others. You are coming here to serve your own self, just as you eat food to fill your own stomach. Man undertakes every activity for his self-fulfilment.

There are several things that you have to learn in these two days. We will discuss these matters later. Since this is the first day, I spoke to you in detail so that you may understand the spirit of service. There are several other things that you have to learn.

What is Seva Dal? Each member of the Seva Dal is like a dal (petal) in a beautiful flower. There are several skills to be learnt by the members of the Seva Dal. If you plant a sapling, it will grow into a plant in due course and yield beautiful flowers. However, the sapling by itself is not attractive. When the plant grows and yields flowers, the beauty of the flowers and fragrance therein will provide joy to one and all. There are several petals in a flower. The flower appears beautiful as long as there are petals in it. Once the petals fade and fall down, the flower ceases to exist. Hence, you should be like the petals of a beautiful flower. Let everyone experience the beauty and enjoy the fragrance of the flower in which you are like the petals.

There are several things still to be told to you which Mukundan will tell you.

Later on, I will provide any clarifications you may require.

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

9. Love is God, God is Love, Live in Love

Date: 13 April 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Seva Dal Conference

God is love and love is God.
When you hold on to this principle of love and
develop love to love relationship,
you will attain the state of non-dualism.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

You have come here with a lot of expectation to take part in the conference. Though your stay at Prasanthi Nilayam is short, your experiences are profound, and you have described them at length in your speeches. However, you deserve much more.

The day on which all the devotees gather and sing the glory of God melodiously;
the day on which the sufferings of the poor are lovingly removed and all people live like brothers and sisters;
the day on which groups of dasas (servants of God) who constantly contemplate on God are served a sumptuous feast;
the day on which noble souls visit us and narrate the stories of God lovingly - enjoy that day as the real day.
All other days are mere death anniversaries.
Do I need to say more, oh noble souls!
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

In this conference, you have dealt at length on various aspects such as the duties and responsibilities of youth and how they should mould their character. Let all your activities be suffused with love.

Modern youth fail to understand the true meaning of love. Love cannot exist if there is a feeling of duality. *Ekatma prema* (non-dual love) is true love. Give-and-take relationship does not reflect the true spirit of love. One should keep giving and giving, without expecting anything in return. That is true love. To retreat in times of difficulty is the sign of selfish love. *Yathartha prema* (true love) will reign supreme only when you give up *swartha* (selfishness) and strive for *parartha* (welfare of others).

You should know the difference between *padartha* (matter) and *yathartha* (reality). Reality transcends matter.

Sarvam khalvidam Brahma
(verily all this is Brahman).

Consider everything as divine, and treat the dualities of life, such as pain and pleasure, loss and gain, with equanimity.

Sukhadukhe samekruthwa labhalabhau jayajayau
(one should remain unaffected by happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat).

Never be carried away by the vagaries of the mind. When you follow the

mind, you see only matter but not the reality. Mind is related to matter. You should not have anything to do with matter. When you associate yourself with the mind, you can never visualise unity. You cannot develop true love and devotion unless you give up duality.

Embodiments of Love!

Understand that the same principle of love exists in you and others. A true devotee is one who understands the principle of unity and acts accordingly. Non-dualism is true devotion. Share your love with others without any expectation. Love everybody only for the sake of love. When you extend your love to others, you can attain the state of non-dualism.

The love that you experience at physical and worldly plane day in and day out is not true love at all! True love is that which is focused on one form, one path, and one goal. It is a great mistake to divide love and divert it in different directions.

Love is God. God is love. Live in love.

Only then can you realise the principle of oneness and attain fulfilment in life.

Prema muditha manase kaho Rama Rama Ram (Sing the sweet name of Rama with your heart filled with love). You may choose any name you like, but you should call Him with all love. Love is most sacred, sweet, and non-dual. It is a great mistake to divide such love and associate it with multiplicity. Your love should remain steady in pleasure and pain. Love and devotion do not give any scope for differences. All differences are the making of your mind. Develop the feeling of oneness that you and I are one. Never think that you and I are different. That is the sign of true devotion.

The letter 'I' stands for oneness. 'You' (individual identity) will not exist when you develop purity and experience oneness with divinity. Hence, give up dualistic feeling. The principle of oneness has to be experienced through love. It cannot be explained in words.

But you have not understood the true meaning of love. You are interpreting it in the physical and worldly sense. Consequently, your love is never steady. It keeps changing every now and then. Love should not be tainted with body attachment. Body is made up of matter. All that is related to matter will never give you peace and happiness. Hence, transcend matter and see the reality. Develop ekatma bhava (feeling of oneness). All are one, be alike to everyone. It is a big mistake to attribute worldly feelings to love. There is no scope for dualism in love.

Embodiments of Love!

Your names and forms are different, but the principle of love is the same in all of you. That is why I address you as the "embodiments of love". Love is always one, it should not be divided. Consider God as one and love Him wholeheartedly. Such one-pointed love toward God can be termed true devotion. Devotees like Jayadeva, Gauranga, and Eknath developed such divine love and sanctified their lives. Likewise, Mira and Sakhubai had unwavering love and devotion toward God. They did not worship various names and forms. They followed one path. They installed one name and one form in their heart and contemplated on their chosen deity incessantly.

Those who are dual-minded and change their path every now and then are bound to ruin their lives. Hence, never be dual-minded. Experience divinity with ekatma bhava. You may choose any name you like - Rama, Krishna, Easwara, etc. - and contemplate on the form. You will certainly reach the goal of life. Lead your life with your mind always focused on the goal.

Once, Radha could not find Krishna anywhere. Since she was deeply attached

to Krishna's physical form, she went in search of Him everywhere. She always yearned and pined for His physical proximity. The name and the form are one and the same. However, people are unable to enquire deeply and experience such oneness.

The power of love is unparalleled. It is beyond the ken of human understanding. Love can be understood only through love.

Mira's husband, Rana, had built a *mandir* (temple) for Krishna. Being a great devotee of the Lord, Mira was always found in the mandir singing His glory ecstatically. Consequently, she earned the wrath of Rana. He commanded her to leave the mandir. This came as a great shock to Mira. She thought to herself, "When Krishna is all-pervasive and not confined to this mandir alone, how can Rana take me away from Him?" She left her home and hearth and set out to Mathura. Where is Mathura? It is not some geographical location. The heart suffused with nectarine love is Mathura.

She sang, *Chalo Re Man Ganga Yamuna Teer* (Oh mind! Go to the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna). Here, Ganga and Yamuna symbolically mean ida and pingala (left and right nostrils). The central part of the eyebrows where ida and pingala meet stands for Mathura. This is the esoteric meaning of the song.

She proceeded toward Mathura, chanting the Name of Krishna incessantly, while crossing rivers, hills, dales, and forests. When she ultimately reached Brindavan, she found the temple doors closed. In spite of her repeated prayers, the doors did not open. Then she said, "Oh Krishna, my heart is Your temple. I have installed You in the altar of my heart." She banged her head against the temple door, calling out to Krishna. She had the vision of Krishna and merged in Him. King Rana repented for having driven away Mira from the temple. He prayed to Krishna for forgiveness.

People these days do not enquire into the inner meaning of certain words they use. They are carried away by the worldly meanings and interpretations. You should take into consideration the feelings that emerge from your heart which is true and eternal. This is how Mira experienced oneness with Krishna. If one wishes to tread the path of devotion, one should hold on to the principle of love firmly. Ordinary mortals do not have such firm determination, but a true devotee will never deviate from the path of love under any circumstances. No other path except love can take us to God. Develop love more and more. Wherever you are, love is your sole refuge.

Embodiments of Love!

Fill your hearts with love, and let love be the guiding principle in all your activities when you return home. When you have love in your heart, you do not need to worry about anything. God will always be with you, in you, around you and will look after you in all respects. When you say, "Krishna, I will follow You," it means that Krishna is separate from you. It is possible that you will lose your way. Hence, you should pray, "Krishna, please be with me always." In fact, He is always in you. When you enquire deeply, you will experience this truth. It is impossible to be away from Him.

Many devotees proclaim, "Oh God, I am in you, I am with you and I am for you." They repeat these words like parrots but do not say them from the depths of their heart. Actually, God is never separate from you. Pray to Him wholeheartedly with the conviction that He is always in you, with you, above you, below you, and around you. When you offer such a prayer to God, He will certainly redeem your life.

We have one more day left. I will explain all these in detail so that you will understand them better. Do not feel satisfied with what you have experienced so far. There is much more to be experienced, which will fill your heart with bliss. How can you say that your hunger is satisfied by eating a little? There is a lot of scope for you to experience divinity in full measure in the days to come.

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

10. Ramayana - a Sacred Way of Life

Date: 18 April 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Rama Navami

Sweeter than sugar, tastier than curd,
sweeter indeed than honey is the Name of Rama.
Constant repetition of this sweet Name
gives one the taste of divine nectar itself.
Therefore, one should contemplate on the Name of Rama incessantly.
(Telugu poem)

The Ramayana represents a sacred path, a sacred door to divinity, a sacred way of life. The Ramayana is not merely the biography of an individual. All characters in the Ramayana are equally important. Dasaratha distributed the sacred pudding he received from the Yajna Purusha equally among his three wives. Kausalya received her share of pudding joyfully and took it to her *puja* (worship) room. Kaikeyi also did the same. Each of them was happy thinking that her son would be the heir apparent to the Ayodhya throne.

However, Sumitra had no such desire. She carried her bowl of pudding to the terrace and placed it on the parapet wall while drying her hair in the sun. All the while, she was contemplating on God. As she watched helplessly, an eagle swooped down and carried away the bowl of sacred pudding. She was shocked and disturbed thinking of the reprimand she would have to face from her husband for being careless. She at once rushed downstairs and informed Kausalya and Kaikeyi about what had happened. Unlike the co-wives of the present time, the three queens had utmost love and affection for each other. Kausalya and Kaikeyi hugged Sumitra and consoled her, saying, "Sister, why are you disturbed so much? We three are one and we will share our pudding with you." Kausalya and Kaikeyi at once went into their respective shrine

rooms and brought their pudding cups. Each of them gave half of her share of pudding to Sumitra. Sumitra felt greatly relieved and expressed her gratitude to her sisters. The three queens offered their pudding to God and partook of it.

Very soon, they conceived. It was Kausalya who developed labour pains first, and she gave birth to a male child. Then Kaikeyi was blessed with a son. Soon Sumitra developed labour pains and gave birth to two sons. In fact, Sumitra never had any desire to have children. But she was blessed with two sons. She accepted it as the Will of God and was very happy about it. The three queens were waiting for King Dasaratha to come and bless the children. Dasaratha went to each of them and showered his blessings on the children. It was then that Sumitra revealed to King Dasaratha the incident of the eagle carrying away her bowl of pudding and her sisters Kausalya and Kaikeyi giving half of their share of pudding to her. That was the reason she was blessed with two sons.

King Dasaratha requested Sage Vasistha, the family preceptor, to christen the newborn children. Sage Viswamitra was also invited for the function. Many sages, Vedic scholars, and eminent personalities who attended the naming ceremony were spellbound by the ethereal beauty of the children. Sage Vasistha, Sage Viswamitra, and other sages blessed the children by chanting Vedic mantras. Everyone was wondering how Sumitra had two sons while Kausalya and Kaikeyi were blessed with only one son each. How can anybody comprehend the ways of God? Everything happened according to God's Will.

Sage Vasistha named Kausalya's son Sri Rama, since He had the power of attraction in Him.

Ramayathi Ithi Ramah
(that which attracts is the principle of Rama).

The name "Rama" was given to Him according to His birth star. His form was highly brilliant and resplendent. As per the tradition, Vasishtha wrote the name Rama on rice.

Then Vasistha named Sumitra's first son Lakshmana, since he looked one of valour and his face shone with all auspicious attributes. He named her second son Satrughna, saying he would destroy all *satrus* (enemies). Vasistha then went to where Kaikeyi was seated with her son on her lap. She was bubbling with joy as she remembered the promise made by Dasaratha that her son would be made the crown prince of Ayodhya. She was thinking that her son would rule over the kingdom of Bharat. Keeping this in mind, Vasistha named her son Bharata. In this manner, the naming ceremony came to a happy conclusion.

The sons of Kausalya and Kaikeyi were having timely food and sleep and were happily playing in their cradles. On the other hand, Sumitra's sons were crying all the time, day and night, without even taking food. Sumitra became restless seeing the plight of her sons. When she mentioned this to King Dasaratha, he consoled her saying, "Everything happens according to God's Will. Pray to Him. He will take care of the rest." There was little he could do about it.

Three days passed, the situation remained the same. Sumitra could no longer bear the suffering of the children. She went to sage Vasishtha and told him about her predicament. Sage Vasishtha closed his eyes. His yogic vision enabled him to know the truth. He said to Sumitra, "Since you partook of the sacred pudding given by Kausalya, you gave birth to Lakshmana, who is an *amsa* (part) of Rama. Similarly, Satrughna is born out of the share of pudding given to you by Kaikeyi. So, he is a part of Bharata. Put Lakshmana by the side of Rama and Satrughna by the side of Bharata. Then they will rest peacefully."

Sumitra did as instructed by Vasishtha. The children became peaceful and stopped crying. Watching this, everyone heaved a sigh of relief. As the children grew up, it became very clear to Sumitra that Lakshmana was an amsa (part) of Rama and Satrughna was an amsa of Bharata. One day, she told Kausalya and Kaikeyi, "Dear sisters, your sons may ascend the throne of Ayodhya in future. I have no such ambitions. I am happy to see my sons being in the company of their elder brothers and serve them." Accordingly Lakshmana and Satrughna were always in the company of Rama and Bharata respectively. They served them and spent their time blissfully. King Dasaratha and the three queens were very happy to see such unity and harmony among their children.

It is but natural that both happiness and difficulties follow each other. As King Dasaratha was spending his time blissfully, one day Sage Viswamitra came with a request, which caused great anxiety to the king. Viswamitra said, "Oh king! I want you to do me a favour." Without a second thought, Dasaratha promised to do the needful. Then the sage said, "I have decided to perform a *yajna* (ritual sacrifice). I request you to send your son, Rama to protect the yajna from the demons."

Dasaratha was in a dilemma. He thought, "Rama is very young and tender. He knows no hardship. How can I send Him to the forest with the sage? How can He fight the cruel demons?"

When he expressed his feelings to the sage, Viswamitra became furious and said, "Oh King! It is a great folly to go back on your word, for no one in the noble lineage of Ikshvaku has, until now, ever broken his word. You are tainting their glory by breaking the promise given to me."

Dasaratha became frightened on hearing the words of Viswamitra. He consulted Sage Vasistha in this regard and ultimately decided to send Rama

with the sage. He left everything to God's Will. He called Rama to his presence. Rama came there with all valour and courage. It was natural for Lakshmana to follow Rama wherever He went. Hence, Lakshmana also came to Dasaratha with Rama. Nobody had called Lakshmana. He came of his own accord and sat next to Rama. The king did not want to dissuade Lakshmana from following Rama. The ritwiks chanted Mantras and blessed Rama and Lakshmana before the two brothers set out with Sage Viswamitra.

When they reached the banks of the Sarayu river, Sage Viswamitra said, "My dear ones! This is a very sacred place. Hence, you may perform Sandhya Vandana here." Rama and Lakshmana offered their prayers as instructed by the sage. They closed their eyes and sat in meditation for sometime. Then Viswamitra thought that it would be very difficult for the royal princes, who were used to palatial comforts and luxuries, to keep awake day and night to guard the yajna. They cannot even think of food because they have to be on high alert all the time to fight the demons. It was then that the sage taught them the sacred mantras of Bala and Atibala that would help them overcome sleep and hunger.

Viswamitra, accompanied by Rama and Lakshmana reached Siddhasrama and started the performance of the yajna. Rama and Lakshmana guarded the yajna night and day, chanting the mantras taught by the sage. They never felt pangs of hunger, nor did they feel sleepy. They were on high alert all the time in all enthusiasm and exuberance. All of a sudden, the demons appeared in their frightening forms and tried to disrupt the yajna. They were making deafening sounds. But the princes were least perturbed. They fought the demons with courage and valour and ultimately vanquished them. Viswamitra was very happy that he could complete the performance of the yajna without any interruption. He showered his love and blessings on Rama and Lakshmana.

In the meantime, a letter arrived from Janaka, the king of Mithila, inviting the sage to take part in a yajna. Viswamitra told the princes, "My dear ones! We have received an invitation from the noble King Janaka. I am proceeding to Mithila, and I wish that you two should accompany me."

At first, Rama was not inclined to go to Mithila and said to Lakshmana, "Dear younger brother, our father instructed us to follow Sage Viswamitra and protect his yajna. We don't have his permission to go to Mithila and take part in the yajna performed by King Janaka."

When the same was conveyed to Viswamitra, he convinced them saying, "My dear ones, your father commanded you to follow me and it is your duty to follow me wherever I go." The princes had no option but to obey the command of Viswamitra.

The arrival of Rama and Lakshmana in Mithila created a sensation. People admired them and began talking about them. As they were moving in the streets, they attracted everyone's attention. "Who are these handsome princes? They look strong and valorous. Have they come to marry the daughters of King Janaka?" People started talking to themselves in this manner. They reached the royal palace allotted to them and rested. The yajna was to commence on the next day.

A meeting was also being arranged for which the gallant heroes of Bharat were invited. It was to see if anyone could break the bow of Siva. The victor could win the hand of Janaka's daughter, Sita. One after the other, the princes tried to lift the bow of Siva, but had to return to their seats humiliated. At the insistence of Viswamitra, Rama gently walked toward the bow and raised it with His left hand. There was a thunderous applause. When He bent the bow to tie the string, it broke with a thunderous sound. Sita was brought there ready with a garland. Then Viswamitra asked Rama whether He was ready to marry Sita.

Rama was ready to undertake any task entrusted to Him by Viswamitra, but he was certainly not prepared for the marriage. Rama offered His salutations

to Viswamitra and politely said, "Swami! You have brought us with you to safeguard your yajna and not for performing our marriage. I would not think of marriage unless I get the consent of My father."

The sage was in a fix. There was absolute silence in the assembly. Everyone was surprised at Rama's reply. Rama was firm in His stand. Thereupon King Janaka sent his messengers along with a few disciples of Viswamitra with an invitation to King Dasaratha. Viswamitra's disciples narrated to Dasaratha all that had happened. The king, the queens, and the people of Ayodhya were filled with joy and jubilation at the prospect of the marriage between Rama and Sita. Dasaratha accompanied by his queens, Bharata, and Satrughna, and a host of others, arrived at Mithila.

The womenfolk proceeded to the venue of the wedding in all enthusiasm, singing joyously, exhorting each other to witness the celestial wedding of Sita and 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.
Father Dasaratha has made ready bounteous feasts.
All learned sages are assembled with Vasishtha presiding.
Oh, what a multitude has assembled
to rejoice, hearts with joy overflowing.
Wedding of the holy pair
Rama and Sita, such a sight is indeed rare.
The sight shall confer great merit.

Rama looks the cool full moon,
and Sita is a matching double.
The compassionate Rama, who loves all,
will confer his grace on us all.
Come quickly to witness the holy wedding of Rama and Sita.
(Telugu Song)

The men folk were also ecstatic and joined the festivity by singing thus:

Come let us go and see the marriage of Rama and Sita,
The sight shall confer great merit.
The lives of those who see this marriage will be sanctified.
Oh come one and all to see the sacred marriage,
Rama, who is riding on an elephant, is shining effulgently.
Mother Sita is by His side,
The brothers are at their service.
Sita and Rama will smilingly enquire about our well-being;
What else can we aspire for!
Come let us go anon to see the holy wedding of Rama and Sita.
(Telugu Song)

Sita was Janaka's foster daughter. He had another daughter by name Urmila. His brother Kushadwaja also had two daughters by name Mandavi and Srutakeerthi. With the consent of King Dasaratha, it was decided that the four brides would be given in marriage to the four brothers. Dasaratha was happy that all his four sons who were born on the same day were getting married on the same day and same time. The marriage function was celebrated in all grandeur.

Sweet notes of auspicious music reverberated in the air. The Vedic priests chanted the sacred mantras full-throated and blessed the couples. King

Dasaratha shed tears of joy. Everyone was filled with divine bliss watching the marriage proceedings.

It is customary during the occasion that the bride and the bridegroom exchange garlands. Sita had to garland Rama first, before the other brides could garland their respective bridegrooms. Sita, being short in stature, could not garland Rama who was *ajanubahu* (tall personality). Unless Rama bent His head before Sita, she could not garland Him. But He did not want to bend His head lest people should blame Him for not maintaining the honour of His lineage. Unable to garland Rama, Sita was holding the garland in her hand for a long time.

There is another secret in this act of Rama. Lakshmana was the incarnation of Adishesha, who carried the mother earth on his hood. Rama looked at Lakshmana as if to say, "Look, why don't you raise that part of the earth where Sita is standing to enable her to garland Me?" Then Lakshmana indicated to Rama that it was not possible to raise any particular area. If he tried to raise that part of the earth where Sita was standing, simultaneously Rama would be raised and so also others.

Lakshmana, being endowed with intelligence, thought of a plan to solve the problem. All of a sudden, he fell at the feet of Rama and did not get up for a long time. Rama had to bend to lift Lakshmana up. Sita seized the opportunity and lost no time in garlanding Rama. Then the other three brides garlanded their respective grooms. The four brothers and their brides shone like brilliant gemstones. The onlookers shed tears of joy watching the grand spectacle.

As they were returning to Ayodhya, they heard a loud and frightening sound. Rama instructed Lakshmana to be ready for the battle. Parasurama appeared on the scene and challenged Rama saying, "Oh Rama! I have heard that you have broken the bow of Siva. It is of no consequence and is not at all difficult to lift. If you really have strength, you should break this weapon of mine." So

saying, Parasurama hurled his weapon at the feet of Rama. Rama calmly picked it up and broke the weapon. Parasurama at once fell at the feet of Rama.

The people of Ayodhya welcomed the newly-wed couples. At the main entrance, Kausalya, Sumitra, and Kaikeyi gave the brides and grooms Mangalarati and took them inside. The entire city of Ayodhya bore a festive look and everyone rejoiced.

Today, everyone is celebrating the marriage of Sita and Rama. But, after the marriage, Rama had to face many ordeals. He overcame them all with fortitude. He decimated the demonic forces. Lakshmana was His main weapon. With his help, Rama emerged victorious in the battle with demons. Many a time He lavished praises on His brothers saying, "My brothers are greater than Me. I owe My victory to them. I could win over the enemies because of the strength of unity among us."

The lives of Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna demonstrated the ideal of brotherhood to the entire world. Such ideal brotherhood is not noticed today. Many wonderful events took place in the life of Lord Rama.

The stories of Lord Vishnu are amazing,
They purify the lives of the people in all the three worlds,
They are like the sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage,
They are like good friends who help you in times of need,
They are like shelters for the sages and seers doing penance in the forest.
(Telugu Poem)

It is not enough to merely celebrate the Rama Navami as the birthday of Sri Rama. You should understand the purpose of His birth and practise the ideals

He demonstrated. Rama Kalyana does not mean the marriage of Rama and Sita at the physical level. Rama Kalyana is Atma Kalyana; it signifies the merging of Atma (individual soul) with Paramatma (universal soul). This is not the story of an individual. Rama symbolises the cosmic and universal spirit.

Alternative	Link	to	Discourse:
http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html			

11. Win the Love of your Mother to Win Love of God

Date: 06 May 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Easwaramma Day

When man is born out of his mother's womb,
he has no garland of any kind around his neck.
Neither of pearls, nor gold, nor a string of gems nor a
necklace of topaz or of rubies or other precious gems
can be seen even for a sample.
There is, however, a garland around his neck, carrying
the unbroken link of the effects of the good and bad
deeds of his past lives strung together by Lord Brahma.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

The love of the mother is nobler and supreme than the love of all the friends and relatives in the world. The power of the mother is unparalleled. That is why we call the native country Motherland. The country of Bharath (India) is like our mother. In this sacred land of ours, several types of energy have been developing since ancient times. Great and holy men like Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Vivekananda could acquire great spiritual power only due to the strength of their mothers' blessings. The sacredness of a mother's heart and the strength of her blessings are unparalleled. But, unfortunately, people are unable to understand properly the love of a mother, not only in our country but in every country.

It is a great sin to ignore the mother with such a divine power. It is only to remind the people of the nobility and sacredness of the mother that she has been given the foremost place in the spiritual field, by exhorting people to

worship the mother first as God. It is said "Mathrudevo bhava (worship the mother as God)"; "Pithrudevo bhava (worship the father as God)"; "Acharyadevo bhava (worship the teacher as God)"; "Athithidevo bhava (worship the guest as God)". Thus, the mother has been given the first place in that order.

It is only when we uphold the honour and dignity of the mother that we will be entitled to be called as true sons. The life of a person who could not win the love of his mother is a mere waste. Hence, we must first acquire the deservedness to win the love of the mother. No one can describe the love of a mother in words. It is only by the strength of a mother's will that a son will come up well in life. Hence, one should respect and love his mother. She must be given the pride of place. It is only such people that can really lead the country. We may or may not worship other deities, but we must certainly worship our mother as God. We should never forget the love of our mother. The love of a mother is supreme. It is only by the love of the mother that divine feelings develop in the children. Where there is a mother of noble qualities, there will surely be all kinds of peace and prosperity. It is foolish to crave for the love of the people, ignoring the love of one's own mother. One should, therefore, revere and respect the mother. One should try to experience the love of the mother.

The mother of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was a noble lady. Even in dire circumstances, when she had no food and drink, she developed unflinching faith in and devotion to God and spent her time engaging herself in cultivating noble thoughts and performing noble deeds, thereby earning God's grace.

Only when one respects one's mother and wins her love can one be called a human being in the real sense. There is no God greater than one's mother in this world.

Unfortunately, today people forget this truth and go to different places in search of God. Instead of craving for the unseen God, one should worship and serve the living divinity that is right in front of one. Several people undertake different activities like penance, pilgrimage to holy places, worship, and other rituals in order to have the holy darshan of God, but they will be of no use. One cannot win the grace of God without first winning the love of one's mother. The love of the mother flows as an undercurrent in every human being.

You go through the history of any great person; it is obvious that they could reach such great heights in life only with the help of their mother's love. When one leads his life in accordance with one's mother's noble thoughts, one will be relieved of all kinds of suffering. One may or may not respect any other person; but one must definitely respect one's mother. One should dedicate one's entire life to win the love of one's mother. The mother's love is always selfless. We must learn to cultivate such love. Wherever you go, whoever you may see, you can find that they have become prosperous only with the blessings of their mother's love. If one cannot win the love of one's mother, how can one hope to win the grace of God? Hence, first and foremost, you strive to win the love of your mother. Do not undertake any work that will hurt the feelings of your mother. The heart of a mother is very tender. Therefore, one should not hurt the feelings of the mother.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was born in a very poor family. His mother brought him up by begging for alms. Whatever little food she could collect by begging in the streets, she used to feed her son and herself go without food. After some time, she became very weak and her health failed. One day, Ramakrishna enquired his mother, "Mother! Why did your health fail like this?" A neighbouring lady replied to the question saying, "Dear son! Your mother is sustaining you by begging in the streets. She gives all the food collected to you and therefore goes without food for herself. Please do not put such a mother, who is an embodiment of love, to suffering." From then on, Ramakrishna took care to keep his mother hale and healthy. He used to feed his mother first with the food collected from various houses in the village and

only then partake of the remaining quantity. By doing so, he could win the grace of Mother Kali and have Her divine Vision.

The culture of Bharath has laid great stress on the teaching, "Mathrudevo bhava (revere the mother as God)" and "Pithrudevo bhava (revere the father as God)" more than all other aspects. A person who could win the love of his mother can win everything else. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa could earn the great name for himself only because he could win the love of his mother. How many great people are there in the state of West Bengal? How many people of noble qualities, rich and educated, are there? But they could not succeed in life due to lack of faith in God. Ramakrishna Paramahansa could lead an ideal life only by loving his mother and obeying her commands, due to his implicit faith and devotion in his mother. He used to teach people that there is nothing greater and nobler in this world than mother's love. The mother is God, verily. It is, therefore, not good and proper to hurt the feelings of the mother who is embodiment of love. Only when we develop love toward our mother will our life become happy and prosperous. Hence, first and foremost, we must strive to win the love of our mother. Whatever the mother does is for our own good. We must develop such firm faith. Take the history of any great person in this world - he owes his greatness to his mother.

Students of the present time are unable to win their mothers' love. The mother undergoes a great ordeal. She is even prepared to undertake hard labour to earn a few rupees, to bring up her children and educate them somehow. What a great sacrilege it is to forget the love of such a noble mother! Only a person who could win the love of his mother can earn God's love as well. We are not born from the earth or the sky; we are born from the womb of our mother. It is possible that differences may arise between a mother and a son, at times. But, the mother does not hate her son on that count and forsake him. There may be sons who hate their mothers, but there are no mothers who hate their sons.

The mother will always aspire for the welfare of her son. Even if they go to the court in a matter of dispute, the mother will say, "He is my son and I am his

mother." They cannot refer to each other in any other manner. The mother will always strive for the safety, health, and welfare of her children. Man, today, is undergoing several difficulties on account of ignoring the love of such a noble mother. If you strive to win the love of your mother, you can win the love of all other people. The love of your mother will always be with you, constantly guarding and guiding you in all your endeavours.

Unfortunately, people are not able to realise this Truth. They think, "it is enough to provide a few morsels of food to that old lady." They are so narrow-minded and selfish. It is a great mistake to think that their responsibility will end by providing some food to their mothers. The mother should always be held in high esteem and served. She must be made to feel happy and contented.

Pundarika was a great devotee of Lord Panduranga. He always held the view that service to the parents is of paramount importance. One day, he was serving his parents by massaging their feet. In order to test his love toward his parents, Lord Panduranga appeared before him. But Pundarika did not want to be distracted from his attention and continued to serve his parents. Lord Panduranga asked him, "My dear Son! I appeared before you to give you My darshan; but you are not looking at Me. Whom are you serving with such single-minded devotion?"

Pundarika replied that he was serving his parents.

Lord Panduranga queried, "Is not God greater than the parents? Won't you have My darshan at least for one second?"

But Pundarika was not disturbed. He replied, "My parents are living divinities for me. I cannot have your darshan, unless I put my parents to sleep. If you wish to give me your darshan, stand there on the brick till then." So saying,

he pushed a brick toward Lord Panduranga.

The Lord then commended his love and devotion toward his parents and declared, "The world will always remain safe and prosperous if all people cultivate such love and devotion toward their parents. May such noble sons like you proliferate in this world." From then on, great and noble ideas of sacrifice and detachment continued to develop in Pundarika. He spent his time happily serving his parents and winning their love.

Putlibai was the mother of Mahatma Gandhi. She continued to observe a vow right from her early days. She never used to take her food in the afternoon without hearing the singing of the cuckoo bird. Gandhi was a child then. One day, it was already 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and his mother did not take her food since the cuckoo did not sing. Gandhi could not bear to see his mother hungry. Therefore, he thought of a plan. He went behind their house and imitated the cuckoo call. Then he went into the house and pleaded with his mother, "Mother! The cuckoo sang. You can now take your food."

His mother, however, could realise that her son was lying. She grew very angry. She caught hold of him and slapped on his cheek twice. She could not contain her anger and anguish. She chided him, saying, "it is my misfortune to have given birth to a liar like you."

Gandhi repented for his mischievous act and begged his mother to forgive him. He also took a vow that he would never speak a lie thereafter in his life.

Thus, mothers in the ancient times used to teach their children good behaviour and put them in the right path. Such ideal mothers are very rare in present times, in the world. Present-day mothers could always think, "My son should get good marks and ranks in the examination. He should acquire high degrees and earn lakhs of rupees. He should rise to a high position in his

career." There are hundreds of such mothers now-a-days. But, there is not even a single mother who teaches her son, "My dear son! You pray to God daily. Never forget God." That is why the country of Bharath is facing innumerable difficulties.

The Bharatiyas (Indians) of yesteryears always used to pray daily, "Oh! Rama! Krishna! Govinda!" They used to chant the divine name incessantly. But things have changed. Now there is no such contemplation on the divine name. On the other hand, worldly desires have proliferated. The culture of Bharath always exhorts the people, "sathyam vada (speak the truth)" and "dharmam chara (follow righteousness)". Unfortunately, today people act contrary to such noble ideals. They are distorting those ideals as, "sathyam vadha (kill the truth)" and "dharmam chera (imprison righteousness)".

Once Easwamma came to Me and requested, "Swami! Several poor mothers have come here along with their children. They have no food to eat. Kindly bless them." Then I rendered them proper help and thus fulfilled Easwamma's wish.

On another day, she came to Me and expressed her anguish thus, "Swami! Small children of five years age are daily walking to Bukkapatnam and back to attend to school. How can they study after walking a such a long distance daily?" I called their parents and advised them, "These tiny tots can learn more from their mothers than from their teachers in a school. Instead of sending these small children to such a long distance for education, you first teach them what little you know. You teach them at least two or three alphabets which you know." Later, I established a school in Puttaparthi and fulfilled the wish of Easwamma.

The mothers of those days, though they were innocent and illiterate, never gave up praying to God. Love God. There is no use wasting your time in worldly matters. We should never try to imitate others. We must try to develop faith in the Truth that manifests from our own heart. It is not good to

develop hatred toward other castes and religions. One should develop faith in one's own religion and follow it diligently.

Once, when this body was a student, some political leaders approached Me and requested, "Raju! We understand that you write good poetry. We arranged a meeting where a number of our people are expected to participate. We request you to please write a good song that can inspire our 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 march into Russia. India was then under the control of Britishers. Taking the situation into account, I wrote a small playlet. In that playlet, I kept a rubber doll in a cradle and sang the following song rocking the cradle gently:

Don't cry my child, don't cry.
If you cry, you will not be called the valorous son of Bharath.
Did you cry because the murderer Hitler
Invaded the immortal Russia?
The Red Army and the brave Stalin
Are there to crush Hitler; don't cry.
Why do you cry my child, why do you cry?
Do you cry because our people lack in unity?
All the people will unite and fight
For our freedom; don't cry.
India will certainly attain freedom.
Don't cry my child, don't cry!"

The mothers of those days used to sing such inspiring patriotic songs and teach their children good things. They used to mould their character to make them heroes of the country. There used to be no scope at all for untruth in their talk. By their truthful words, they used to train their children in the path of truth.

Once, the village of Puttaparthi was affected by infectious diseases like cholera and plague. Several people died on account of these diseases. I warned the children in the village that these diseases would spread through drinking polluted water and eating impure food, so they should take proper care in this regard.

I exhorted them, "Purify the water and then drink. You eat only clean and wholesome food, though in small quantities. Not only that, keep your mouth always fresh and clean. Several diseases will affect you due to unclean mouth. It is not good for you to eat anything that you come across when you feel hungry. Whether it is for keeping good health or happiness, God's grace is important. Hence, always pray to God."

Happiness can be attained only through constant contemplation on God; nothing else. It is not something that can be attained by external objects. It can only spring from one's own heart. In order that we may attain good health and happiness, we must constantly contemplate on God and thereby sanctify our time.

It is only the parents who led ideal lives that nourished and nurtured our country of Bharath, since ancient times. Unfortunately, today you do not find sons who obey their parents. The youth of today brush aside their parents' words as insane talk and ignore them. This is not correct. They are not insane words; they are verily truthful words spoken from the depth of their hearts. God will certainly hear the prayers said with purity of consciousness and shower His Grace on such people. Hence, one should always pray to God in whichever form one likes and sanctify one's life by the grace of God. Since ancient times, the women of Bharath offered such prayers to God, in all sincerity and devotion. That is why the country of Bharath could attain great heights.

Embodiments of Love!

If you wish that you or the children to be born to you should be sacred,

constantly contemplate on God. Only when the parents lead a good and noble life will their children be good and noble. Hence, the parents must be good, in the first instance. Unfortunately, today the parents are unable to set an example to their children, with the result that the children are taking to bad ways. Such sacred teachings have become extinct in the country of Bharath, today. The mothers in ancient India used to teach good things and good habits to their children thus:

Get up early in the morning at the crowing of the cock,
Have a bath after your morning ablutions,
Wear a proper dress.
Eat properly and moderately.
Go to school and study diligently.
Earn a good name.
Don't move out when it is raining,
And never go near the ditches.
Take part in games,
Run and play.
If you abide by all these rules,
You will have both health and wealth. (Telugu Poem)

Both the elders as well as the children are not brushing their teeth properly, today. That is the only reason why all sorts of diseases are spreading from ourselves. For both, good and bad, we only are responsible. They do not come of their own accord. When we cultivate sacred feelings in us, we will be rewarded with good results. If sacred feelings are to take root in us, we have to cultivate good habits.

Better indeed is knowledge than mechanical practice.
Better still is meditation.
But better than meditation is the surrender of the fruit of all actions.
For such renunciation of the fruit of all actions

would indeed result in liberation.
(Gita, Ch.12, sloka 12)

Right from early morning till we go to bed, if we are engaged in good activities, that itself will automatically become a practice. In fact, the country needs such youth. Who are youths? People generally think that boys and girls aged between 18 and 20 years constitute youth. This is not correct. It is only people with noble thoughts who can be considered as youth. Hence, one must cultivate noble thoughts.

As soon as you get up, your first action shall be chanting the divine name, "Rama! Krishna! Govinda!" Again, before you go to bed, chant the divine name. When you do such chanting of the divine name, you will always have good thoughts. Unfortunately, today people totally forget chanting of the divine name. People think that they are highly educated and have high degrees, but they will not enable you to tread the right path. Education that will not develop enquiry into one's own self is not education at all! It will only lead to agitation! Mere book reading does not constitute education. Book reading will contribute only to acquiring bookish knowledge. That is artificial knowledge. Real knowledge comes out of the heart. When the young men and women realise and propagate this Truth, the country will progress in all directions.

Embodiments of Love!

Do not waste your time in reading voluminous books, thinking that such books will help you in acquiring great knowledge. Read only books that will help in the contemplation on the divine name. Do not be satisfied with acquiring mere bookish knowledge. Such knowledge is only a superficial knowledge.

What you need really is the knowledge of Self. Strive to acquire that knowledge. It manifests from within. It cannot be acquired from external sources. Is it not a fact that the more you dig in the river bed the more the water comes out of the sand! Similarly, the more you remove the bad thoughts in you, the more the sacred knowledge and sacred thoughts manifest in you. Purity, steadiness, wisdom, and such other noble qualities manifest only from one's own heart. First and foremost you have to cultivate sacred and noble thoughts. But, you need not give credence to all such talk. You have to always tread the sacred path.

The mothers in the ancient times used to teach their children such sacred things. That is why the children of those days used to engage themselves in constant contemplation on God, with the result that the country was constantly protected by God. It is not the body that is important for us, it is the thought and feelings.

Several people question, "Where is God?" I tell such people, "My dear! I am God; you are also God." This is the Truth. Why should we be afraid of speaking this Truth? God is omnipresent. All are embodiments of God! There is divinity in every human being. If not, we cannot live in this world.

It is only because of our faith in God that we have been able to survive in this world till today. A small story to illustrate the point. There used to be a husband and wife in a village. The wife was constantly chanting the divine name. "Rama! Krishna! Govinda!", and worshipping God daily. The husband, however, was not doing any worship or contemplation on God. But he used to attend to his daily chores. The wife used to feel, "Alas! My husband is not chanting the divine name at least once in a day."

One night, the husband could not get sleep and was turning this side and that side on the bed restlessly. At that time, he casually said, "Rama!" His wife

was overjoyed on hearing the divine name coming out of the mouth of her husband, though unintentionally. The next day, as soon as she got up from her bed, she collected all the rice available in the house, cooked it, and fed the poor people, in jubilation.

The husband, who was observing this feeding of the poor, asked her, "What is the matter! You are cooking and feeding the poor today. What is the special occasion?"

The wife replied, "Yesterday night, I heard the divine name of "Rama!" emerge from your mouth. My heart overflowed with joy on hearing the divine name from your mouth. Hence, this celebration."

On hearing his wife's reply, the husband felt sorry and thought to himself, "Alas! I have installed Rama in my heart and worshipped him there all the while. Has my Rama gone out from my heart today?"

Several people do not give expression to their love and devotion to God. They keep their devotion to themselves. However, one day or the other it manifests outside.

Embodiments of Love!

Contemplate on the divine name, irrespective of the religion, caste, creed, or sex. You can always chant the divine name of your liking.

The mother of Ramakrishna Paramahansa taught her son good things and shaped him into a great yogi. All the mothers should take her as an example

and strive to put their children in the right path. If you constantly contemplate on and chant the divine name, that itself will purify your thoughts and feelings. Never forget the divine name. If you constantly contemplate on the divine name, your life will surely be sanctified.

Embodiments of Love! Therefore, contemplate on the divine name constantly.

(Bhagawan concluded his divine discourse with the bhajan, "Rama Rama Rama Sita".

Alternative	Link	to	Discourse:
http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html			

12. Develop a Spirit of Oneness

Date: 23 May 2005 / Location: Brindavan / Occasion: Buddha Purnima

Embodiments of Love!

MANY DIGNITARIES FROM SRI LANKA have spoken to you about the great teachings of Buddha. First of all, you have to understand that God is omnipresent. There is no place where you do not find God. The essence of the teachings of all scriptures is that God is present everywhere. Out of their ignorance, some people argue that God is limited to a particular place.

Divinity Indwells all Beings

Truly speaking, Divinity is present in everyone and is all-pervasive. This is the basic truth of all doctrines and philosophies. See everywhere God. If you see God everywhere, nothing bad will happen to you. This *ekatma bhava* (principle of oneness) should be understood by the Bharatiyas (Indians).

See no evil; see what is good,
Talk no evil; talk what is good,
Hear no evil; hear what is good,
Do no evil; do what is good,
Be always with God.

Some people call Him Rama, some others adore Him as Krishna, and still some others worship Him as Buddha. Names and forms may vary, but God is one. God is not limited to a particular name, form, region, or religion. There is only one God, who pervades every atom of the creation. Words fail to express the glory and grandeur of Divinity. People may describe Divinity in a number of ways, but no description can ever portray Divinity in full measure. In fact, to describe Divinity is a sign of delusion.

Where is God? You are all embodiments of God. God pervades all beings as their life-breath. Such transcendental principle of Divinity cannot be described. One may do one's best to describe it at any length, yet all descriptions will fall short of what reality is. Water is infinite; a container cannot hold more water than its capacity. As the size of the container, so is the quantity of water collected. Likewise, God is infinite, but each one describes Him based on his limited understanding. Divinity is much more than what human mind can comprehend.

Embodiments of Love!

It is impossible for anyone to describe Divinity in full measure. God is one, but people may describe Him in various ways depending on their feelings. Divinity is one. It is sign of ignorance to divide God in the name of religion and limit Him to a particular name and form. God is limitless and boundless. He is *Sarvantaryami* (all-knowing inner reality). He is *Sarva Bhutantaratma* (indweller of all beings). How can anyone describe such Divinity? God is present in everyone in the form of *Atma* (Self). Develop such self-confidence and spirit of oneness.

Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti
(truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names).

Pointing to the tumbler, Swami said, "This is water. Telugu people call it neeru, Tamilians call it thanni, so on and so forth. Different people call it by different names, but water is the same." Likewise, the same God is extolled by various names. The indweller is the same in all beings. People worship God by different names and forms, but God is one. The principle of the Atma which resides in everyone is the true divine power.

Only those with self-confidence are true bhaktas (devotees). You cannot call yourself a devotee if you lack self-confidence. Without self-confidence, you

cannot achieve anything in life. Therefore, first and foremost, develop firm and unshakeable self-confidence. From self-confidence arises self-satisfaction. Self-satisfaction shows you the path of self-sacrifice which ultimately leads to self-realisation. Self-confidence is the basis for self-realisation.

There is Nothing like my God and your God

Today, many people practise meditation without knowing what it is. In the process, they waste a lot of time. What is meditation? Is it to sit cross-legged with closed eyes? No. Not at all. People undertake meditation with a deluded mind. Consequently, they are unable to achieve the desired result. **What is meant by meditation? To think of God at all times and under all circumstances is true meditation. You should install God in your heart and discharge your duties with the feeling that God is the basis of everything. Only then can you be called a true devotee.**

Wherever you go, whatever you may do, recognise the truth that there is only one God and He is all-pervasive. Never give scope for differences saying, my God and your God. Where is your God? Where is my God? All are one; be alike to everyone. There is only one God and He is present in everyone. It is a big mistake to think that God is different for different people. You should have firm faith that God is one. The process of inhalation and exhalation as indicated by the *Soham* principle is one and the same in everybody. *Soham* means "I am God." This clearly demonstrates that God is not different from you. When man comes into the world, the first word he utters is "*Koham, Koham*" (who am I?). He should constantly keep asking this question until he realises his true identity. He should realise his true nature and proclaim, "*Soham, Soham*" (I am God) before leaving the world.

Never attribute multiplicity to Divinity on the basis of different names and forms such as Rama, Krishna, Jesus, Allah, Buddha, etc. You may call Him by any name, but God is one and the same. But these days, we do not find teachers who can make lasting impression on the hearts of people by imparting such sacred teachings. All the time, man keeps searching for God

elsewhere. How can you find God elsewhere? Some people may call Him Allah; others may call Him by some other name. Does God become different for different people just because they call Him by different names? No, no. These are only names. To think that God is different for different people is a great delusion. You may call Him by any name. God is one.

Sri Lanka will be Safe and Secure

When you develop such spirit of oneness, you will certainly have *Sakshatkara* (vision of the Divine). Everyone should develop ekatma bhava (spirit of oneness).

Easwara sarva bhutanam
(God is the indweller of all beings).

It is sheer ignorance to say, "My God is different from your God." Those who quarrel with each other in the name of religion are foolish people. For some time now, certain types of differences have cropped up in Sri Lanka. Whatever others may say, we have to firmly believe that God is one. It is a great mistake to develop differences on the basis of our deluded thinking.

Once an old woman went in search of Jesus. When she met him, she asked, "Are you Jesus?"

Jesus replied, "That is the name given to me. But you can call me by any name, I shall respond."

Names and forms are bound to change. When you are born, people call you a child. As you grow up, you are called a boy, then you become a man and later on a grandfather. But the child, boy, man, and grandfather are one and the

same. Childhood, youth, and old age are merely the different stages of your life. But you are one and the same. Similarly, names and forms may be different, but God is one.

Embodiments of Love!

You have come here all the way from Sri Lanka because of your love for Me. My love for you is hundred times more than the love you have for Me (prolonged loud applause). Sri Lanka had to face many hardships, even from the time of Ravana. But Sri Lanka can never be put to harm. It will always be safe, secure, and prosperous (loud prolonged applause). God is the leader of your country. As long as you have faith in God, you have nothing to fear. May you all enjoy safety and security! Wherever you go, whatever you do, have firm conviction that God is always with you, in you, around you, above you, below you. Do not be carried away by what others say. Have God firmly installed in your heart. You can never be put to any harm. No danger can ever befall you. Lead your lives with such courage and conviction. God will certainly bless you with success.

Embodiments of Love!

The hearts of the people of Sri Lanka are sacred. Hence, they will always enjoy safety and security. Difficulties will come and go like passing clouds. You don't need to be afraid of anything. God will always protect you. Be courageous and face difficulties with fortitude. You are the embodiments of Love. Where there is love, there cannot be any adversity. Love is God. God is Love. Hence, fill your hearts with love.

Embodiments of Love!

Very soon, I will visit Sri Lanka and bestow eternal bliss on all of you (thunderous applause). In the present situation, it is difficult for Me to walk. However, difficulty is only for the body. It comes and goes. I do not care for such physical constraints. I will certainly come to your country very soon and fulfil your long cherished dream. Right from a child to an old man, devotees in

Sri Lanka think of Swami always. Your prayers and penance will certainly find fulfilment very soon. Cherish this sacred feeling in your heart. The passage of time will not affect the intimate relationship that exists between you and Me. It is eternal and everlasting.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan, "Prema Mudhita Manase Kaho")

Alternative	Link	to	Discourse:
http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html			

13. Understand The Principle Of Fundamental Truth

Date: 23 June 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam

The Present Vice Chancellor and the former Vice Chancellor have narrated their experiences. When vyashti (individual) identifies himself with samashti (community), he realises Parameshti (God). It is very difficult to understand Parameshti which is beyond both vyashti and samashti. There will be harmony between vyashti and samashti when one develops equanimity.

Know What Is True And Eternal

One should realise that samashti is the basis of everything. People are not able to understand what is meant by 'I' and 'you'. 'Where are you studying? Where am I studying?' In these two sentences, there are two different identities of the same principle of Samashti. Few have truly understood the principle of Samashti so far. But there lies in it the transcendental principle of Parameshti. However, the transcendental principle of Parameshti is much more difficult to understand. Our Gokak (Prof. V.K. Gokak, first Vice Chancellor of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning) also found himself in such a situation. He had read volumes of great books. He knew answers to many intricate questions. But he could not understand what was true and eternal. Similarly, he could not understand the difference between atma (Self) and anatma (non-Self). Truly speaking, anatma has no existence. There is only Atma everywhere. After some time, Gokak realised this truth and understood it clearly. I provided help to him at that time. Man wants help of many types for the sake of clarity. This help will provide a lot of lasting strength to a true devotee. This help is not temporary. It is true and eternal. When you keep on enquiring what is true and eternal, gradually the veil of Maya will be removed.

After some time, Gokak came close to Me. All his doubts disappeared and he held on to the principle of divinity which is formless, true, eternal, pure and unsullied. It is not possible for all to understand this divine principle. This principle of truth is present in you, Me and everyone equally. One who takes truth as the basis will never become unsteady. Everything may change, but truth will remain changeless.

Attain The State Of Doubtlessness

The principle of Karma (action) is difficult to understand. One type of karma may be responsible for all your doubts. But another type of Karma will destroy your doubts and take you to the state of unity. Gokak realised this truth and became doubtless. When you attain the state of doubtlessness, you realise the truth. This is the royal path of attaining moksha (liberation). What is the real meaning of moksha? Moha kshaya (removal of attachment) is moksha (liberation). So long as one has attachment, one cannot think of liberation. Hence, one should strive for detachment in the first instance.

Gokak firmly held on to the principle of truth. One day, he came to Me and asked, "Swami! Am I the knower or is conscience the knower?" I told him, "There is something else between conscience and conscious. That is maya." Maya is responsible for all delusion. Do not become a victim of maya. When you cast aside maya, then truth will manifest from within. What type of truth is it? Truth can neither be heard nor seen though it appears that it is seen and heard. But it transcends both. All that is seen or heard cannot be experienced by the heart. When you transcend the senses, you see the dawn of consciousness. Truth is that which is close to consciousness. Next morning, he came to Me again and said, "Whatever doubts I had yesterday, have been removed. But I am finding it difficult to understand the origin of doubts." Then I told him, "Take for, example, bats; they move about like birds, gather their food like birds. But contrary to the nature of birds, they hang head downward from the branches of trees. You may doubt whether they are birds or animals.

Doubts come to man in the same manner. At one point of time, all these doubts will stop coming to you. This is not something related to Me and others; it is related to you and Me."

Vyashti constitutes samashti and samashti is the collective form of vyashti. In the nal analysis, samashti is the expansion of vyashti. One who understands the relationship between vyashti, samashti and parameshti can know the truth. This is what Gokak understood ultimately. Everyone has to make an effort to understand this truth. We are leading our lives in fun and frolic, but this is not the reality. We can understand the reality only when we transcend worldliness. Total change cannot come instantly. Gokak understood this truth fully well. Hence, he held on to this principle of fundamental truth rmyly. In the end, he forgot everything else.

Dawn Of Truth And Experience Of Bliss

At that time, Gokak was studying Savitri (an epic poem written by Sri Aurobindo). All his inner thoughts were focused on Savitri. There exist inner thoughts in every human being which cannot be seen. One day or the other, truth becomes manifest all of a sudden when you are consistent in your sadhana. At that time, Guru Purnima was fast approaching. He said, "Swami, I can see light approaching me on the path I am proceeding." After saying this, he closed his eyes. He did not utter a word.

I went near him and touched his head. I told him, "My dear, now you go home, have a cup of coffee and come." But he did not say anything. He had transcended the state of duality. He went home, prayed to Savitri and came back. Ultimately, he could get all the answers from Savitri. From then onwards, he started contemplating on Savitri. He used to come to Me both in the morning and in the evening. One day when he came to Me, he was all smiles. I asked him, "You seem to be very happy, what is the reason?" "Swami! This bliss is Your blessing. It has not come from me", he replied.

Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam,
Gagana Sadrisham,
Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee
Sakshibhutam

(God 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 Tattwamasi, One without a second, eternal, pure, unchanging, witness of all functions of the intellect).

On Experiencing Illumination

I told him to remain in that state forever. Next morning, he came again. He said, "Swami, I have been in the same state." He said that he did not even think where the blissful state had come from. Knowing very well that he should not speak much at that time, I asked him to go home and come later. He left.

Next morning, at Brahmamuhurtha time, he came again. He knocked at the door thrice, but I knocked six times. He understood the meaning and left the place silently. After this, no scope was left for questions and answers. Thereafter, he stopped asking questions. He went on contemplating on Savitri. Ultimately, he attained the state of non-duality.

One day when he was meditating with closed eyes, I slapped hard on his head twice. Then he started experiencing illumination. As illumination dawned on him, he lost interest in all worldly matters. He remained in that state. On

another day, I told him to close his eyes. He did accordingly. As he closed his eyes, I pressed his Bhrumadhya (centre of the eyebrows) with My thumb. Instantly, all his doubts disappeared. He said, "Swami, I am one, God is one, love is one. I do not require anything else." I told him to go and come the next morning. Gokak was very punctual and always came at the correct time. As he came again and again in this manner, he had the vision of Savitri. He could visualise Savitri every now and then, but not continuously. He considered Savitri as the fundamental principle. He held on to this principle firmly. In this manner, he could attain the state of divinity. As you proceed on the path of sadhana continuously, certain powers will manifest in you. You should not attach any importance to them. Once you understand the fundamental principle, you will have everything. That fundamental principle is one, and not two. Truth is one, not two. Everything else is untruth; it is like passing clouds. He forgot everything else. He focused his mind only on the fundamental principle.

Once when I was at Kodaikanal, he sent a lengthy telegram to Me. I then sent him a telegram with the message, "I know, this is right. Don't change your mind." From then onwards, there was no further correspondence between us. However, once he asked his wife to write a letter to Me. Her name was Sharadamma. She was also a Mahajnani (one of great wisdom). She used to write in such a way that two words written by her would have four different meanings. Thereafter, only atmic relationship existed between us. He attained the state of absolute silence. He did not touch any book nor did he ask any question. He did not write any letter either. All that he said was, "Swami! All Your answers have touched my heart." Then I told him, "Both of us understand the relationship that exists between us. You don't worry about anything else." After that, the relationship between us at physical level ceased to exist. At the same time, our relationship at spiritual level became more intimate. Before leaving his mortal coil, he wrote these words, "I have reached You."

14. Everything depends on God's Grace

Date: 21 July 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Guru Purnima

Everyone has to face the consequences of his actions.
Who has made the bats to hang from the branches of a
tree with their heads downward?
Has anyone done it out of hatred?
No. It is their karma (fate).
Likewise, nobody can escape from the consequences of karma.
(Telugu poem)

Birds fly in the sky with the help of wings. Likewise, bats fly in the sky, but unlike other birds, they hang with their heads downward from the branches of trees. Is it not their fate? One may perform any activity, but one is bound to face the consequences of one's action. This is the law of nature.

Students - Boys and Girls!

People may act as they please, but they cannot escape from the consequences of their actions. Whether one is a *pamara* (simpleton) or a *mahaneeya* (noble soul), one has to face the results of one's actions. Let no one be under the illusion that one can commit sin and still go scot-free. Hence, one should enquire before undertaking any activity whether it is good or bad. Wherever you go, the results of your actions will follow you like your shadow.

However, it is possible to escape from the consequences of action by the grace of God. God is always by your side saying "*Tathastu!*, *Tathastu!* (So shall it be!)" Man is not taking cognisance of this truth and is indulging in

wicked deeds. He knows pretty well what is good and what is bad, yet, he is unable to give up his evil ways. One's experiences in life, good and bad, depend on his actions.

No one can comprehend the ways of God. They are beyond description. You may think that you can commit a mistake surreptitiously and feel that no one has seen you. But you cannot hide your actions from God. The consequences of your actions will haunt you wherever you go.

One should not be judged by his external appearance. One may look noble and speak in a pleasing manner, but one's actions may not be in consonance with one's words. You may undertake a number of good activities, yet you cannot escape from the consequences of your past deeds. You have to bear this truth always in mind.

Embodiments of Love!

The world is full of wonders and mysteries. The law that governs human life and the world at large is beyond the ken of human understanding. The principle of divinity is not visible to the naked eye, but it is what prompts you to perform action and experience the consequences thereof.

The story of the Lord is amazing,
It purifies the lives of people in all the three worlds,
It is like the sickle that cuts the creepers of worldly bondage,
It is like a good friend who helps you in times of need,
It is like a shelter for the sages and seers doing penance in the forest.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

You may not be able to comprehend fully all that is being said. But you will

understand it through experience. It is impossible to escape *karma phala* (fruits of action). You read a number of books, but do you put into practice whatever you have learnt? No. No. You put into practice only that which is convenient and necessary for you and ignore the rest.

Students!

You may wonder if there is a way to escape from the consequences of karma. Yes, it is possible for those who earn the grace of God. Once you become the recipient of God's grace, you will not be affected by karma phala. Hence, you should strive to earn divine grace. Scholars say, it is impossible to escape karma. What they say is true to a certain extent. But once you earn divine grace, even if you have to experience the consequences of karma, you will not feel the pain.

Take for instance a bottle containing medicine. You find the expiry date mentioned on the bottle. After the expiry date, the medicine will lose its potency. Likewise, God's grace will make the karma phala "expire", i.e. it nullifies the effects of karma. Hence, it is possible to escape from the consequences of karma. Man should cultivate the necessary strength and will power to deserve divine grace. You will be free from the shackles of karma once you attain divine grace.

Lord Easwara had granted only sixteen years of life-span to Markandeya. But Markandeya was unaware of this. One evening, he found his parents full of sorrow. On enquiry, they revealed that his end had approached and that was the cause of their sorrow. They said, "Lord Easwara had ordained that you would live only for sixteen years, and today happens to be the last day of your earthly sojourn. Tomorrow our earthly ties will be snapped."

Markandeya was surprised to hear this. He also felt sorry that he was not made aware of it earlier. He said, "I would have made proper use of my time if I had known that I would live for only sixteen years." He went to the temple

of Easwara without wasting even a moment, hugged the Siva Linga and started chanting Om Namah Sivaya wholeheartedly. At the appointed hour, Lord Yama (God of death) cast his noose around the neck of young Markandeya. As he was hugging the Linga, the noose fell around the Siva Linga also.

Easwara manifested there and remonstrated with Yama, "How dare you cast the noose around Me?" Pleased with the devotion of Markandeya, He blessed him with the boon of immortality. In fact, it was Easwara who had stipulated 16 years of life-span for Markandeya. But on account of Markandeya's intense devotion and total surrender Easwara had to change His decree. Markandeya's episode bears ample testimony to the fact that one can escape even from the God of death if one becomes the recipient of Lord Easwara's grace. Hence, contemplate on God and chant His Name incessantly.

Once when Lord Yama was going round the world, he noticed that everyone was chanting the divine name. Wherever he went, he found devotees contemplating on the Lord. "If everyone starts chanting the divine Name, how am I to discharge my duties? How can I cast my noose around a devotee?" he wondered. He started praying to Lord Easwara thus. Then Easwara appeared before him and said, "You may cast your noose on anyone at the appointed time. But remember that only those who have experienced the fruits of their actions will be ensnared by your noose. It cannot touch those who have no trace of karma phala (fruits of action). That is why Markandeya became My property and I showered My grace on him."

That is why people start chanting the divine names such as "Rama, Krishna, Govinda" as the end approaches. As demonstrated by Markandeya, devotees can alter the Will of God by their sincere prayers. In matters relating to Divinity, the word "impossible" does not exist. God can accomplish anything. If you surrender to Him completely, He can cancel the consequences of your actions and confer His grace on you. One need not feel depressed or dejected thinking that he is bound by karma phala. God can cancel your karma phala if your prayers are sincere. In this manner, God protected the lives of many

devotees and alleviated their suffering in response to their prayers.

Some people out of their ego doubt the power of God and try to test Him. They think, "Let us see, how he will do this." But God cannot be understood or experienced by such tests. Such tests are futile exercise. Evil qualities like ego, jealousy, and hatred will ruin man's life. One should make every effort to earn the grace of God.

Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam
(everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on God).

That is why Swami is exhorting you to undertake spiritual sadhana. Nagar sankirtan is one of the sadhanas that is prescribed for devotees. No one knows when one's end approaches. Yama has no consideration of what one is doing, good or bad at the time of casting his noose. One may leave his mortal coil even when one is doing nagar sankirtan. Hence, one should always be prepared to face Yama by chanting the Divine Name. You should undertake spiritual practice and earn the divine grace so as to be free from karma phala. One need not feel depressed and resign to one's fate. One can easily overcome fate with sincere prayers. The story of Markandeya proves this point beyond doubt. Everything depends on God's grace.

Embodiments of Love!

You may undertake any number of spiritual practices, but never forget God's Name even for a moment. Only then will you be protected. Never do anything that will take you away from God. You can achieve anything through prayer. You do not need to pray loudly, it is enough if you pray mentally. Some people have a mistaken notion that God will not come to their rescue if they do not pray loudly. God resides in your heart. He listens to your prayers. If you aspire to attain His grace, you have to contemplate on Him incessantly.

Worldly difficulties come and go. One should not attach much importance to them. However, through prayer, one can overcome any difficulties. Only God's grace is true and everlasting. One should strive to attain it.

Embodiments of Love!

Chant the name of God day in and day out. That alone will protect you at all times. Just as air is all-pervasive, God is present in you, with you, around you, below you, above you. Hence, you should be in constant communion with divinity. When you develop faith in Divinity, you will naturally have unity. Consequently, there will be no scope for enmity. You need not perform any rituals in order to win the grace of God. It is enough if you do namasmarana (chanting the divine Name) from the depth of your heart.

Bhajan Bina Sukha Shanthi Nahin

(one cannot attain peace and happiness without singing the glory of God).

If you incessantly chant the divine name "Rama", no harm can ever befall you.

Embodiments of Love!

It is because of your good fortune that you all have gathered here today. Do not fritter away this opportunity. Make the best use of your stay here and get the maximum benefit out of it. Remember that God is always with 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 a mountain top or in the middle of deep sea.
(Telugu poem)

Students, Embodiments of Love!

I am very much aware that you think of Swami always. It does not matter whether you sing the divine Name loudly or silently. I see only the feeling behind it. Nothing can come in the way of God and His devotee. Rishis of yore went to the Himalayas in order to spend their time in contemplation of God. Wherever you are, God listens to your prayers. Do bhajans sincerely. Swami will certainly listen to you. Never give room for any type of weakness. Be always courageous. When you adhere to Swami's words, the power of Sai will manifest in you. Chant any name of your choice, Easwara, Rama, Krishna, etc., but always remember that God is one. I will never force you to chant a particular name. One should not limit God to a particular name or form. You may call Me by any name, I shall respond.

Recently, a strange incident took place. Subramaniam of Larsen and, Toubro and Chief Engineer Kondal Rao had gone to East Godavari and West Godavari region in connection with the Water Supply Project works. As they were conducting a survey in a forest area, they were confronted by a group of naxalites. The naxalites questioned them, "Who are you? Why have you come here? Who has sent you here? How dare you enter our area without our permission?"

They replied, "We have come here in your own interest. Because there is scarcity of water in this region, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has sent us to make arrangements for the drinking water supply." On hearing this, the naxalites were stupefied and overjoyed. They said, "We are living in the forests and hence are not aware of the magnificent service activities that Swami has undertaken."

They guided the engineers as to where to lay the pipes and fix the taps. They are all coming here for Swami's darshan. The Water Supply Project works in

East and West Godavari districts are nearing completion. We have already drawn plans for a water supply project in the Krishna District also. I am taking up these projects and completing them of My own accord, without anybody's asking. Water is very essential for the survival of everyone. It is the sustainer of life. What else can be of greater service than providing drinking water to the needy? It is the source and sustenance of life. I do not expect any rituals or worship from you. I am doing it out of My love for you. East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna districts are now being covered under Sri Sathya Sai drinking water supply project. The people of those districts are extremely happy. There can be no greater service than providing drinking water. That is what I have been doing. You need not ask for it. I am giving it out of My own accord.

Till today, no government, or anyone for that matter, has taken up the task of providing drinking water to Krishna district. It is only Sai who is providing water to all. I am always engaged in such humanitarian projects. I do not involve Myself in any other work. Water is essential for human life. Hence I am prepared to provide water for all.

Devotees should pray that everybody should have water to drink. Pray for the welfare of all. Prayer is the need of the hour. You may be worried that Swami is not able to walk. Always remember that Swami is not the body. I have no connection with the body. I am always happy and healthy. Do not pray to God for the fulfilment of your desires. Pray for the welfare of all.

When I had a fall, the people of East Godavari and West Godavari came and prayed, "Swami, we want only Your health and not water."

I told them, "Your welfare is My welfare." They are bringing a helicopter for Me with the prayer that I should pay a visit to East Godavari and West Godavari districts. Very soon, I will be visiting these districts.

Recapitulate and savour these blissful moments you have spent here. Do namasmarana.

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

15. Unity, Purity, Divinity

Date: 17 August 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Educare Conference

During his childhood, man develops absorbing interest
in play in the company of other children.

In youth and middle age, he is entangled in worldly matters
and deeply engrossed in money earning.

Finally in old age, he craves for this and that without
contemplating on God even at that ripe age.

Thus, he wastes his precious human birth.

(Telugu poem)

In this world, there are millions of educated people. Right from a child to a learned old man, everyone is interested in reading books and acquiring knowledge. But in what way are they benefited by the acquisition of bookish knowledge? Such education can only help you to eke out a livelihood. Right from a pauper to a millionaire, everybody wants his children to be well educated. Parents are prepared to spend any amount of money and they even borrow money (even beyond their means) to provide quality education to their children. In spite of the fact that the parents face a lot of hardship in educating their children, the children do not have any gratitude towards their benefactors. They do not introspect, "Who is responsible for all my development? Who has made me what I am today?"

Under these circumstances, we should enquire into the true purpose of education. One may study a number of books and master various branches of knowledge, but does one enjoy peace and tranquillity? All the knowledge that we acquire from books can take care only of our physical needs. The fact is, true knowledge is latent in everyone. Women do not lag behind men in academic excellence. People think that education confers on them respect and esteem. But people lack true wisdom in spite of their high academic achievements.

In the present, parents want their children to pursue solely job-oriented education. But what is the use of such education, which does not bring about transformation among children? Neither are the children benefited nor are they able to render any help to their parents. Modern man develops ego on account of his educational achievements.

Humility is the hallmark of true education. If a man lacks viveka (discrimination) and vinaya (humility), all his education is of no value.

You should understand that your education is meant for the welfare and progress of society. But in what way is society benefited by educated people? Actually, you are learning many things from society and deriving benefit from it. But the power of discrimination, which is found even in uneducated people, is not to be found in the so-called educated people today. When this is the true state of affairs why should the educated get inflated with ego?

There is scarcely any humility among students today. They show no respect toward elders. They do not realise their responsibilities toward society. What is the use of merely acquiring bookish knowledge if one does not respect elders and serve society? One who leads such a life is not true to one's nature. Walking, talking, reading, writing - everything becomes an affectation. If this is the result of academic education, why should one go to college at all?

Every student must enquire into himself, "What am I doing in the college? What am I supposed to do?" Only when the student conducts such self-enquiry, can they understand the true meaning of education.

Mere bookish knowledge is not true education. It is merely transfer of what is contained in pustaka (book) to mastaka (head) and vice-versa. In this manner, people are entangled between pustaka and mastaka without really

understanding the true meaning of education. They are wasting their time in the pursuit of bookish knowledge instead of acquiring practical knowledge. No doubt there is a lot of information in pustaka, but what purpose does it serve if the pustaka is filled with filth? You can never achieve the desired results from such an education.

The same was explained by the chief guest in his address. "Though all people learn and study, what is the ultimate result out of this?" he questioned. People spend thousands of rupees for acquiring academic education. What is the role the educated people play in society today? Do they contribute to peace in society? Do they try to bring about transformation in individuals? No. In fact, they are unable to inculcate discipline to their own children. Most children may pretend to be well behaved and humble in the presence of their parents, but they behave like rowdies once they step out of their houses.

Students should strive to earn a good name in society. Today's education is making the students materialistic. It does not prepare the students to turn inward to listen to their inner voice. One should acquire Atma prabodha (Atmic knowledge). That is true education. Without awareness of the Self, all other knowledge is useless. Why should one pursue such education?

People are interested in exercising their influence and power; they are not making efforts to cleanse their mind and heart. This is the result of modern education. People have learnt to talk sweetly, but they do not translate their words into action.

Embodiments of Love!

Mere learning by rote the contents of books is not important. You should imbibe the gandha (essence) of all granthas (texts). That is true education. People read a number of books, but what is the use? They merely quote what others have said. Is this what you are supposed to learn? You should listen to the prompting / utterance of your inner voice and share it with others. But, scarcely anybody thinks on these lines today.

Embodiments of Love!

You must put into practice at least one or two principles of what you have learnt and set an example to others. There are many learned scholars, but do they practise what they have learnt? They appear to be people of eminence ("chief"), but they are cheap in their behaviour. The end of education is character. We should consider character as our very life-breath. Education without character is useless, like half-cooked rice. We should practise at least one or two principles and only then venture to preach to others.

There are three important principles in every human being: manas (mind), buddhi (intellect) and Atma (Self). What is the nature of Self? It is all-pervasive. True education is that which originates from the heart. The reference in this context is to the spiritual heart and not the physical heart. There are many noble souls who are setting ideals to society by translating their knowledge into action. If you do not act in a principled manner, all your education becomes useless. It is what you practise that matters, not what you speak. Wherever you may go, your behaviour should be exemplary. That is what pleases Me.

Happiness is union with God. You are not ordinary mortals. All are essentially divine. In order to realise your true nature, practise what you preach. Only then can you experience bliss. Verily, bliss is the true nature of man. Why should you give up that which is natural to you and lead an artificial life?

Wherever you see, in colleges and schools, students lack practical knowledge. They give importance, only to bookish knowledge and become "books" themselves.

True education is that which originates from the heart. Heart is very important for human existence. When a child is born, the first thing that people observe is the heart beat. You should rely more on your spiritual heart than on the physical heart. Conscience is another name for spiritual heart.

Keep your heart pure. That should be your main endeavour. Whatever is done with love and purity of heart will confer bliss on you. In fact, bliss is latent in everyone. But man is unaware of this truth. One should make every effort to manifest the innate bliss that is in one.

What is the nature of this bliss? Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is wisdom absolute, beyond the pair of opposites). It transcends duality. As long one is immersed in duality, one cannot experience bliss.

First of all one should understand the principle of unity. Unity leads to purity, and purity leads to divinity. A true human being is one who strives for unity, purity, and divinity. Otherwise, one is no better than birds and animals. First, purify your senses and develop unity. Consider all as your brothers and sisters and live in harmony.

In public meetings, we hear the speakers addressing people as brothers and sisters. But do they really mean what they say? Do you find unity among brothers and sisters today? No. True happiness lies in unity. Human life can be compared to a tree. Our relations are like branches and sub-branches. Contemplation of God is like a flower from which you will get the fruit of bliss.

Students!

You can certainly acquire secular knowledge. But do not rest contented with that. Turn inward and acquire spiritual knowledge as well. Only then can you attain peace.

Embodiments of Love!

Love is the essence of education. Bereft of love, education is artificial. Therefore, develop love in the first instance. Understand that the indweller is

the same though bodies are different. Hold on to this fundamental principle and experience ananda (bliss). So many of you have assembled here. Everyone's attention is focused on Swami. In the same manner, let your mind be focused on divinity always. Contemplate on God. Serve your fellowmen.

If a person who has been starving for ten days is served a sumptuous feast, you can well imagine the joy he experiences. When all the tanks and lakes are dried to a trickle, you can imagine the joy that a continuous downpour brings with it. Similarly, serve those who are in desperate need of your help. Give them happiness. You can attain divinity only through service. Human life is most precious. But, man is behaving like an animal and thus wasting his life.

Students!

Being vidyarthi, you should endeavour to acquire true vidya (education). There is no point in merely going through books without understanding the true meaning of vidya. Always contemplate on the fundamental principle of life. Beings are many, but the divine principle is one and the same. Hence, recognise the principle of divinity that is present in all in the form of Atma. Atma is adhara (support) and body is adheya (the supported). Consider Atma as the basis of your life and everything else will be taken care of.

Everyone can have the vision of the Atma. All are endowed with such power. Enquire into yourself what you have achieved by going through a number of voluminous books? You have become hard-hearted. If this is the result of your education, why should you study at all? First of all, develop love. When you have love in you, everyone will become your friend. If your heart is not suffused with love, your life will become artificial. Life is meaningless without love. If everyone shares their love with their neighbour, there will be no room for hatred at all. Share your love with everyone and live like brothers and sisters. Today we find conflicts and differences even among brothers and sisters, because they lack proper understanding.

People do not understand the true meaning of love. Their love is tainted with physical and worldly feelings. When you understand the principle of love and develop love to love relationship, all will become one. The Veda says, "Sahasra seersha Purushah ..." It means that all heads, all eyes, all feet are His. Once you understand the principle of oneness that is present in all, you can live in tune with the true spirit of brotherhood.

Our hand has five fingers, and each of them has a specific duty assigned to it. All the fingers work in unison and harmony while performing a task. Once an argument ensued among the five fingers of the hand as to which finger among them is the great. The thumb claimed, "It is not possible to undertake any work without me. Hence, I am the greatest."

Then the index finger smiled and said, "Look here, Oh thumb! How can you perform any task without my support? Moreover, I am used as pointer to identify individuals. Hence, I am greater than you."

The middle finger intervened and said, "There is no point in what you say. I am the tallest among all the fingers. Two of you on one side and two on the other are serving me as ADCs. Hence, I am the greatest."

Then the ring-finger said, "I feel like laughing at your ignorance. Don't you know that people adorn me with gold rings studded with precious stones like diamond, emerald, topaz, etc.? Hence, I am your king."

In the end, the little finger said, "I always lead from the front when it comes to teaching a lesson to someone and punishing the guilty. Hence, I am your leader and you have to follow me."

As the fingers were arguing among themselves in this manner, the heart

intervened and said, "Oh ignorant ones! Each one of you is as important as the other. One cannot perform any task if there is no unity and harmony among you. In fact, you represent the five human values, which are like five life-breaths of a human being."

Hearing these words of wisdom, the five fingers realised their mistake and bent their head in shame.

A deep enquiry reveals that the heart is the greatest of all. Body, mind, and intellect are mere instruments. Hence, one should follow the advice of the heart in all one's endeavours. Understand that all are one and each one is equally important. Do not become egotistic, thinking that you alone are very important. Do not waste your precious time in vain argumentation. Be friendly with all and face the challenges of life with unity and harmony.

Students!

You have to lead your lives in an ideal manner. In fact, all ideals are latent in you. They cannot be learnt from books. The principle of "I" is common in all. If someone asks, "Who is Sai Baba?", I respond saying, "I". If someone asks who is the Vice Chancellor? He will say, "I". The single letter "I" represents the principle of Atma. The Veda declares, Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma (God is one without a second). True spirituality lies in knowing your true Self. But you are unable to know your true Self because you identify yourself with the body. Identification with the body gives rise to ego. One with ego cannot know the reality. Your welfare and also that of others will be ensured when you have a firm conviction that all are one. Develop such a spirit of unity. You cannot expect divinity to manifest in you unless you cultivate such unity. The Veda has exhorted:

Let us all move together, let us all grow together.

Let us all stay united and share our knowledge,
Let us live together with friendship and harmony.
(Telugu poem)

Some students do not share even their textbooks with others. How can they attain happiness if they are so self-centred and narrow-minded? You should all stand united. Where there is unity, there is bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

There is only one thing that you have to learn. Develop love. The same principle of love is present in you, in Me and in everyone. I see only love in others. Hence, all are one for Me. You too should develop such feelings of love and equality. All are one, be alike to everyone. This is what you have to learn today.

Embodiments of Love!

Along with the acquisition of secular knowledge, make efforts to understand the principle of oneness. Only then can you achieve unity and harmony. Take for instance this rose flower. It consists of a number of petals. Likewise, our heart can be compared to a flower, and the virtues are like petals. The petals of a rose flower may fade and fall by the next day, but the flower of the heart remains ever fresh. It symbolises the principle of oneness.

People worship the navagrahas (nine planets) to invoke their blessings. You might have observed that there is perfect unity and harmony among the nine planets. (Bhagawan with a wave of his hand materialised a gold ring studded with nine types of gems.) Here you see a navaratna ring. Whoever wears this ring will be protected by the navagrahas wherever they go.

Develop unity. Be courageous and develop the necessary strength to face the

vicissitudes of life. I don't want to take much of your time. Whatever you have learnt here, let it be imprinted in your heart. Only then can you attain peace and your education will become meaningful.

Embodiments of Love!

I shower My love and blessings on one and all. Be always united and spend your time in a bliss. Make your parents happy. Your body is given to you by your parents. Hence, first of all, express your gratitude to them for this gift. Only then can you find fulfilment in life.

Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan, "Prema muditha manase kaho ...".

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

16. Eschew Body Attachment

Date: 03 September 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Medical Conference

The Effulgent Lord who shines in every atom and pervades the entire universe will protect you always. He is the Omnipotent Lord of Parthi, who will grant you bhakthi (devotion), and will certainly help you in all your endeavours. What else is to be conveyed to this assembly of noble souls? (Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Man thinks that he is able to lead a comfortable life with the help of wealth, food, clothing, houses, etc. that he has acquired. This is not true. The very survival of a human being is dependent on God's grace. There are many wealthy people in this world. Do they all lead a comfortable life? It is a fact that none can achieve anything in this world without God's grace. Hence, first and foremost man must contemplate on God.

One may read a number of books, acquire a number of academic degrees, and visit a number of countries, but these cannot help a human being to lead a comfortable life. People think that they have acquired high academic qualifications, but they enable them to acquire only bookish knowledge. At present, you find that everyone is engaged in acquiring bookish knowledge. But they forget the fact that people led a happier and better life without bookish knowledge in the past.

People think that pursuing academic education and acquiring bookish knowledge is real education. No, that is not real education. Education devoid of educare is not real education. What is educare? Educare is that which brings out the latent divinity in a human being.

Divinity is also known as consciousness. It is only because of the consciousness present in him that every individual is able to know the nature of the world around him. But, unfortunately, no one is able to recognise this all-pervading consciousness. In fact, it is only this consciousness that is protecting every human being. In spite of one's education and scholarship, one is not able to realise this truth.

Education is negative and artificial, whereas educare is positive. People are going to foreign countries to acquire such artificial education. What is the use of acquiring such education? Instead, everyone should strive to acquire educare. One need not go to foreign countries for acquiring educare. It wells up from within and protects the person constantly. Educare is the unity of thought, word, and deed.

One who has realised their own nature is an educated person in the real sense. One may enquire, "Who are you?" "Who is he?", etc. But one may not know who oneself is. One might have acquired encyclopaedic knowledge about everything in this world. But of what use is it if one does not enquire into oneself by questioning "Who am I?" Real education constitutes enquiring into oneself about one's own true nature.

You may question someone, "Sir! Where did you come from?" The person replies, "I am from India." That very reply that he came from India connotes a negative sense. The real "I" is to be explored. That "I" is the real source. Without realising this source, if one simply states that one came from this place or that place, it is not the correct answer. The reply that one came from India refers to the body. The body must have travelled from India, but the

consciousness is all-pervading.

When someone questions, "Who are you?", the correct answer would be, "I am I." If someone replies that he came from America or India, it connotes a negative sense. We often make a statement that this is my body, my mind, my intellect, etc. These are all artificial and not real.

Nowadays, a lot of research is being made into the nature of the mind. But the mind is never steady. The mind is like a mad monkey, and the body is like a water bubble. You are not this mad monkey. You are not this water bubble. The name given to the human race is "mankind". But, today, that kindness is gone and mankind has become monkey mind. You don't find even an iota of kindness and compassion in human beings today.

Realising one's innate divinity is educare. That innate divinity in man has been referred to by several people as Atma. Without realising the nature of the Atma one cannot understand the nature of the body. Educare consists of realising the nature of the Atma.

When someone questions you what is the meaning of the word "self", you answer "I". But that is not the correct meaning of self. It is not correct to identify "I" with "self", i.e. body. "I" refers to Aham (individualised soul). As long as one identifies "I" with self, one cannot understand the real meaning of "I". Only when one sheds attachment to self and develops the feeling of equanimity can one understand the nature of Atma. This Atma Tattwa (Atma principle) is equally present in every being. This is the fundamental principle. It is only because of this fundamental principle that every living being acquires value.

One has to recognise this fundamental principle. Only then does one deserve to be called a human being. In this world, birds and beasts live along with

human beings. Human beings can be differentiated from birds and beasts only when man realises that fundamental "I", which is the Atma Tattwa. Since ancient times, people in India have been striving to realise this fundamental "I", which is present in all beings.

These days, people are confronted with several difficulties and worries in their life because their awareness is limited to bodily relationship. Such body consciousness is artificial. It does not reveal their true Self. One has to strive to realise the fundamental "I". Human body is ephemeral and is bound to perish one day or the other. When we speak of "I", it should be limited not to the ephemeral human body but to the fundamental "I".

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 deha (human body) with which we identify ourselves by saying "I" is subject to birth and death again and again. But, the Dehi (indweller), is the eternal Devadeva (Paramatma). While the vesture of deha (body) has birth and death, the Dehi is beyond birth and death and is omnipresent.

Consciousness has neither birth nor death.
It has neither beginning nor end.
It is present in all beings as the eternal witness.
(Telugu Poem)

You might have observed a beggar standing in front of your house seeking

alms with a request, Bhavathi bhikshamdehi (give me alms). He is reminding you of your true nature of Divinity by addressing you so. The word Dehi refers to Divinity. He is seeking alms from God Himself. Hence, true education is realising the Dehi.

Education is not merely reading a number of books, which confers only bookish knowledge. Why do you run after these books? This bookish knowledge will enable you merely to eke out a livelihood. But, there is something beyond this bookish knowledge and livelihood, which all of you have to pursue.

Can you call all those who know how to read and write educated?
Can one be called educated merely for acquiring degrees?
Can you call it education which does not confer virtues?
If education is just for a living,
don't we find birds and beasts carrying on their lives?
(Telugu Poem)

One may acquire a lot of wealth and become a millionaire with the help of bookish knowledge and high academic degrees. But, ultimately, people will give value to a realised soul and not to the one who has accumulated enormous wealth. As long as the body is present, people will refer to a person as "so and so; a very rich person; a king, etc."

At present, man is exposed to unrest and lack of peace. What could be the reason for this state of affairs? Not even one individual is living peacefully.

The whole world is in a state of turmoil. It is true that secular education is necessary for one's living in this world. But one has to go beyond this level and explore into the realm of universal consciousness that leads and

motivates every living being. That consciousness is present equally in every human being, right from a pauper to a millionaire. The fundamental "I" is present in you, him, and every individual.

Here is a small example. Suppose you question somebody, "Who is the doctor?" The doctor will immediately rise to answer, "I am the doctor." In this example, the doctor identifies himself with his profession and says "I" am the doctor. But he forgets about the fundamental "I" present in him.

When a question is put, "Where is God?", the natural answer would be, "He is present in all." The same truth is enshrined in the aphorisms, Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings) and Isavasyam idam sarvam (the entire universe is permeated by God).

Different varieties of sweets like Mysore pak, gulab jamoon, laddu, khova, etc., are prepared. Names are different, but the fundamental ingredient (sugar) in all these sweets is the same. Similarly, one who realises the truth that the same Atma Tattwa is present in every human being and, in fact, every living being, is the happiest person.

Several persons today must attain such a level of consciousness. People in ancient times strove to attain that state and therefore they were aptly referred to as yogis. They realised the truth that every human being was actually a three-in-one entity: (1) the one he thinks he is, (2) the one others think he is, and (3) the one he really is. All three aspects are present in one individual, with no separate entity for each aspect. This principle is changeless and eternal.

We often come across people who claim that their sons are employed in lucrative jobs in America. As a matter of fact, who is your son? You say that so and so is your son, keeping in view the bodily relationship with someone who

has a name and form. Devoid of name and form, who is the son and who is the father? All these names and forms are acquired only after a person is born.

When man emerges from the womb of his mother,
one does not find any garland around his neck.
There are no jewels made of pearls,
nor are there glittering gold ornaments.
There are no chains studded with precious
stones like emerald and diamonds.
But there is one garland around his neck.
Brahma strings together the consequences of
his past deeds into a heavy garland and
Puts it around his neck at the time of his birth.
(Telugu Poem)

As long as there is bodily relationship between you and him, you call him your son. If the body perishes, whom do you call your son? All these relationships are worldly and physical. As long as the physical relationship exists, you consider someone your relative, friend, or foe. Hence, do not ever give excessive importance to these physical relationships. It is only when you rise above these physical relationships that you will realise the Antaryami (inner motivator). You may enquire from any of our boys, "Where is God?" They will spontaneously answer, "Everywhere. In fact, you are God." Their relationship with God is beyond the physical level of the body.

You are always leading a life based on physical relationships. But these are not permanent. Such relationships exist today, but may cease to exist tomorrow. As long as there is life in the body, you say, "I am." Once the body perishes, how can you call yourself "I"?

When you enquire into the matter deeply, everything in this objective world reduces itself to zero. All that we see in this world are zeros. Unfortunately, today we consider the zero as hero.

However, there is one fundamental principle, "I", which is eternal. That fundamental principle is hero. It is present in every individual, but it is not noticed. It is the inner motivator.

We often refer to our human body consisting of flesh and blood as "I". Our physical body is not eternal. It is like the passing clouds which come and go. Considering such transient body as the eternal "I", we often struggle to keep the body in comfort. This is not the correct approach. The body must be employed for the purpose for which it was given to us. Man is born to realise the eternal truth.

Here is a small example. You performed the marriage of your son and brought a girl into your house, claiming her as your daughter-in-law. Before her marriage to your son, who was this daughter-in-law? The relationship ceases to exist once you leave this world. Such relationships are like passing clouds. Unfortunately, today we are passing our lives keeping such passing clouds as our true relationships. This is not the proper thing to do. Every individual should desist from leading a life based on dehabhimana (attachment to the body).

Even educated people have attachment to the body; they constantly strive to maintain the physical body, feeding it with comforts. It is only because of attachment to the body that they are exposed to sorrows and difficulties. Hence, shed body attachment and cultivate attachment to the Eternal Truth.

People crave for the darshan of Rama, Krishna, and other deities, which are

the names given to the physical body donned by Divinity in different ages. As long as you are attached to the physical body, you cannot realise the Atma Tattwa. In fact, Atma does not have any attachment. The Atma is present in you, Me, and every individual and every living being - in keeping with the aphorism Ekatma sarva bhutantaratma (one Atma dwells in all beings). Realising the nature of such an all-pervading Atma is considered to be true spirituality - not just performing some rituals like worship, religious vows, and bhajans.

When someone asked Sita, "Where is your Rama?", she replied, "Sri Rama is always with me only." What people generally refer to is the physical body of Sri Rama, the son of King Dasaratha. In fact, the real Rama is not related to any individual - neither the son of some king nor the son-in-law of another king. He is immanent in every living being.

Keeping in view the bodily relationship, people often make enquiries, "Where did your uncle come from?" "Where did your aunt come from?", etc. Suppose you question the same person, "Where did you come from?" He cannot give a correct answer.

The truth is that all people come from the same source. When one realises this truth, there will no more be any worry or sorrow. Hence, one has to realise this universal truth. If you do not develop faith in unity, but follow diversity, your entire life will be chaotic. Do not develop attachment to the world. Instead, cultivate spiritual attachment. When you live in harmony with your fellow human beings, you will derive happiness. Then you will enjoy the unity between human beings. The real devotee is one who has realised such unity. Unity leads to purity, which in turn leads to Divinity. One who has not experienced such unity, purity, and Divinity confines himself to body attachment and will be trapped in the birth-death cycle.

You are all aware of the havoc of tidal waves that shook the coastal villages

on the east coast of India (tsunami), a few months ago. More recently, in America a very devastating hurricane submerged several towns and villages. The entire region presented the picture of a vast sheet of water. No one knew who survived and who died. Only after the water receded could an estimate of the extent of damage caused to life and property be made.

Embodiments of Love!

Eschew body attachment and realise the unity in divinity present everywhere. That is real sadhana. Today, people undertake sadhana to achieve something, all the while thinking of something else. As a result, they are unable to achieve their goal. Such divided attention is the fault of the concerned individual but not that of the objective world. Ensure that your sadhana is on the right track. Only then will you be able to realise the unity in diversity.

Several people live long years of age, some even 100 years. But they are unable to realise this unity. Instead, they visualise duality everywhere. This cannot be termed real sadhana. One who has realised the non-dual (advaita) Brahman alone can be considered to be a real manava (human being). Hence, try to realise the unity in diversity by removing the feelings of duality and experience bliss. In fact, unity is divinity, and that divinity is immanent in you. As long as you are under the influence of duality, you will not be able to realise that unity. Realise unity, experience unity and spread unity to the entire world. Unity alone brings purity and purity develops love. Only when you develop such pure love will you be able to understand everything in the spiritual realm.

I will take some other opportunity to explain in greater detail the concept of pure love. If you entangle yourself in worldly attachments and still aspire for divinity, how is it possible? Hence, keep yourself away from all attachments and attain unity.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan, "Prema Mudhita Manase

Kaho".)

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

17. Cultivate Satwic Qualities Right from Childhood

Date: 22 October 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Children's Festival of Joy

Childhood passes in trivial play with other children.
Youth passes in amorous sport,
Middle age absorbs time and effort in amassing wealth,
Come dotage, time crawls in futile longing for worldly desires,
yet there is no time for contemplation of God.
Thus is wasted the precious heritage of human birth,
deeply entangled in the net of karma.
(Telugu poem)

Why waste your time in idleness?
Time wasted is life wasted;
Arise, awake, it is not too late,
Think of the future, at least now.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love! Dear Students!

If you spend your time thus, if you fritter away your time and energy in vain pursuits thus, what for is your human birth? What will happen to you in future? Did you ever ponder over this? Time is the measure for human life. Time is the most precious aspect in human life. Don't waste time. "Time

wasted is life wasted." You have to seriously question yourself whether it is sensible to waste your time thus. If you waste your precious time in this young age, when will you be able to sanctify your life?

Man has to perform karma in this karmabhumi (field of activity) right from birth to death. In fact, the human birth has been given to us to perform karma. Therefore, we are engaged in performing various karmas, continuously. But, very few make any effort to ask themselves whether the karmas performed are sathkarmas (good deeds) or not.

One has to strive to sanctify one's time, right from childhood. We partake of a variety of items as food to sustain the human body. But none is making an enquiry whether the food one partakes of is proper and healthy, whether it is beneficial for nourishing and nurturing one's physical, mental, and spiritual health.

Man is born out of karma, grows and
departs from the world due to karma;
Karma is verily the embodiment of divinity.
It is only due to karma that happiness and sorrow
occur in the world.
(Telugu Poem)

The Bhagavadgita exhorts that man has a right only to perform his duty and none to the fruit thereof. Of course, there will be a result for every karma that is performed by a human being. There will be a good result for a good karma and a bad result for a bad karma. This is the eternal law. When you partake of a mango fruit, you will only have the belch of that fruit and not that of a lime fruit. In the same manner, your head (thoughts) will always be conditioned by the type of food you consume.

"As the food, so is the head (thoughts). As the head, so is God" Thus, the

food, the head, and God will be on the same wavelength. Hence, one has to cultivate good and noble thoughts always. If you eat sathwic (pure, serene) food and cultivate sathwic nature right from childhood, your entire life will run smoothly. Hence, one has to be wary of one's food and head (thoughts). If you wish to sanctify your human birth, you should not live like a bird, beast, or an animal. Having taken birth as a human being, one has to perform the karmas worthy of a human being. One has to conduct oneself as a human being.

What does the term "human values" imply? Sathya (truth), dharma (righteousness), santhi (peace), prema (love), and ahimsa (nonviolence). It is only when we cultivate and exhibit these five human values in our daily lives that we will be entitled to be called human beings. Human being is a repository of trigunas, namely, sathwa (calm serenity), rajas (passionate activity), and thamo guna (sloth, slumber). Unfortunately, today, we find the rajo and thamo gunas more active in human beings. We do not find even a trace of sathwa guna anywhere. Hence, it is of utmost importance today that people are taught and encouraged to cultivate sathwa guna, perform sathwic karmas and finally reach the abode of sathwic guna.

Embodiments of Love!

You are now in the stage of childhood. This is the right age to cultivate sathwa guna. The quality of your life in the later stages will depend upon the qualities you cultivate now. What is the use of trying to cultivate sathwa guna at the fag end of your life, when your physical body refuses to co-operate with you in your sadhana (spiritual exercises)? Hence, you must cultivate and put into practice the sathwa guna in the youthful age itself. If man wishes to experience manavatwa (humanness) and reach Daivatwa (Divinity), sathwa guna is very essential. It is only when you consciously cultivate sathwa guna that you will be able to attain sathwic nature. If you aim to attain sathwic nature but indulge in rajasic and thamasic acts, it is not possible. All our ancient sages and seers did their sadhana when they were young and strong.

Embodiments of Love!

You have to partake of sathwic food. By partaking of sathwic food, you will be able to cultivate sathwic thoughts. And, by cultivating sathwic thoughts, you will be able to undertake sathwic karmas. It is absolutely necessary that one should have sathwic friends in youth and constantly move about in their company. It is said,

Good company leads to detachment;
Detachment makes one free from delusion;
Freedom from delusion leads to steadiness of mind;
Steadiness of mind confers liberation.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

Hence, you have to partake of sathwic food, keeping your goal of liberation in the mind.

You may at times have a doubt that you may not get such sathwic food. I do not at all agree with this view. Don't you get vegetables and edible green leaves in plenty? In fact, the moment you are born out of your mother's womb, you are surviving and thriving on your mother's milk or cow's milk. Is this not sathwic food? Can you not live upon a vegetarian diet consisting of vegetables, green leaves, and cow's milk?

Why should you cater to the dictates of your palate, adding chillies, salt, tamarind, and spices? It is only when you gradually reduce these ingredients for taste you will be able to cultivate sathwa guna. Parents have a great responsibility in teaching the children about the efficacy of sathwic food and getting them accustomed to it right from their childhood. On the other hand, if the parents themselves prepare and serve rajasic and thamasic food

consisting of meat, fish, etc., in their homes, how can they expect the children to develop sathwa guna?

I am of the view that the children at least should abstain from such rajasic and thamic food and demand from their parents only sathwic food. One has to consciously cultivate the habit of partaking of only sathwic food. Only then will one be able to develop sathwa guna.

Embodiments of Love!

All our senses are conditioned by the trigunas, and the gunas, in turn, are conditioned by the food we consume. Hence, if we start eating sathwic food, undertake sathwic karmas and move about in the company of sathwic friends, I am sure that we can transform ourselves into sathwic individuals. It is bad company that is responsible for evil qualities. If you want to cultivate good qualities, you have to eat sathwic food. In fact, it is the food that we consume is responsible for all the evil qualities.

Dear students!

If you develop bad qualities like anger, passion, envy, jealousy, etc., right from this early age, your entire life will be spoiled. You are poisoning your young minds with these evil qualities. My advice to the youngsters and students is eat sathwic food; cultivate sathwic behaviour, and keep the company of sathwic people right from this early age.

I often observe that youngsters today join bad company the moment they enter the school or college and continue to move about in the company of bad people. With the result that they cultivate bad qualities, resulting in bad behaviour. Frequently, they are not even aware of the subtle changes taking place in their behaviour toward elders, parents, teachers, and society. They think that they are on the right track, since they are pursuing education in a good educational institution. The education they are pursuing may be good,

but the core of their heart is polluted due to bad company. Several bad thoughts emanate in their mind even at a young age.

People often think that it is a natural phenomenon due to young age. I do not at all subscribe to this view. It is not a natural phenomenon at all! It is most unnatural. Since you are partaking of bad food, you are having bad thoughts. Hence, first and foremost, give up bad food. People who are devoted to Swami, must join satsanga. But you are joining bad company and, as a result, are developing bad thoughts. Once bad thoughts enter your mind, none can drive them away. Hence, you have to cultivate good thoughts even before bad thoughts enter your mind.

Several parents are not concerned about the future of their children. Either they are too busy pursuing their vocations or they are helpless in supervising your behaviour. But, if you tread the right path, they will be most happy. On the other hand, if you are moving about in bad company, cultivating bad habits, resulting in bad behaviour, they will be very sad and will be unable to share their distress or anguish with anybody. Hence, it is your foremost duty to keep your parents happy.

If you want to keep your parents happy, you must tread the right path. So, tread the right path and keep your parents happy. Only then will you be able to cultivate good behaviour. There are three aspects in human life, which are interlinked: thoughts, behaviour, and the end result. As the thoughts, so will be the behaviour, and as the behaviour, so will be the result. Teachers expect good behaviour from their pupils. How is it possible, when the students move about in bad company, eat wrong kinds of food, and entertain bad thoughts? The end result is always bad in such a situation. While taking bitter food, how can you experience sweetness? In short, the rajasic and thamasic food that you consume is the root cause for the bad thoughts that are entering your mind.

Dear students!

All of you must tread the right path. Even if your parents for any reason offer you rajasic and thamasic food prepared in the home, you must explain and convince them of the ill-effects of such food, saying, "Mother! If you serve rajasic and thamasic food to me, I will only get bad thoughts. This is not conducive to good behaviour on my part." You must also convince them of the need to prepare and serve sathwic food to all members of the family. Not only should you eat sathwic food, you should also read good books. Your entire life is dependent upon good food, good thoughts, and good company.

Dear students!

You should not read all sorts of trash like cheap novels, stories, etc. Such trash will generate bad thoughts in you and pollute your mind. When you go to a library, you should read the biographies of great and noble people, which will help to cultivate good qualities and good thoughts in you. One reason for the pollution of young minds and proliferation of bad thoughts in them is reading all sorts of cheap literature. In fact, it is only the mind that is responsible for good or bad thoughts. That is why it is said, *Manaeva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayo* (mind is responsible for both bondage and liberation of man). Unfortunately, in these days it is only cheap books that have become popular and acquired great attraction. Good books have become a rare commodity.

A question may arise as to where one would get such good books. You go to good libraries of institutions committed to the moral and spiritual uplift of humanity. Frequently, we come across people traveling in trains and buses purchasing worthless books available in the railway platforms and bus stands and reading them with absorbing interest. They may say that they are reading them for whiling away the time. They do not realise how harmful those books are in generating bad thoughts and polluting their minds. Hence, you must always select books that contribute to your intellectual, moral, and spiritual development.

Embodiments of Love!

If you wish to cultivate good thoughts and good behaviour, you must read good books. Several students today consider it a fashion to read cheap literature that is available for a low price. With the result that cheap thoughts and cheap behaviour are generated in them. They look for cheap books and trash distributed free of cost. They woefully lack a sense of discrimination to judge whether such writing is conducive to their moral, spiritual, and character development. They will, however, realise the consequences of their action after their minds are totally polluted. Then it will be too late for them to retrace their steps. It is only through good books that good thoughts and good behaviour can be cultivated.

Dear students!

There are several other important aspects to be taught to you in these three days that will enable you to cultivate noble thoughts and tread the right path. I will teach several aspects in due course that will enable you to cultivate pure thoughts.

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

18. Develop the Spirit of Oneness

Date: 19 November 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Ladies Day

Embodiments of Love!

Today, being Ladies' day, many ladies have gathered here to share their happiness with one and all. We distinguish and differentiate between ladies and gents on the basis of *upadhi* (vesture) or physical form. However, the principle of Brahman present in ladies and gents is one and the same.

Sarvam khalvidam Brahma
(verily all this is Brahman).

Everyone aspires to attain Divinity. Many sages, seers and yogis did intense penance to have the vision of God.

Where is God?

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

God assumes human form to protect humanity. This has been the mission of all Avatars .

Embodiments of Love!

God transcends names, forms and attributes. He is infinite and not limited to a particular form. Once, Sage Narada and a few other sages prayed to Lord

Narayana to incarnate in human form and redeem mankind. Lord Narayana said, "Narada, Brahma Shakti (Divine power) is positive. It is not possible for Brahma Shakti to incarnate on earth unless it is coupled with negative power. It is only when the positive and negative combine that Divinity manifests in human form."

In response to the prayers of sages and seers, God comes down in human form. He strives for the welfare of humanity and bestows joy on one and all. The Avatar is a manifestation of *Brahma Swarupa* and *manavatwa* (humanness). The same principle of Brahman is latent in all. One has to develop inward vision in order to experience Him.

Easwara sarva bhutanam
(God is the indweller of all beings).

In this cosmic drama, God alone is the director and also the actor. He is donning all the roles such as mother, father, husband, wife, daughter, son, etc.

Someone says, "I have been blessed with a grandson today." The grandson is a manifestation of Brahma. Brahma alone assumes various names and forms in this world. When God incarnates on earth, He has to assume the form of jiva (individual soul). The principles of *Daivatwa* (Divinity) and *jivatwa* (individual) are inseparable. You cannot find one to the exclusion of the other.

Divinity has no specific form. Only the jiva has a name and a form but not Deva (God). He is present in all. In fact, each one of you is an embodiment of God. Whatever you see around is also the manifestation of God. Even the small birds that you see here are endowed with the principle of Divinity. There is no place which is not pervaded with Divinity. There is no form which

is not divine. However, God assumes a particular form based on the feelings of His devotees.

God is extolled as *Sabda Brahmamayi*, *Characharamayi*, *Jyotirmayi*, *Vangmayi*, *Nityanandamayi*, *Paratparamayi*, *Mayamayi* and *Sreemayi* (embodiment of sound, mobility and immobility, light, speech, eternal bliss, perfection, delusion and wealth). Hence, even the words that we utter manifest our innate divinity. It is God who speaks through each one of you. You should have this firm conviction. If someone accuses you, think that God in that form is accusing you. When you develop such spirit of oneness and tolerance, you will never be perturbed by censure and blame. Your mind will always remain in peace. Whatever may happen, accept it wholeheartedly as the Will of God. **Have firm faith that it is God and God alone who is the doer.**

Do not consider your fellow human beings as mere individuals. When you talk to someone, think that you are talking to God. When you do not see God in others and treat them as your own, you will be giving room to evil qualities like anger, jealousy, hatred, etc. Develop the spirit of oneness. Only then will your life be redeemed.

When you go to a noble soul and ask him for a message, he will merely say, "My dear son, know thyself." Today People are interested in knowing about others. They keep on enquiring, "Who are you? Where do you come from?" But, they do not enquire into themselves "Who am I?" Only when you conduct such a self enquiry will you get the correct answer. God has given you the human body. It is He who makes you talk, walk, laugh, and even cry. **Everything happens according to His Will. Develop such firm faith.**

On this occasion, we should remember Mother Easwaramma and the ideals she exemplified. She was a paragon of virtues. She was always happy and cheerful, and she had a smiling countenance. Her heart was tender and sweet because it was filled with love and compassion.

One day, she approached Me with a request, "Swami, when the children of our village suffer from any ailment, their mothers have to carry them all the way to Bukkapatnam hospital. It is a heartrending sight to see the grief-stricken mothers carrying their children that far. There is no guarantee that they get proper medical attention even after going there. Hence, kindly establish a small hospital in our village itself."

I pacified her saying that her wish will certainly be fulfilled at an appropriate time. Only when the *kala*, *karma*, *karana*, and *kartavya* (time, action, reason, and duty) are favourable can one attain the desired result. I constructed a hospital as per her wish.

On some other day, she came to Me with another prayer, "Swami, I am unable to bear the sight of small children carrying heavy loads of books and walking all the way to Bukkapatnam school. Even You had to walk to Bukkapatnam school in those days. Kindly construct a small school in our village and save them from the trouble of trudging all the way to Bukkapatnam for their studies."

I assured her, "Don't worry; I will surely construct a school in the village." Accordingly, I fulfilled her wish.

She came to Me with yet another request, "Swami, people in our village are suffering for want of drinking water facility. They have to go all the way to Chitravathi river to fetch water. Even in the Chitravathi, we do not find water always. It is not a perennial river. We find water only when there are rains. I feel very sad to see small children carrying pots filled with water on their tender shoulders. Water is the sustainer of life. Hence, kindly get a well dug in our village and quench the thirst of people."

I told her, "Your desires are very simple. I will certainly fulfil them in a big way. You don't worry about these things. I will make sure that the people of our village have proper education and medical facilities."

As per My promise to her, I got a small school constructed in the village. In the earlier days, she was concerned that not all the children of all the villages were attending school. Later on, I established a college. Easwamma was very happy. Gradually, the college has developed into a university.

To begin with, I got a small hospital constructed on the top of the hill. Dr. Seetharamaiah from East Godavari district came here to serve in the hospital at My behest. He was an ardent devotee. He served here till his last breath. The hospital was totally managed by one doctor and two nurses in those days. Now much more has been achieved than what Easwamma had asked for by establishing a Super Speciality Hospital. The simple desires of Easwamma in those days paved the way for gigantic social welfare projects.

Once when I went to the banks of the river Chitravathi, I noticed some ladies from the village scooping out sand to get their pots filled with water. Later, Easwamma also told Me about the hardships of the housewives in the village for obtaining drinking water and requested Me to do something to relieve their difficulties. Thereafter, I arranged for pipe water to be supplied to the villages from a few hundred kilometres away. In fact, I fulfilled every little desire that she had expressed. The reason being: her desires were never for her own benefit but invariably in the larger interest of the villagers. Whenever anyone expresses a truly selfless desire, Swami will surely fulfil such wishes. What was once a small school has now been transformed into a multi-disciplinary university. What was a small well has been transformed into a gigantic water supply system.

Electricity was a rare privilege for the rural population those days. The politicians who came to power were not very enthusiastic and effective in supplying electricity for most villages. Therefore, I decided that without seeking their assistance or help, I must get these facilities provided by Myself. When Puttaparthi was electrified, there was jubilation, and this even caused jealousy in nearby villages. Hence, I expanded the facility to other villages also.

These were not casual acts of fancy but were provided after ascertaining the needs of the villagers. See this vast auditorium. For whom have I got it constructed? Is it not for the comfort of all of you? It is said,

Paropakara punyaya, papaya parapeedanam
(one attains merit by helping others and commits sin by hurting them).

Help ever, Hurt never.

Hence, always strive to help everybody.

Selfishness is an evil. Fish is better than "selfish".

Unfortunately, today you see persons who are utterly selfish everywhere. It is difficult to trace the origin of the present-day politics steeped in utter selfishness, but its consequences are rampant corruption and evil tendencies. If this kind of politics is eliminated, there will be happiness all around. All and sundry have now entered politics. Even panwalas and beedi vendors have developed political aspirations. One has to understand the true purpose and significance of politics before one enters into it. Instead of being helpful to society politicians actually engage themselves in harming those whom they are supposed to serve. Those in power expect that everyone should hanker after them for obtaining things as a matter of favour that, in fact, are their right. I would therefore advise that you shun such politics. Instead, rely on your own innate strength.

What sort of a practice is it to go from door to door begging for votes? If you lack the competence, your endeavours are bound to fail. Depend on God's grace. If you depend on God, He will turn the minds of people in your favour. God is everything. Victory is secured only when you totally depend on God's grace. Here again your prayers to God should not be for selfish reasons. If you are selfish, it practically renders you incapable of helping others.

First of all, acquire good qualities. You must be helpful to a few people around you at least. Your efforts should reflect an element of sacrifice.

Karmanyevadhikarasthe ma phaleshu kadachana
(you have right only to work, but not to the fruit thereof).

Be active in your life. Whatever work you take up, depend on your own innate strength. Do not depend on assistance, support or help from others. Be self-reliant. If you wish to have your family and children well educated and flourishing, you pray to God.

Wherever you look, God is present. From stars to hillocks, from insects to elephants, everything is pervaded by Brahman. Fill your heart with divine feelings. God is known as *Hridayavasi* (resident of heart). Here heart does not mean the physical heart. If there is enlargement of physical heart, it results in a disease. What I refer in this context is the spiritual heart which is present in every individual. When there is an expansion of heart, it gives rise to broadmindedness. On the other hand, when there is contraction of heart, you will have only narrow feelings. Hence, never entertain mean qualities.

The human birth is highly sacred. That is why God assumes the human form. Hence, develop purity of heart and lead your lives in a sacred manner. When I give a discourse or involve you in bhajan singing, it is only meant for the

expansion of your heart. When you participate in nagar sankirtan in the early hours of the day, your heart will be brimming with bliss. It is not enough if you merely sing for your own satisfaction. You should participate in community singing wholeheartedly and share your joy with one and all. Sing His glory full-throated and make everyone drink the nectar of the divine name. Your aim should always be to attain expansion of heart in every endeavour. Only then will the title of "human being" befits you. Be broadminded and share your happiness with everybody.

At present, selfishness and self-interest are on the rise. People are not striving to purify their hearts. On the other hand, they are trying to cover up their mistakes and pose to be men of eminence. They are interested only in the welfare of their own family and friends. You should have concern for the feelings and well-being of others also.

Love is God. Live in love.

Love should not be tainted with narrow feelings of I and mine. All should live in amity with the spirit of oneness. It is possible only when you have firm faith that God is present in all. Without the presence of divinity within, one cannot live. With such awareness, live always in God consciousness.

Consider the suffering of others as your own. Do not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you. Consider love as your very life-breath. Grow in love. Be broadminded and share your love with everybody. Pray that others should not undergo the suffering you have undergone. Let everybody be happy and make progress in life. It is possible only when you develop love.

Bhagawan ended His Discourse with the bhajan , "Prema Muditha Manase Kaho".

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

19. Truth and righteousness are the foundation for true education

Date: **22 November 2005** / Location: **Prasanthi Nilayam** / Occasion: **Convocation - 24**

Dear Students!

I do not wish to speak much about present-day education. In fact, there is a purpose and goal for education: that is truth. Whatever is learnt other than truth, cannot be construed as true education. That is only secular education.

There are many "educated" people in the world today. But, what are engaged in? I do not find educated people engaged in service to society today. Nevertheless, the educational institutions in the world are turning out more and more such "educated" people. The education that these people acquire is only secular education and not spiritual education. In fact, spiritual education is the only true education, which will establish the existence of God.

Secular education enables one to secure employment and eke out a living thereby. It is for the physical sustenance of the person concerned and their family. As the saying goes, "The end of education is character." Devoid of character, all other possessions are useless. Unfortunately, today, character building has been relegated to the background. It is the last priority.

Of what use it is to pursue such education that does not confer character on a person? Modern education may help one to gain control over men and matter, but it utterly fails in uplifting one's own self. There must be unity between one's inner feelings and outward actions. The harmony between thought, word, and deed is of utmost importance. Education should enable one to cultivate good qualities, character, and devotion. When there is unity between thought, word, and deed, one can acquire purity and realise Divinity.

Modern education is fully self-centred. Wherever you look, selfishness is rampant. Contrary to it, true education teaches selflessness. People pursuing such type of education, give up their selfish interests and work for the larger interest of society. It is said, Paropakaraya punyaya, papaya parapeedanam (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). Wherever you look, people today analyse whether a particular activity they wish to undertake will be beneficial to them or not. Everywhere you will find only selfish interest coming to the fore.

People tend to forget that the real self is one's own Self (Atma), which is the same Self (Atma) present in every individual. And, that Self is Chaitanya Shakti (the power of universal consciousness). This Chaitanya Shakti is present in every human being, nay every living being. That is why it is said, Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). Hence, one has to give up one's self-interest and strive to realise the Atma Tattwa (Atmic Principle) that is present in every living being.

Modern education is steeped in utter selfishness. It is only when one transcends one's self-interest that one can acquire true education and purity of heart. One has to rise above self-interest and help others with a spirit of sacrifice. Only then can one become a true human being and be called as such; not by mere education. Birds, beasts, and animals cannot realise this sacred Atma Tattwa and manifest selflessness. Only a human being can do so by sadhana (spiritual exercises). A human being can acquire value only by developing good character. Hence, one has to strive to acquire and protect one's character by pursuing true education.

Education is not for earning a fat pay-packet. After all, what can money do? In what way it can help us? It may perhaps help us acquire name and fame and build palatial buildings with modern comforts. But, devoid of character, of what use all these comforts? Unfortunately, today the world respects only

such people. In my view, a person without character is unfit to be called a human being. He is only an animal. Even an animal is better than such a human being, for, it has a season and a reason. But a human being has no season and reason at all! Wherever you see, you will find only selfishness today. Only such people pass off as gentlemen in society in present times.

Coming to the point once again, character is the most important aspect of a human being. Truth and righteousness are the foundation for character. As the saying goes, Sathyannasti paro dharma (There is no dharma greater than adherence to truth). The mansion of righteousness rests on the foundation of truth. If the very foundation of truth collapses, there can be no righteousness. Hence, truth and righteousness are the two most important limbs of a human being. When truth and righteousness go together, love manifests.

Bereft of truth, righteousness, love, and peace,
the value of all your education is zero;
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love, and peace,
the sanctity of all your acts of charity is zero;
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love, and peace,
the utility of the positions of power occupied is zero;
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love, and peace,
the result of all your good deeds is zero;
These four qualities are the four foundation walls
that support the mansion of Sanathana Dharma.
What more can I explain,
Oh men of noble qualities!
(Telugu poem)

There can be no peace without truth, righteousness, and love. You often come across people complaining, "I have everything in life, but I have no peace of mind." A person without peace of mind is confronted with troubles from all

sides. If only one has peace of mind, one can be happy in the world. One will have no troubles at all! Such a person is a great soul.

Let us now analyse the true meaning of the word manava (human being). It means one without attachment to the world. Only such a person can be called a real human being. To marry someone, beget children, and develop a family - these are all considered to be attachments. Man loses peace on account of developing attachments. A paradoxical situation has developed today where man has everything - good food, comfortable life, etc. - but he has no peace of mind. Why? Because, he has developed an attachment to the objects of enjoyment. Peace is something which cannot be purchased in a market. It depends upon one's attitude to life and living.

Hence one has to develop ekatma bhava (feeling of oneness). If this ekatma bhava is developed, one can move about freely in the world with no attachment to any particular individual or object. When one loses one's freedom, one will become bound by the objective world. One will develop desires, lust, etc. Where there is lust, love cannot exist.

The rose flower, which is a symbol of love, teaches many good things. It is a thing of beauty that speaks silently in the language of fragrance. It is surrounded by thorns. In this example, the rose flower is comparable to love and the thorns to lust. Man must be able to pluck the flower of love without being pricked by the thorns of lust. It is only when man develops pure love untainted by desire and lust that he can be called a true human being.

Adi Sankara, the greatest exponent of the advaita (nondual) philosophy, once went on a tour to North India on a mission of winning over scholars by argumentation. During the course of his tour, he came across a great scholar by name Mandana Mishra. He had a wife, Ubhaya Bharati, who was equally well-versed in scriptures. Besides, she was a realised soul. She was selected to be the arbitrator and judge to decide the winner in the argumentative

sessions between Sankaracharya and Mandana Mishra.

She was a truthful lady and was aptly suited to be a judge. The judges of modern times are not comparable to Ubhaya Bharati in the qualities of truth and objectivity. She always believed in the aphorism "Truth is God" and therefore was eminently suited for the assignment.

The arguments between Sankaracharya and Mandana Mishra commenced in the presence of Ubhaya Bharati. She was following the arguments and counter arguments with rapt attention. Finally, Sankaracharya defeated Mandana Mishra in the arguments and was declared as winner by Ubhaya Bharati.

As per the conditions governing the sessions, Mandana Mishra had to take to sanyas (become a renunciant), and he did accordingly. As a dutiful wife, Ubhaya Bharati followed suit, and she also took to sanyas.

A question may arise here as to what is sanyas, in the real sense. It is giving up of all desires. As long as one entertains desires, one will only be a samsari (householder). One will develop worldly relationships. One will desire to have a son in the first instance. Thereafter, the whole retinue of daughter-in-law, grandsons, granddaughters, etc., will follow.

Ubhaya Bharati did not wish to entangle herself in the web of such worldly relationships. Hence, she took to sanyas (renunciation).

One day, she was going along with her disciples to the river Ganga for taking a holy dip in the river. On the way, she observed a sanyasi (renunciant) relaxing on the wayside, keeping a dried bottle gourd under his head. He was

using it to store drinking water, so he was preserving it safely. Ubhaya Bharati saw this sanyasi's attachment to the bottle gourd and commented to her disciples, "Look! This man calls himself a sanyasi, but he is attached to a bottle gourd, which he is keeping safely under his head as a pillow."

The sanyasi heard this comment, but did not utter anything then. While Ubhaya Bharati and her disciples were returning from the river, he threw away the bottle gourd in front of them in order to demonstrate that he was not attached to the article. Observing his action, Ubhaya Bharati 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 (realised soul) and sanyasi?" Her comment was an eye-opener for the sanyasi. Immediately, he fell at the feet of Ubhaya Bharati and prayed to her to teach him true knowledge.

People today put up a show as though they had renounced everything. In fact, it is they who crave for worldly possessions.

Dear students!

You are all engaged in pursuing education. Hence, you must have only one desire now. That is brahmacharya (celibacy). When you come here to join the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning as students, you pray, "Swami! We don't want anything. We have no desires like marriage, setting up a family, building houses, etc. Please lead us on the path of liberation." But, the moment you leave the portals of the Institute, umpteen number of desires swarm you like honey bees.

Man's behaviour is influenced by sthanabala (power of the place), bhujabala (power of the physical body) and dhanabala (power of wealth). For instance, in the Ramayana, when Rama and Lakshmana were going in search of Sita,

Lakshmana suddenly felt tired and told Rama that he was exhausted and was fed up with the search for Sita and would like to go back to Ayodhya as quickly as possible to have a more comfortable living.

Rama smiled at him and said, "Let us proceed further, I shall explain everything later."

How did Lakshmana, who previously had declared that Rama was everything to him and that he would not live without Rama, even for a moment, suddenly develop this attitude? How did this concern for bodily comfort arise in him suddenly?

After they walked some distance and sat under a tree. That moment Lakshmana felt the pangs of repentance for his impertinent behaviour. He realised his mistake, caught hold of Rama's feet and asked, "Rama! Forgive me for what I had said. I cannot understand how these devilish qualities and bad thoughts entered me. What could be the reason?"

Rama thought over the matter for some time and explained, "Lakshmana! The region through which we passed just now was the haunt of Surpanakha. She used to rest under that tree. Hence, the place is surcharged with all her devilish qualities. The vibrations of those evil qualities aroused bad thoughts in you. The moment you came out of the place, you are your normal self again. Your inherent good nature asserted itself."

Thus, one's association with a particular place also has its effect on one's behaviour. That is what is called sthanabala (power of the place).

People often wish and pray for a son. But what type of son do they should pray for? One who will emulate the noble qualities of the parents.

Unfortunately, today you do not find noble qualities anywhere. Youngsters often move in bad company and cultivate bad qualities. This is not correct. They should always make friendship with good people and emulate their qualities. The great epic Ramayana is replete with several examples of how association with good people results in developing noble qualities. Adi Sankara in his famous Bhaja Govindam song very graphically described how satsanga (good company) would ultimately lead one to liberation:

Satsangatwe nissangatwam,
Nissangatwe nirmohatwam,
Nirmohatwe nischalatattwam,
Nischalatattwe jivanmukti.
(Sanskrit sloka)

Today, people move about in bad company and ultimately spoil themselves. This is the effect of the Kali Yuga, which is often referred to as the Kalaha Yuga (the Age of Conflict). Man, by nature, is divine; but he turns bad on account of dussanga (bad company). That is why sages and seers in ancient times constantly strove to cultivate noble qualities by satsanga.

Today, trash literature is found everywhere. Wherever you look, you will find people, especially youngsters, reading bad books that pollute their minds. You might have observed youngsters visiting the library invariably on Sundays and holidays. They search for bad books and read them with absorbing interest. Those bad books are very exciting to the young minds. Thus, youngsters spoil themselves on account of bad company. No force on earth can change such boys. Not even God. Unless one makes introspection into one's behaviour and strives for transformation, one continues to move about in bad company.

One's character and conduct are of paramount importance. If they are taken care of, one is sure of treading the right path. There is no use acquiring high academic degrees with a view to earn high salary and position. How long will they last? On the other hand, it is possible that they may land one in trouble sometimes.

In keeping with the saying, Yad bhavam tad bhavati (as the feeling, so is the result), one has to cultivate noble thoughts and feelings. One has to read good books that will bring about a transformation of heart and uplift the soul.

You often find youngsters going to the library and engaged in deep study. What sort of books they study? They read bad books camouflaged in a good cover. Once you remove the cover and look into the book, everything is trash, with bad photos. You will have to be very tough with such students. No one can be taken for granted. They speak sweet words outwardly as though they are very innocent. But, they stealthily engage themselves in bad activities. Unlike the students in the Gurukula system of the ancient times, present day students indulge in bad behaviour. In spite of great efforts on the part of teachers to bring about a transformation in them, they continue to exhibit their bad qualities. It is not surprising to see students assaulting teachers in the educational institutions today. There are students who find fault with those who actually provide for their living. There are also students who do not hesitate to pull down the very hand that feeds them. Such are the qualities of the present day students. They do not appreciate the role played by the teachers in their uplift.

What are the qualities expected of a student?

Students should pursue such education that confers on them the sacred qualities like
good character,
adherence to truth,
devotion, discipline, and duty.
(Telugu poem)

Only students who cultivate such qualities are eligible to be called students in the real sense. Those who act against those principles are not students, but stupid. You should not make friendship with such people. Neither you should call them stupid and earn their wrath. Be neutral in your relationship with them. You should keep up your own good qualities, which the world will appreciate. Love all. In fact, love is the most important aspect of education. One who teaches the method by which man can cultivate selfless love is the real Guru. There are, of course, several such teachers.

I have established the Sathya Sai Educational Institutions only with a view to inculcate love and teach good qualities to students. It is not an exaggeration to say that there is not a single bad book in our library. Our students are very good students. They do not at all move in bad company.

Even when they go home for vacation, they do not like to stay there for long. Sometimes, their mothers may say, "My dear! You stayed for one full year in Brindavan or Puttaparthi. You never had an opportunity to eat tasty and spicy food. I shall now prepare such food that you will relish."

Our boys will then reply, "Mother! You should also not eat such rajasic (passionate) food. It is not good for health."

As the food, so is the head (thoughts). Thus, when the food and head go together, people forget God. Hence, do not change your food habits. Continue to stick to a sathwic (pure) diet. Take plenty of green leafy vegetables. It is only when you maintain spartan habits with regard to food and head that will you become a good-natured individual.

You are aware that people outside have high expectations of the students studying in Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions. Students, as long as they

remain in our hostels, exhibit good behaviour and devotion. Once they go out of the portals of the institution, they turn bad. This should not happen. Wherever you are, whether in the hostel here or when you go out, you must continue to exhibit good behaviour. Of course, I have no doubt at all about the behaviour of our students. They are good boys. I sincerely wish and hope that our students continue to be good and become good citizens worthy of emulation by others.

I conclude My Discourse with blessings to all.

Alternative	Link	to	Discourse:
http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html			

20. Realise your innate divinity to attain peace

Date: 23 November 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Birthday - 80

Bereft of truth, righteousness, love and peace
the value of all your education is zero;
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love and peace
the sanctity of all your acts of charity is zero;
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love and peace
the utility of the positions of power occupied is zero;
Bereft of truth, righteousness, love and peace
the result of all your good deeds is zero.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love! Human birth is meant for attaining peace and not for occupying positions of authority. One may have all types of wealth and comforts, but bereft of peace, life itself has no meaning. There are many in this world who are well-to-do, highly educated and occupying positions of authority. But in what way is society benefited by them? They have no time or inclination to wipe off the tears of the suffering humanity.

How can we help the poor and the downtrodden? This should be the concern of the people in power. But nobody seems to think on these lines. In the name of social work, people are indulging in "show-work!" They drive away the beggars who come to their doorstep begging for alms. Man should engage himself in acts of charity in order to experience peace.

You should understand the import of the term manava (human being) in the first instance. What is the goal of a human being? Is it to strive for the fulfillment of one's desires? Is it to come up in life in the worldly sense? Is it to enjoy sensual pleasures? Human life is a mixture of happiness and sorrow. It is not possible to experience one to the exclusion of the other. How can you

expect to attain happiness and peace if you are not prepared to help your fellow human beings? Everyone has to experience ups and downs in life, but they are like passing clouds. Difficulties are a part of life. None can escape them. Hence, one has to treat happiness and sorrow with equanimity. There is pleasure in pain and vice versa. One should not be elated by pleasure nor depressed by pain. We have to develop the spirit of equanimity in order to progress in life. Samatwa (equality) is very essential for samaaja (society) to progress. Sukha-dukhe samekruthwa labha-labhau jaya-jayau (one should maintain equipoise in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory, and defeat). But man, despite enjoying all comforts and pleasures, is unable to bear even a small difficulty. He is disturbed and distressed by the slightest trouble.

How can one Attain Peace

If you ask a wealthy person whether he is happy, what will be his reply? He will say, "Sir, I have no dearth of money. My children are well settled in life. My home is very well furnished with all types of comforts and conveniences. I have everything in life except peace of mind." How can one attain peace of mind? It is possible only when one realizes one's innate divinity. Why are we not able to experience peace? Where does the mistake lie? We go on enquiring others, "Who are you"? But we do not make an effort to enquire into ourselves, "Who am I"? There lies the mistake. Once we realize who we really are, we will be free from sorrows and difficulties forever. Hence, first and foremost, we should make efforts to realize our true identity. What is the use of knowing everything without being aware of the Self?

Is it not a futile exercise to sow seeds when there is no rain? Even when there are rains, can you reap a harvest unless you have sown seeds? Both the positive and the negative are required for the electric current to flow. In the same manner, both self-effort and divine grace are essential to achieve success in your endeavors.

God is Everywhere

Easwara-Sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings), Isavasyam idam sarvam (the entire universe is permeated by God). We must realize that we are born to experience our innate divinity and not merely to enjoy worldly pleasures. We have to take to the path of spirituality to experience our innate divinity. If we lack in spiritual outlook, we do not deserve to be called human beings. In fact, it amounts to a betrayal of God. God does not expect you to simply worship Him. He expects you to lead an ideal and purposeful life.

Once, sage Narada enquired Lord Vishnu, what is the royal path to immortality or liberation. Lord Vishnu replied, "One should realize that I am present in all beings." The spark of divinity is present in all. Man is not a mere mortal. He is essentially divine. Jiva (individualized soul) and Deva (God) coexist. The former is negative, and the latter is positive. Lord Vishnu told Narada, "I have to assume the form of a human in order to move among men and protect the world. I am present in everyone in the form of Atma. When man constantly contemplates on the principle of Atma, I manifest My-self."

The same divine principle of Atma is present in all. One who realizes this truth experiences the all-pervasive divinity. God is in you, with you, around you, above you, and below you. However, you cannot realize this truth unless you give up negative feelings. God is everywhere. You have not to search for Him. Develop firm faith that He is in you. God has no specific form. He transcends all names and forms.

Having been born as a human being you should strive for the welfare of society. You are a member of society, and your welfare depends on the welfare of society. Hence, undertake activities that are beneficial to society.

Embodiments of Love! Do not identify yourself with the body. You are the embodiments of the Atma.

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

The indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the eternal witness.
(Telugu poem)

God is One, Truth is One, Love is One

Can anyone say "My Atma is dead"? The physical body perishes with the passage of time, but the Atma is eternal. One can see the reflection of the sun in the water of a well, in a water tank, in the river, and in the ocean. Without water, there can be no re-flection. When you are in the house you do not see the reflection of the Sun as there is no water. Life is like water, and you see the reflection of Atma as long as there is life. The sun is one, but it appears as though there exists a separate sun for each country. When it is daytime in India, it is night-time in America, and vice-versa. The sun may appear at different times in different countries, but it is one and the same. We cannot call it as Indian sun, the American sun, and so on and so forth. Similarly, God is one. Truth is one. Love is one. Live in love. When you adhere to the twin principles of truth and love, you will experience the manifestation of divinity in everything.

God is One. Who is God? In fact, you, yourself, are God. Everyone should develop the firm conviction, "I am God." When you develop such firm conviction, there will be no room for ego and hatred. You are God, and your fellow human being is also God. De-velop such principles of oneness and equality. When you conflict with others, you are actually in conflict with yourself. Victory and loss are a part of the game of life. One should not criticize or blame the other. When someone meets with failure in his endeavor, empathize with him. When you do not identify yourself with others, differences are bound to crop up.

Who are you? You think you are the body. How long will the body last? It may leave at any time. The human body is like a water bubble. How can you identify yourself with such an ephemeral body? You may say "I am the mind." Mind is nothing but a bundle of desires. The mind does not have a specific

form. The desires constitute the mind. One day or the other, you must give up all your desires. Hence, do not identify yourself with the mind.

Keep your Mind Steady

Today's man has limitless desires. His mind wavers from moment to moment and hence is called a monkey mind. Do not allow your mind to behave like a monkey. You belong to mankind, so keep your mind always steady. Constantly remind yourself that you are a human being. Daivam maanusha rupena (God in the form of human). Give up body consciousness and live in the constant awareness that you are God.

We construct temples to consecrate idols and worship them. Where does the idol come from? It is your own creation. You offer worship to the man-made idols, but you are not prepared to worship yourself (the God within). There is no point in merely worshipping idols if you do not realize your own innate divinity. Everyone must respect and revere the principle of the Atma within. Consider Atmaviswasa (faith in the Self or Self-confidence) as your very life breath. Atmaviswasa is verily the true viswasa (faith). Faith in idols is temporary.

When you go to Tirupati, you worship God in the form of Lord Venkateswara. You extol Him saying, "Lord Venkateswara is our family deity." When you make a pilgrimage to Brindavan, you worship God in the form of Krishna. In Ayodhya, you worship Him in the form of Lord Rama. Depending on the place and circumstances, different names and forms have been attributed to God. But, in reality, Lord Venkateswara, Krishna, Rama, and Sai Baba, are all one and the same. Call Him by any name, and He will respond. He has no differences. You should not be deluded by differences in name and form. Each human being has a specific form, and it is not permanent. Therefore, develop firm faith in the oneness of the Atma.

Develop Unwavering Faith

Embodiments of Love! Having come here after spending a lot of money and

putting up with inconveniences, you should make proper use of your stay here. Ask yourself, whether you have spent your time in a purposeful manner. What is the use of coming here if you do not practice Swami's teachings? Develop unwavering faith in the one-ness of divinity. Only then can you experience peace. As long as you do not contemplate the oneness of God, the wavering nature of the mind continues.

Religions are many but the path and goal are one.
The thoughts of each individual may be different, but the Reality is One.
(Telugu Poem)

Religions are different but the praise of God is one and the same. You may criticize someone as a bad person today and extol him as good tomorrow. Good and bad are your own thinking. Your mind is the cause for both. In reality, man is always good by nature. Human life is highly sacred. That is why it is said, Daivam maanusha rupena (God is in the form of a human). Do not belittle yourself by thinking that you are a mere mortal. You are verily God. The very fact that you portray God in a human form and worship Him proves that human being is essentially divine. Do not attach undue importance to forms. Understand the inherent principle of divinity. Keep the mind with a one-pointed focus.

What is the use of taking birth as a human being if you behave like an animal? You need not give up everything and become a sannyasi (renunciant). See God in man. God is all-pervasive. You cannot say that God is confined to a particular place. There is no place where God does not exist.

Sarvatah panipadam tat sarvathokshi siromukham,
Sarvatah sruthimalloke sarvamavruthya tishthati
(With hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth, and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe).

Purify the Mind

We cultivate paddy. However, we do not consume it as paddy. We remove the husk covering the grain and transform it into the rice. So long as there is a husk, it is destined to have "rebirth". Our desires are like the husk covering the rice grain. We will be free from the cycle of birth and death once we give up all desires.

Paddy becomes suitable for consumption only after it undergoes the process of re-refinement and becomes rice. Rice is used for making various preparations such as puli-hora, chitrannam, chakkeram pongali, payasam, etc. (rice delicacies). Also, Rice flour for preparing idlis and dosas (rice preparations). The names of these food items may vary, but the essential ingredient of rice is the same in all. Just as paddy is transformed into rice, our mind should also be purified through the process of refinement, termed samskara.

You are deluded because of your materialistic outlook. You have to change your vision as it is not something that God will change for you. He has given you everything in its pristine form. But you are polluting it because of your selfish desires. The mind is the root cause of all this. Hence, annihilate the mind and everything will be clear to you.

Embodiments of Love! Your heart is pure and sacred, but you are deluded by the clouds of desires. Just as the sun and the moon are not visible to us when they are covered by clouds, we are unable to visualize our reality because of our desires. These clouds pass over.

Childhood passes in trivial play with other children.

Youth passes in amorous sport.

Middle age absorbs time and effort in amassing wealth.

Come declining years, time crawls in futile longing for worldly desires.

Yet there is no time for contemplation of God.

Thus, is wasted the precious human birth, deeply entangled in the net of karma.

(Telugu poem)

Rely on the Eternal Atma

Man feels proud of his youth and falls into the trap of maya (delusion). As the end approaches, he regrets not having attained peace of mind in spite of enjoying all comforts and pleasures. Man passes through various stages in life such as childhood, youth, middle age, and old age. However, there is no transformation in him with the advancement of age. Instead of trying to change the srishti (creation), man should change his drishti (outlook). We can see the reality only when we change our drishti. There is nothing wrong with srishti. God's creation is perfect, and none can change it. In this creation, God can make anything happen by His divine Will.

So long as one is endowed with physical strength and vigor, one may enjoy himself by participating in atalu and patalu (play and song). However, one should not indulge oneself in any activity beyond a certain limit. As age advances, the physical body undergoes certain changes. Your voice, breath, and vision are bound to change with the passage of time. You suffer from unrest and anxiety because you rely on your physical body. Instead, rely on the changeless and eternal principle of Atma.

Man is ruining his life because of his habits. He should lead a life of righteousness. Do not give undue importance to food and drink. Consider character as your very life breath. If you lack character, you will have to face innumerable difficulties in life.

Hold on to one Name and one Form

Divinity is referred to as Sath, which means changeless and eternal principle.

People of different religions call it by different names. The Muslims extol God saying, "Allah Ho Akbar" (God is great). They consider God as their sole refuge. Whether one is a Muslim or a Hindu, God is the only refuge for all! You should emphatically declare to yourself, "I want God." You should get immersed in the 'divine', not in 'deep wine!' Once you accept Lord Rama as your chosen God, you should spend your entire life in the contemplation of Rama. But, these days, man has become fickle-minded. One day he keeps the picture of Rama on his altar and starts worshipping Him by chanting His name, but the very next day he replaces Rama's picture with that of Sri Krishna if his wishes are not fulfilled.

Once there lived a devotee of Lord Shiva. He used to worship Shiva every day and chant the sacred Panchakshari mantra, "Om Namah Shivaya". But, after some time, he felt that Lord Shiva had not done him any favor. Hence, he put away Shiva's picture in the almirah (wardrobe) and kept Rama's picture on the altar. Initially, he could feel some peace. However, his desires remained still unfulfilled, and he became restless. Now he kept Rama's picture also in the same almirah, and on the advice of his guru started worshipping Krishna. He chanted the divine name "Gopala Krishna" incessantly. After some time, he felt that even Krishna had not done him any good.

One day a lady devotee came to him and said, "What is the use of worshipping Rama and Krishna? Better you do Devi puja (Divine Mother worship)." As per her advice, he kept a picture of Devi on the altar and started worshipping it, replacing the picture of Krishna. As the puja was in progress, he noticed that the fragrance from the incense sticks was wafting toward the almirah where the pictures of other deities were kept. He, therefore, decided to remove those pictures from the almirah, thinking that the incense was meant for the goddess and that the other deities had no right to enjoy the fragrance.

Immediately, the Divine Mother manifested before him and said, "Oh mad man! You worshipped Shiva for a few days, then switched over to Rama and later to Krishna. What is the guarantee that you will not discard My picture also tomorrow? This is not true devotion. You should contemplate on one

name and one form till your last breath. You should remain unperturbed by difficulties and lead a spiritual life. Fill your heart with sacred feelings. Only then will your life be redeemed."

If you want to progress in life never forget the name of God. Do not divert your mind from one name to another. Let your mind be focused on one name and one form.

Mana eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayoh (the mind alone is the cause for bondage and liberation of man). The mind wavers because of the desires you entertain. Hence, you will attain peace only when you give up your desires. Do not let the mind waver. Keep it steady. Mere performance of acts of charity will not confer nobility on you. Offer yourself to God with single-minded devotion. Only then can you attain peace and happiness. Control your desires. Control your thoughts. Then everything will come under your control.

Embodiments of Love! You are endowed with the eternal principles of truth and love. Sathyannasti paro dharmah (There is no dharma greater than adherence to truth) Consider sathya (truth) as the basis of your life and follow the path of dharma (righteousness). Only then will the principle of Love manifest in you. When you have love, you will be successful in all your endeavors.

Embodiments of Atma! You are the embodiments of Atma. There is no form for the Atma. The body made up of five elements is bound to perish. You are not the body, which is bound to perish. You are the indweller, which has neither birth nor death. It has no attachment whatsoever. You will attain immortality once you realize your true identity. You will be free from all worries and desires.

Foster Love and Truth

You should not have even a trace of worry. You may ask, "Is there anyone without worries and desires?" I, Myself, am a living example and ideal in this regard. I have absolutely no desires whatsoever. Everything is in My hand. I

can give you whatever you ask for. However, do not crave materialistic things from Me. They are transient like passing clouds. Ask for that which is eternal. The clouds pass away and are not permanent. There is Truth within you that is permanent. This Truth sustains the world. The twin principles of Truth and Love are present in everyone. I am the Truth that is present in all. I am the love that is present in all. Truth and love are all-pervasive. However, we are not making efforts to experience truth and love. We try to use the Truth and Love according to our convenience. The Truth and Love in us are present in monkeys, dogs, and other animals. We should develop and foster Eternal Truth and Love.

Embodiments of Love! Today you may be occupying positions of power, but how long can you remain in power? It is only temporary. Only divinity is everlasting. You have chosen the path of Truth. Never deviate from it. Never forget the principle of truth you have experienced. You may forget anything in life but not Truth and love. Love is antarvahini (undercurrent) and Truth is bahirvahini (manifest flux). Both of them have to be protected and sustained. That is the duty of a human being. Bereft of truth and love, one does not deserve to be called a human being at all!

Have One-Pointed Devotion

Embodiments of Love! Let your life be filled with love. Do not confine your love to your family and friends. Share it with one and all. Whomsoever you come across, consider everyone as the embodiment of divinity. Share your love with your fellow human beings, become the recipient of their love, and lead your life practicing Truth. Follow the path of truth. I always teach the principles of Truth and love. Congregations like this are meant only to exhort you to adhere to the path of truth and love.

All of you have gathered here out of your love for Me. Having come here and listened to My message, you should practice truth and love in your daily life. Only that will make Me very happy. Let your love be not tainted with worldly feelings. Let it flow incessantly toward God.

This was the ideal demonstrated by Radha. Who is Radha? She is dhaara (incessant flow). Her focus was always on God. She offered everything to God. Once she was given milk that was poisoned. Because she offered everything to God, God received the poi-son and the milk which thus became sanctified was partaken by Radha. She was the kind of person who was always in thought of Krishna. You should understand the meaning of Radha. If you start with "R" you get Radha, if you start with "A" you get aadhaar (basis), if you start with "D" you are Dear to God because of dhara (incessant flow of love for God), and if you start with "A" you get araadh (worship). This means that the very basis of Radha's life was incessant aradhana (worship) of Lord Krishna. Radha symbolized dhara (Prakriti or nature). Krishna is Paramatma (God). Radha knew only Krishna and no one else. She was totally immersed in the love of Krishna. It is because of such one-pointed devotion that she could attain liberation. One who aspires to attain liberation should follow the path of love as exemplified by Radha.

Embodiments of Love! I do not want to cause inconvenience to you by speaking at length. Hence, I bring My Discourse to a close. Consider wherever you go and whatever work you do as God's work. See God everywhere. I will be happy when you develop such divine feelings. So many people have assembled here. I confer on you the sacred wealth of My love and bliss. May all of you lead a long, happy, healthy, and peaceful life!

21. Divine Discourse

Date: **24 February 2005** / Location: **Prasanthi Nilayam** / Occasion: **Appointment of University Vice Chancellor**

Simply by learning alphabet and letters can one become literate? Can one become educated merely by acquiring degrees? Can one be called educated bereft of the discrimination between spirituality and knowledge? Birds and beast also eke out a living without any such education.

Students and teachers, it is truly your good luck and fortune! If you reflect on the Vice Chancellors and the teachers you have had, you will realise that it is verily your good fortune. The first Vice Chancellor of this university was Sri Vinayak Gokak. The seeds sown by him have sprouted today and have acquired great reputation and esteem. Today, his son is taking charge of this university as its Vice Chancellor. Sri Vinayak Gokak was a great scholar. His son is also a great scholar and a great intellectual.

In the future, this Institute will attain great heights and will become the leader for the whole country. There may be some ignorant people who will have doubts as to how such a university in a rural village can become a leader. But note that it is bound to become one! You all think that this university will excel only in academics. This is not merely an educational Institution. In the future the concept of "Educare" will gain great repute and acceptance. "Atma Tattwa " will be shared by this Institute with all the people.

Secular education is merely the gross or the superficial manifestation. The undercurrent is Educare. This will gain emphasis and will come to the forefront very soon! The initiative has already been taken in Delhi. Great scholars have associated themselves in this process. It is not that it depends on the individuals, but their capacity also counts.

There must be no place for pride in education. Educated individuals must be humble with discrimination and wisdom. Why should we feel proud at being educated? Never be egotistic. That which helps to render service to society is

true education. It has become a human habit and behaviour to define things as good and bad. But remember, both good and bad are created by the Will of only One God. Therefore, knowledge cannot be differentiated as good and bad. Your knowledge is but a fraction of the infinite!

The essence of education is humility. Within each one there is the spirit. The Japanese, the Americans, and the Britishers think that their achievements are due to individual qualifications. But all these accomplishments are truly due to the noble youth. What was the accomplishment of Winston Churchill? Being the chief of the Army, he encouraged everybody. This quality made him noble.

Lincoln grew under such poor and trying conditions. His mother consoled him saying that though poverty may be cheap in the eyes of the public, it will bring him great respect in the future. She advised him to, "Tell the truth. Say, I am poor; I cannot afford to wear rich and good dresses. Do not feel shy." Finally, he turned out to become the President of the United States of America. It is such great sacred mothers who have brought forth great leaders in the world. In recent times, we are having more such sacred mothers and, therefore, many sacred Institutions are coming up.

Lincoln would pay his obeisance to his parents before leaving the house every day. You too must respect your parents and make them happy. That is why since ancient times, it has been said, Matru Devo Bhava, Pitru Devo Bhava. Sathyam Vada, Dharmam Chara .

Students!

Your parents are spending so much money for your education. They even fast in order to pay your fees. However, in our University, education is totally free. Get a good name like Abraham Lincoln. Emulate his example. That is true education. First respect your parents. Keep up the honour of your family.

Do not do all this merely to win praise. Humility is a must. Only those who behave like this can be called students. They will reach great heights. Such

students are needed today. We have a good lot of them. Swami is willing that He should give them more and more opportunities to manifest the noble qualities within them. You think that you have secured high ranks. Do not limit yourself to those ranks. Be true to yourself.

Many spend a lot of money and go abroad. There is nothing great in that. Stay here and be prestigious. I will never be happy if you humiliate your own country and acquire a good name abroad. Students, I am so happy to see all of you. You too are deriving so much happiness looking at Bhagawan. I am ready to give up even My life to foster you all. Keep up your good conduct. That is very important.

Sri Vinayak Gokak was a great scholar. His son too rejected great and attractive offers and chose to work in the villages in India. He may look very simple from outside. But you cannot comprehend his honour and dignity. Modern students wear all sorts of coats. However, he wears simple clothes. He has sacred qualities, which are so dear to Swami. This University has been gifted with such people right from the beginning.

In this world, there are many educated people. But they sell their education for money. Spirituality is not a commodity for sale. Spiritual education is very necessary today. Sri S.V. Giri too was occupying a very high position, that of the Chief Vigilance Commissioner, before coming here. He resigned and came straight to Swami. It is these sacrifices that brought him such good name and repute. Na karmana na prajaya dhanena tyage naike amrutatva manasuhu (Not by action, not by progeny, not by wealth; but by sacrifice alone can man attain immortality).

Today, Sri Anil Gokak too sacrificed everything and came to Swami. The other day, we had sent some members from the Central Trust to invite him to take up this position. Hearing them, he just forgot himself. He and his wife immediately consented to come over here and accept the responsibility. Such men of sacrifice will surely win great repute.

Students, you too must be prepared to sacrifice. Sacrifice does not mean

leaving everything. But you need to stay in society and earn a good name. Position may bring a good name today and it will disappear tomorrow. But a good name in the spiritual field will remain for eternity.

Students, your Love is most valuable to Me. I am unmindful of any other wealth. See that this Love does not diminish. Humility is the breath of God. It is vidya (education) that should be shared with everybody. From tomorrow, Sri Anil Gokak will make all efforts to share the richness of his past experience with you all. Sri S.V. Giri will continue to stay here. Just because another Vice Chancellor has come, he will not leave Swami and go. Our former Vice-Chancellors, Prof. Venkataraman and Sri S.V.Giri, have decided to settle down here and share their knowledge with all.

Above all, focus your attention on the indweller. The indweller is indeed Divinity itself. There is no doubt that the human body is required to discharge its regular duties. But do not give too much attention to the body as this will lead to body attachment.

(Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan , "Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama Rama Ram ").

Music attracts God. That is why the Music College was started here. It has to progress a lot in the future and reach great heights. The knowledge of Music should help you to share the feeling of Divinity through music with everyone.

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

22. The Indweller is God Himself

Date: 07 October 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Dasara

During childhood, man develops absorbing
interest in play in the company of other children;
During youth, under the influence of cupid,
he roams about in the company of women with infatuation;
During middle age, he is entangled in worldly
matters and deeply engrossed in hoarding wealth;
And lastly, in old age, he craves for this and that,
not contemplating on God even at that ripe age.
Unable to get rid of old habits,
Unable to develop interest in Godward path,
Man wastes his precious human birth,
Deeply enmeshed in the web of karma.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Man spends his life time thus, deeply enmeshed in pursuing ephemeral things. He is carried away by unproductive thoughts depending upon the particular stage of growth through which he is passing. Ultimately, he realises that he has, in fact, wasted his precious human birth in vain pursuits. Is this the real nature of a human being? Is this what he has to learn in life? These activities are momentary like water bubbles. They cannot provide lasting happiness to man. It is mere foolishness to spend one's time in such futile pursuits.

When God takes birth in human form, people doubt whether he is born like any other human being from the mother's womb or out of His Divine will. The

fact is when God takes birth in human form, he selects His parents. He carries on with His avataric mission with the help of the form He has assumed. This happens in every age. The same was the case with Lord Krishna in the Dwapara Yuga. He made friendship with the Pandavas. In fact, He was friend, philosopher, and guide to them. He constantly protected them against the machinations of the wicked Kauvaras. When they were engaged in the Kurukshetra war with the Kauravas, Krishna donned the role of a ratha sarathi (charioteer) to Arjuna and led the Pandavas to victory.

After the war ended, Lord Krishna informed the Pandavas that He would leave for His palace in Dwaraka. He wanted one of the five Pandava brothers to accompany Him during this journey. Kunthi, the mother of the Pandavas, suggested that Krishna take Arjuna with Him since they were very close to each other. Accordingly, Lord Krishna took Arjuna to Dwaraka and provided all comforts to him during his stay there. Arjuna was a bit embarrassed to take avail of the services rendered by Lord Krishna to him. He told Krishna, "Oh! Lord! How can I take services from You?" Krishna replied, "Arjuna! You are mistaken. Whom am I serving? Is it your body? Even your body belongs to Me. It is not yours. I am the protector of all beings in the world. You, therefore, should not delude yourself thinking that you are the 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.
Truly Speaking, the Dehi (indweller) is
Devadeva (God of gods) Himself.
(Telugu Poem)

"I am that Devadeva. You identify yourself with the body out of delusion and say 'I'. But that is not your real Self. You are not the body. As long as you

identify yourself with the body, you remain as the individual being (jiva). Once you come out of that delusion, you become one with Deva (the Supreme Self). Hence, give up attachment to the body. The human body is like a doll. However, one has to perform all one's karmas using the body as the instrument. Man has the right only to perform karma. The entire world moves on account of karma. I am the Director of this cosmic play, Oh! Arjuna!", said Lord Krishna.

The Yadavas with whom Krishna spent His entire life perished due to their ego and hatred. In the end, Krishna Himself gave up the human vesture and left for His divine abode. Watching these developments helplessly, Arjuna wept inconsolably. Unable to bear the separation from his dear Lord, friend, philosopher and guide, he wailed, "Oh! Krishna! You have been constantly protecting me and guarding me. Now that you left for your heavenly abode, in whom shall I seek refuge?"

At last, realising the futility of spending his time in grief, he returned to Hasthinapura. The city of Dwaraka presented a scene of total destruction. The entire Yadava clan had perished. Arjuna did not know what to do in those circumstances. He remembered the possibility of his mother Kunthi enquiring about the welfare of Lord Krishna and the Yadavas. A hundred and one questions cropped up in his mind, but he had no answers for any of them.

Finally, Arjuna collected all the gopikas (cowherd maids) and started on his march out of Dwaraka, as per the divine command. Suddenly, Arjuna and the gopikas were surrounded by a horde of forest dwelling nomads. But, to his utter dismay, Arjuna could not even lift his bow, the Gandiva; strange indeed! The great warrior Arjuna, who tore the opposing army lines into pieces with utter ease in the Kurukshetra war, could not even lift his Gandiva now. He lamented at his helplessness and prayed to Krishna "Oh! Lord Krishna! What has happened to all my strength? Where is it gone now?" Again, he answered to himself: "He who had granted this power to me has now taken it back."

At last, in utter helplessness and agony, he prayed to Lord Krishna "Oh! Lord! You have to protect your gopikas yourself. I am helpless." Finally, Arjuna reached Hasthinapura along with some of the gopikas who could be saved from the clutches of the barbarians by the divine grace of Krishna. There, Arjuna found the people in great despair. He could not understand the reason for their sorrow.

Meanwhile, Dharmaraja was very anxious to know from Arjuna the welfare of Lord Krishna. Arjuna replied, "I will tell you everything that had happened, in detail." However, mother Kunthi was very anxious to know about the welfare of Lord Krishna. She enquired, "Son! Arjuna! Is my dear Krishna alright? Please tell me in detail what had happened during your stay in Dwaraka." She was very eager to know the facts, and Arjuna could not but reveal the truth. Finally, he steadied himself and related everything about the departure of Krishna for His heavenly abode and the subsequent developments.

The moment Arjuna revealed that Krishna had shed His mortal coil, mother Kunthi could not bear the grief, and she collapsed on the cot on which she was sitting. Dharmaraja rushed to her side and tried to console her saying, "Mother! What was destined to happen has happened. These are all the divine leelas of Lord Krishna. There is no use grieving over these developments. Please get up."

But, mother Kunthi did not respond. He realised that she had left her mortal coil. He put her head on his lap and called all his brothers. He gave instructions to his brothers for performing the obsequies of mother Kunthi. At the same time, he gave instructions for the necessary arrangements to be made for the coronation of young Parikshit, the heir apparent, as the King of Hasthinapura.

Thereafter, he called Nakula and Sahadeva to his side and told them to make arrangements for their mahaprasthan (the great march) of the Pandavas to the Himalayas. Droupadi, the queen of the Pandavas, who was witnessing

these developments, could not maintain her poise anymore. She could not bear the double loss of Lord Krishna's departure on the one side and the sudden demise of mother Kunthi on the other.

Dharmaraja called Arjuna and instructed him to make arrangements for the cremation of the dead body of mother Kunthi. Arjuna complied with his instructions. The brothers could not contain their grief. They wept inconsolably on two counts - one for losing their dear Lord Krishna and the other over the death of their beloved mother.

Dharmaraja led the funeral procession, carrying the fire in an earthen pot. The same tradition was in vogue in those days also. As the funeral procession was proceeding, the people of Hastinapura could not contain their emotions. Finally, when the body of mother Kunthi was placed on the funeral pyre in the cremation ground, Dharmaraja lit the pyre. In a few moments, the mortal body of mother Kunthi was consigned to flames. The Pandava brothers returned home.

The next item on their agenda was to perform the coronation of young Parikshit . What a great wonder! They lost their dear mother; they lost their very life breath, Lord Krishna; yet, they were now prepared to perform the coronation of Parikshit with perfect calm and poise! Time marches on! And, all things that have to be performed have to take their course.

The kingdom of Hastinapura has to be protected. Thinking thus, the priests started chanting the Vedic mantras for conducting the rituals connected with the coronation of Parikshit. He was brought into the court, and the royal crown was placed on his head amidst the chanting of vedic mantras by the priests.

However, Parikshit was very unhappy and pleaded with the Pandavas, "Oh!

My dear grandfathers! You are all great kings. You are still hale and healthy. Is it proper for me to wear the royal crown in your esteemed presence? Do I deserve to wear this royal crown? How worthless and insignificant am I! Some one of you, please wear this crown and rule the country."

The Pandava brothers tried to convince Parikshit saying, "Dear child! We will not be here any more to rule this kingdom. There must be someone to look after the welfare of the people as king of this great country. Therefore, you have to shoulder this responsibility. The affairs of the kingdom have to be looked after. You should not flinch from your duty in ensuring the continuity of the regal obligations." Explaining thus and convincing the young Parikshit, they sat down.

Thereafter, the coronation of Parikshit as the King of Hastinapura was performed as per the wishes of Dharmaraja. Parikshit too bowed to the wishes of Dharmaraja and allowed the rituals of coronation to be completed. The Pandavas then started on their great march to the Himalayas, straight from the royal court where the coronation of Parikshit was being held. They immersed the ashes of their mother in the holy river Ganges. Thereafter, they continued their march in the Himalayas, proceeding one behind the other. Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas, led the great march. Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva followed him in that order. Droupadi, being the wife of the five Pandava brothers, walked behind the brothers.

While the Pandavas and their queen Droupadi were thus proceeding in their great march to the Himalayas, Droupadi first dropped down. Thereafter, the four brothers, Sahadeva, Nakula, Arjuna, and Bhima dropped down in that order during the course of their journey. But, none among them looked behind during their march. For each of them, it was a lone journey to their final abode. Finally, Dharmaraja was alone, and he continued his march.

In this manner, the Pandavas' earthly sojourn came to an end.

Pariskhit was grief-stricken when he came to know about their departure from this world. When they set out on the mahaprasthanas, people were unable to bear their separation, and hence many of them shed their mortal coils. It appeared as though destiny was unkind toward the Pandavas. Who can understand the ways of destiny! None, except God, can know about the turn of events in one's life. One may don ochre robes, but that will not enable one to know what the future has in store.

The Pandavas symbolised virtues and valour. They could shed their mortal coils peacefully because they had led their lives in an ideal manner and sanctified their time in the contemplation of God.

Like the Pandavas, King Parikshit was also one of virtues and valour. Even while carrying out his kingly duties He spent his time in namasmarana. When he took over the reigns of Hasthinapura, some evil-minded kings joined hands and waged a war against him. They underestimated his strength and valour, thinking that he was young and inexperienced. But some other noble kings came to his rescue. With their help, Parikshit could vanquish the enemies and assert his supremacy. He could emerge victorious due to his unflinching faith in God. That is why I often tell you: God is your sole refuge wherever you are - whether on the mountain top or in the sky or in the town or in the city or in the middle of the deep sea.

When Parikshit was anointed king, initially people were apprehensive as to how a young boy could shape the destiny of a kingdom. However, under the able guidance of Kripacharya's son, Parikshit proved to be an efficient king. He followed in the foot steps of the Pandavas. He took some time off from his royal duties and went to the place where the Pandavas shed their mortal coils. He performed pradakshina (circumambulation) and wore the dust of their feet on his head in reverence. He practised and propagated their ideals.

The Pandavas are ideals to the entire world. We should emulate their ideals and sanctify our lives. We may have to face sorrows and suffering, but we

should remain undeterred by emotional obstacles. Only then will the true power and strength manifest in us. When we follow the ideals of the Pandavas, we will experience peace, happiness, and prosperity.

Students!

You are young and have a long life ahead of you. Pariskhit was much younger than you when he ascended the throne. However, he took up the challenge with admirable courage and faith in God. He stood as an ideal to the young generation. You too should develop such courage and fortitude and strive for the welfare of society. That is the true ideal. Pray to God to bestow on you the necessary strength to hold on to this ideal. The Pandavas left the world long ago but their ideal is eternal and ever fresh. You should cherish their ideal in your heart and try to follow the same in letter and spirit.

Embodiments of Love! Students!

All of you are highly virtuous. You should be an ideal to others. Never give room for sorrow. Be always fearless. You don't need to be a slave to others. Have firm faith that God is always with you, guiding you, and guarding you. Having God firmly installed in your heart, and, with the divine name on your lips, you march forward saying Jai, Jai, Jai ...

Alternative	Link	to	Discourse:
http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html			

23. With courage and purity, realise Divinity

Date: 08 October 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Dasara

Everyone has to face the consequences of his karma (actions).
Who made the bats to hang from the branches of a tree
with their heads downwards?
Did anyone tied them upside down out of hatred?
No, it is their fate.
Likewise, nobody can escape from the consequences of karma.
(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Yesterday, I was telling you about the coronation of Parikshit. At that time, there were many who had offered advice to him and assisted him. Many were supportive for his advancement. Parikshit was very young, almost a boy. It was not easy to raise a little boy to be an efficient emperor. There were no elders left in the lineage of the Pandavas. Bhima, Arjuna, Dharmaja, Nakula and Sahadeva had all started on their way to the Himalayan slopes. The lone representative of the Pandava clan was this little boy Parikshit. He was just put to schooling in the traditional way. But there was none who could ascend to the throne, except him. The young lad was thus caught in a complex situation.

He, however, proceeded on the path shown by three preceptors who were available. The young Parikshit was in tears and was pleading with his granduncle and grandmother (Dharmaja and Draupadi), asking them whether it was fair on their part to abandon him, leaving such a heavy responsibility on his shoulders. Dharmaja told the boy that the consequences of the

passage of time were inescapable. Even Krishna, who was their constant support, had left them to fend for themselves. They also had no choice but to follow the foot steps of Krishna. After all, they had been strict adherents to the advice and guidance of Krishna. Krishna treated the Pandavas as bosom friends. He had reared them as His own children. He had been their closest relative. In fact he had sustained them in every manner of relationship. He alone was their refuge. So, they advised Parikshit to face his responsibilities with courage and confidence. Thereafter, they tarried awhile to see how Parikshit would tackle the situation.

Parikshit replied bravely that he would not shirk his responsibilities nor let down the glory of his lineage. "I shall rule this kingdom," he averred. He was full of confidence and courage. Dharmaja and Draupadi were happy and relieved. They were astonished at the courageous demeanour of the young lad.

One has to note some events that transpired at that time. Dharmaja was in his human form and was preparing to proceed to the spiritual and divine realms. To go from the earthly realm to the divine realm needed a lot of courage. Dharmaja traversed the entire plane of the spiritual and the mundane and made a proper mix to achieve ability to advance to the divine realms. In fact, he got this capacity by seeing the self confidence of young Parikshit.

Parikshit was then reminded of the happenings prior to this. He had gone to each of the Pandavas and asked them to take up the responsibility of ruling the kingdom. But all of them had declined and insisted that Dharmaja alone was qualified to rule the kingdom, which was also the wish of the people. Finally they settled on the young Parikshit as the only suitable person. Hearing this, young Parikshit was frightened and fell at the feet of his grandfather with tears and pleaded whether it was possible for such a young person to rule such a large kingdom. It was Draupadi who gave the necessary reassurance to Parikshit. Thus, the crowning of Parikshit as emperor took

place.

On the second day after his coronation, Parikshit assembled all his vassal kings. People thought that the young king was frightened and that was why he was assembling all of them. All the kings were collected and seated in the chamber of the court. Parikshit spoke to them. "You see a young boy as your lord before you. But be sure I shall not flinch from my duties, nor should you from yours. We are together committed to see to the welfare of this empire; so, I want now to know your intention. Some of you, I know; others I cannot even recognise. So, you make your decision to go along with me for the sake of the empire or follow your own ambitions."

After he spoke thus, the assembly split into two factions, one supporting Parikshit and the other pursuing their private ambitions, thinking that the youthful king lacked determination and could be flouted easily. After this, a war broke out between the factions. Parikshit fought the battle with the names of his grandfather Arjuna on his lips (Arjuna had 12 names:

Arjuna, the pure

Phalguna, the one born under the star Phalguna

Partha, scion of the Prithu lineage

Kiriti; one born with a crown

Swaetavahana, one mounted on a pure white charger

Bheebathsu, one who is above the emotion of revolution

Vijaya, ever victorious

Krishna, the dark one

Savyasachi, ambidextrous

Dhananjaya the victor of all wealth.)

Thus, as he battled, all the Pandavas were present around him (in their spiritual form). Even Draupadi was there. Few know this fact that Draupadi was a great leader in her own right.

It would be a mistake to think that Parikshit plunged into warfare in his first act as emperor. In fact, Draupadi was his mentor, physically as a child and spiritually in the later part of his life. She had warned him that it would not be proper on his part to drag himself into strife as soon as he became the king. First, he had to infuse confidence in his own people and, thanks to the training given by Draupadi he was able to succeed in good measure. All his subjects young and old stood by him addressing and adoring him as Maharaja - the king of kings - with affection and awe. They became confident and fearless. With such a king presiding over their welfare, where was the room for any fear? And Parikshit reassured them that in spite of his being so young, he was fully favoured by God's grace and, as such, there was no power on earth that could oppose him. God alone was his refuge. He undertook the administration of the empire with full faith under the guidance of God.

Do not be under the impression that all this training was only after the decision of the Pandavas to proceed to the Himalayas. Right from the end of the Great War, it was known that the sole heir to the empire was the infant son of Abhimanyu. Draupadi decided to take up the task of grooming of the child for his future role. So she told Dharmaja that though he was the repository of all virtues, he was at times prone to indecision. Thus, right from the beginning Parikshit, was under the care of Draupadi.

Even before the formal coronation of Parikshit, Draupadi, along with Dharmaja, used to address the people of Hastinapura, saying that, this young child was their future ruler. "Do not be misled by his youthful looks. He is blessed with the grace of God and is replete with all kingly virtues. The duty of a ruler of a large population is to look after their needs like a mother. At present, he is a small child and needs your support and protection. Take this up as a duty conferred on you by God. In due course, he will be the king and

he will look after your welfare like a dutiful son. We are not concerned with enjoyment and pleasure. Do everything as a matter of duty. And, when the time is ripe, you shall be protected and provided with your needs by him as he is verily a gift of God to us and to all. Everything happens according to the will of God. The will of God cannot be tampered with by any other force."

Thus, Draupadi and Dharmaja already paved the way for the crowning of Parikshit. That was the manner of political administration in those days. Every single person in the kingdom shall be well looked after, like the children of a close knit family. When such a family of elders and children are in control where is the room for fear or worry? Thus, Parikshit became a great emperor. Are there any parents who can bring up their children in this way? Even if you are prepared to train the young boys in the right way, the children will not be ready to listen. But Parikshit was a good learner as well as a leader with courage. Courage is the means of all successful results. This is also a true spiritual practice. That is the true strength. Armed with such divine and spiritual strength Parikshit achieved greatness. And the whole empire prospered thereby. Such a motherly preceptor is very rare.

Parikshit summoned all his ministers and also representatives from the subcontinent and spoke to them on the importance of unity. In fact purity is dependent on unity and purity is the way to divinity. With divinity, all tasks will become fruitful. It is enough to sustain and maintain this purity both in the individual and community. This concept of individual and collective behaviour was taught to his subjects and thereby an ideal community was created in his empire. The young king Parikshit smilingly approached his people and even apologised to them for any mistakes that he might have unwittingly committed. The type of communication that should exist between the ruler and the ruled was exemplified by Parikshit par excellence. Young Parikshit had full faith in God, whose benevolence and love ensured his welfare and that of his subjects. All of you have the same firm faith in God and maintain purity and you can be certain of the success of your sadhana (spiritual exercise).

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

24. Purity of the Heart is True Sadhana

Date: 09 October 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Dasara

Without any real work, chatting throughout the day,
is this sadhana, do you think?
Following a regimen of feeding your belly thrice a day,
do you think it is sadhana?
Vigorous activity by day and deep sleep by night,
do you think this is sadhana?
Is this for which God has created you?
You spend a whole lot of time in this kind of regimen,
but this is not sadhana.
Do not waste your time in this manner.
From this moment strive to know-recognise-God.
This alone is sadhana.
(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

The all-pervading consciousness is termed Divinity. It is also said that Divinity is present in all living beings. But there is none who has seen that omnipresent Divinity. It is only a human being who can contemplate on and realise the Cosmic Person. In fact, human life itself is the manifestation of divine power. But, some people do not agree with this statement.

Divinity is manifest in every living being. The same *Atma Tattwa* (Atmic principle) is present not only in human beings but in every living being in the universe. But one has to have a pure and selfless heart to realise this truth. In

order to realise this truth, every human being has to constantly contemplate on God. By doing so, your heart will become pure and peaceful. The moment you attain that stage, God will surely perceptibly manifest in you. This must be your sadhana.

It is not only the practice of *dhyana* (meditation) that can make God manifest to the *sadhaka* (spiritual aspirant). God is present as an indweller uniformly in human beings as well as insects, birds, and beasts. Suppose you put a question, "Where is God now?" The spontaneous answer would be that God is present in you also. Several people undertake sadhanas like dhyana (meditation) to find answers to such questions.

Sage Narada affirmed that God could be realised through the nine forms of devotion, namely, *sravanam* (listening), *kirtanam* (singing), *Vishnusmaranam* (contemplating on Vishnu), *Padasevanam* (serving His lotus feet), *vandanam* (salutation), *archanam* (worship), *dasyam* (servitude), *sneham* (friendship) and *Atmanivedanam* (Self-surrender).

There is no one in this world in whose heart God does not dwell as the indweller. Therefore, is meditation required to visualise such an all-pervading and omnipresent God?

There are many who teach different techniques of meditation today. However, meditation is meant to acquire purity of the spiritual heart, for, without attaining purity of the heart, the seat of awareness, God cannot be realised. Hence, one has to strive to attain purity of the spiritual heart.

What kind of sadhana did Kamsa do in the Dwapara Yuga? In fact, he was constantly abusing Lord Krishna. However, Lord Krishna was so compassionate that He gave His darshan to Kamsa.

No sadhana would help in realising God, if one is devoid of purity of the heart. The different kinds of sadhana like fasting, meditation, etc., would help to develop one's faith in the omnipresent God who, in fact, resides as the indweller in you. People generally think that God gave darshan to such and such person. But the truth is God never gives darshan to people who have no purity of the heart. Hence, if you wish to have the darshan of God, you must develop purity of the heart. All kinds of sadhana are meant only to attain purity. **The moment you attain purity of the heart, the omnipresent God will manifest right in front of you.**

Unfortunately, today in the world there is a dearth of gurus who can firmly lead the seeker on the path of purity. They confine themselves to some mechanical techniques of meditation in exchange for money.

In fact, one does not need to undertake any complex system of meditation. One can undertake the simple sadhana of constant contemplation on the omnipresent God. Few teach such simple methods nowadays. People listen to and read about several intriguing kinds of meditation and start a sadhana that catches their interest or imagination.

Embodiments of Love!

If you want to visualise God, you must attain purity of the heart. You refer to a certain individual and say that he is your father. But the father is embarrassed at such reference since he is, in reality, the same Atma Tattwa (Atmic Principle) that is present in all the human beings. You marry some girl and refer to her as your wife. But she is in fact, the embodiment of the divine Atma. Similarly, you caress a child affectionately, calling it your son. But the same child may tell you that he is not your son in reality, but the embodiment of divinity. Thus, all relationships in this world are in fact, Atmic relationships only.

To speak the truth, real *Atma Sakshatkara* (Self realisation) is the merging of the individual *self* (jiva) with *Brahman* (Supreme Self). Anyone you come

across is verily God. How can there be human beings without such omnipresent divinity? Lord Krishna declared that He incarnated again and again whenever there was decline in the practice of *dharmā* (righteousness). He also declared that He was the *beejam* (seed) in all the living beings. Though He moved intimately with the gopālas and gopikas (cowherd boys and girls), He was never bound by their relationship with Him. The gopikas, who were aware of this truth, constantly contemplated on Him chanting the divine name "Krishna! Krishna!" The very name Krishna brought the embodiment of divine Atma before their eyes.

The gopikas were highly realised souls who had the firm conviction that the same Atma Tattwa was present in every individual, nay, every living being. That is why they could visualise Krishna in every individual and every object of the world. All that we see in the objective world, say, for example, this hall, this pandal, the buildings around, etc., are not really objects. People often get deluded into thinking so, seeing their external forms. The universal Atma Tattwa is present in all these objects. It is only gopikas who realised that Supreme Truth naturally and spontaneously. They could visualise Krishna in all individuals and objects.

We often refer to individuals as my son, my brother, my father, my mother, my wife, etc., keeping in view the worldly relationships. But the truth is that the same God is manifesting through all those individuals. Hence, one has to consider every individual as the embodiment of Divinity. The entire universe is permeated by *Brahma Tattwa*. All the names and forms attributed to the Atma Tattwa are all our own making.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to perform several methods/modes of worship to Mother Kali throughout the day. One day, the divine Mother appeared before him and enquired, "Ramakrishna! You are getting mad day by day. You worshipped Me in a particular form. Why do you confine Me to this form and that form. In fact, all forms are Mine. Whomsoever you come across, consider them as the embodiments of Divinity."

God is pure and attributeless. Such an attributeless and unsullied divinity is present in every human being. All human beings are, in fact, the reflections of such an omnipresent divinity. Hence, every human being has to be considered as the embodiment of Divinity and respected. Though God is omnipresent, He assumes a particular form and serves human beings in many ways. Right from now, realise this truth that all names and forms are His. Anybody you come across, consider them as the embodiment of Divinity. When you develop such an attitude, you can see God anywhere and everywhere.

You go to Mathura or Dwaraka and see how people still worship Lord Krishna with the same devotional fervour, though He left His mortal coil in the Dwapara Yuga some 5000 years ago. When God incarnates in human form, it is natural to consider Him as an ordinary human being. This is not the correct approach. **I often reiterate that I am God. But, I also remind you that you are verily God.** You should not give scope for any confusion and difference of opinion in this regard. Everyone of you are embodiments of divinity in reality. When you develop such a firm conviction, you can visualise God in every human being. It is only in keeping with this concept that the expression

Yad bhavam tad bhavati (as is the feeling, so is the result)

is asserted in the scriptures.

Since people are not aware of the real nature of Divinity, they refer to certain individuals as father, mother, uncle, etc., keeping in view their physical forms and the relationships with them. If people are so deluded on the basis of physical relationships, they are bound to get confused about the real nature of Divinity. Lord Krishna declared once while revealing His omnipresent divinity that there was none other than Him in the entire universe. The same

truth is contained in the declaration

Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti (truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names).

For example, the number 1 is only 1. When you add three numbers to it, it becomes 4. Thus, we go on adding numbers to 1 and arrive at different numbers. However, the first number remains the same, namely, 1. That is Divinity. This is what the profound declaration states,

Ekoham bahusyam (the One willed to become many).

People often use two terms *Deva* (God) and jiva (individual being). In fact, there is no jiva at all! All are embodiments of Divinity only! Then the question arises why do people die? Since people are not able to realise the immortal nature of the Atma residing in the physical body, they make use of the term death. Atma has no death at all! It is immortal. Those who realise this truth, merge in God. For those who cannot realise the truth, jiva remains as Jiva and Deva as Deva. The dual feeling persists in them.

What is the underlying meaning in the declaration:

Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma (God is one without a second)

Since there is no entity other than Brahman in this universe, it is declared thus. This is the Vedic declaration.

The Upanishads explain our true nature in the *Mahavakya* (great aphorism) *Tattwamasi* (That Thou Art). In another Mahavakya, they declare,

Prajnanam Brahma (Brahman is Supreme Consciousness).

To whom shall this declaration refer? Again, it is to that God Absolute. Thus, all the Vedas and the Upanishads proclaim the non-dual concept of jiva and terms Deva as one and only one. But no one is making an effort to realise this truth. In the end, they think God is separate from them.

People often ascribe distinctions between different forms of divinity, for example Rama, Krishna, etc. Since they try to identify themselves with a particular form, they entertain feelings of difference. By doing so, they move away from God and remain as jivas only. All such differences exist only in the individuals.

God is only one. In fact, He is not different from you. He is in you; you are verily God! If it is not so, why should the Vedas declare Tattwamasi?

Develop the firm conviction that you and God are only one. When you attain such a firm conviction, you become one with God. For example, you keep a number of photos of Sai Baba in your puja room. But, in all the photos, you will find that the same God is photographed in different poses. When you realise the underlying unity of Divinity, there can be no room for any confusion. You will be able to realise the truth.

Whatever I speak is only Truth. Since you are not aware of this truth, you are unable to develop faith in it. Several people nowadays claim to be godmen,

who lecture upon this concept endlessly. Believe Me, they are all meant to confuse the devotees. In fact, when you develop firm faith in the declaration that God is only one, you will be able to realise the truth. One who is able to realise this truth will have no confusion and doubt.

Do not use harsh words about anyone. In fact, there are no enemies in the world. You should not consider anyone as an enemy and abuse him or her. One day, someone may be an enemy to you; but you may become friends on another. You should not consider someone as separate from you. All are friends.

Embodiments of Love!

You are worshipping and praying to God with great love. Continue to love God and develop faith in Him. Only then will all your doubts be cleared and will you be able to understand the nature of Divinity in full. Doubt implies duality, that is, a feeling of separation between you and God. In fact, there are no two entities - God and you. Everything is "I", "I", "I". Hold on to the truth, Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma.

For example, how many hours does the clock show? Twelve hours. When the hour hand crosses twelve, it again moves to one in the clock. When it crosses one, it moves to the next hour. Thus, only when the hour hand crosses one does it moves to two. Similarly, there is nothing that can be called the second. God is only one. However, when you wish to entangle yourself in worldly matters, duality comes. In fact, there is no duality with regard to Divinity.

Sometimes I wake up the children sleeping in My room and ask them, "What is the time now?" They reply, "Swami! It is 12 o'clock." I again ask them, "Is it 12 o'clock in the day or night?" They reply, "Swami! It is 12 o' clock in the night." Thus, when 12 hours of the day are added to 12 hours of night, it becomes 24 hours. Strictly speaking, there are no 24 hours. It is only because

the day is followed by night and so on that you find 24 hours.

Hence, do not make a distinction between day and night. The railway people make such distinction for their operational convenience. For us, night follows day and again the day starts after the night. Both day and night are one for us.

Therefore develop firm faith in the principle of unity in all that you come across in the world. God is one and only one. If you do not develop firm faith in this principle, it is possible that you will worship one form of God and hate another. You should always hold on to the principle of oneness of God. That is the truth. If you are not able to develop such faith, ignore it and do not make it a matter of dispute and strife. Do not ever attribute duality to God. God is always one and only one. When you are able to understand and develop firm faith in the oneness of God, your life will go on smoothly.

(Holding a bunch of flowers in front of the audience Swami enquired) What is this? It is a bunch of flowers. There are a number of flowers strung together with the help of a thread, with the result that it assumed the form of a bunch. Though the flowers are of different varieties, the thread that holds them together is only one. The same principle has been explained in the Veda as

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

The above example demonstrates unity in diversity. When you refer to a single person, you say the person is a man (or a woman). When you refer to a number of persons grouped together, you call them a group. Though there is a vast difference in the terms we use while referring to a single person and a group of persons, there is a fundamental unity in the classification. That unity is Divinity, which shall never be forgotten. Unfortunately, in the present

times, people tend to look at the apparent diversity in this objective world, ignoring the underlying principle of unity. Take for example, the Pandavas. Who were they? The five Pandava brothers were the sons of Kunthi. One mother, but five sons. In the ordinary worldly sense, they are five in number.

You may not be able to understand this principle of oneness of Divinity, but, in due course, when you are able to recognise the principle with a mature mind, you will understand that truth is one, not two. This is a handkerchief! (*showing a handkerchief to the audience*). There are several threads in it woven together. Since the threads are woven into warp and woof, it assumed the form of a handkerchief. The cloth is one and the threads are many. One has to recognise that principle of unity in diversity. We find several students gathered in this hall. Each one appears to be different. But, they are all students of Sri Sathya Sai College. Thus, one has to strive to develop that unity.

Dear Students!

I am extremely happy to see you all. I attend to a number of tasks and participate in a number of programmes right from early morning till I go to bed. I feel very happy and energetic. There is no one else who enjoys bliss as Myself. I am always happy and cheerful. I do not at all pay attention to praise or scorn from any quarter. They are only the outward manifestation in words of one's feelings. I have nothing to do with them. I do not entertain any feelings of difference at all.

"All are one, be alike to everyone."

(Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan, "Govinda Krishna Jai".)

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

25. Education without Educare is Inadequate

Date: 10 October 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Dasara

Good education is

That which teaches the method of achieving world peace;

That which destroys narrow-mindedness; and

That which promotes unity, equality, and peaceful co-existence among human beings.

(Telugu poem)

Good education is not merely reading several books, gathering bookish knowledge, and teaching it to others. There is no use acquiring mere bookish knowledge. By acquiring bookish knowledge, you may perhaps become a book yourself. Real education is that which promotes unity, equality, and peaceful co-existence with fellow human beings. Merely reading books and periodicals and acquiring bookish knowledge is the so-called secular education. Several people in the world today are pursuing this type of education only. But this cannot be called real education.

Real education flows from the heart and is termed as 'Educare'. There is a lot of difference between 'education' and 'educare'! Educare is the basis and foundation for all types of education. Educare is the adhara (support) and education is the adheya (supported). All the texts we read teach only education to us. But this is totally inadequate. We must pursue educare along with education.

Sage Valmiki in the Treta Yuga wrote the great epic Ramayana. It emerged from the great sage as a spontaneous expression of his divine feelings. So too was the Bhagavatha composed by the great rishi Veda Vyasa. These great

rishis gave expression to their divine feelings emerging from the depths of their hearts in the form of such great epics. That is why they became immortal works teaching eternal truths. These great epics teach about the divine life and message of the great Avatars. They were composed by great rishis, who themselves had the vision of God.

When Sita was living in the forest along with Rama during their fourteen year exile, Rama taught her many things. She did not reveal it to anyone, but she was following those teachings carefully. After the completion of the period of exile, Sita, Rama, and Lakshmana returned to Ayodhya. Rama was crowned the king of Ayodhya. Days rolled by.

One day, he called Lakshmana and commanded him to take Janaki in a chariot and leave her to herself in a deserted place with no human habitation on the banks of the river Ganges and return. Obeying Rama's command, he left Sita in the forest and returned to the capital. Sage Valmiki was passing through the forest on his way back to his hermitage from the river Ganga where he had gone for his ritual bath. The grief stricken words of Sita fell on his ears. Having listened to Sita's tale of woe, he consoled her and brought her to his hermitage.

Sita spent her days in the hermitage in constant contemplation of Rama and his glory. When she was left in the forest by Lakshmana, she was already pregnant. After completion of nine months, she gave birth to the twins Lava and Kusa. Under the loving care and tutelage of sage Valmiki, the twin brothers grew up as great warriors and worthy sons of Rama.

One day, Sita was lost in deep contemplation of Rama. She was thinking of the happy days that she had spent in His company and was feeling utterly dejected at the turn of events. Meanwhile, Kusa and Lava returned to the hermitage and saw their mother in tears. They could not understand the reason for her grief. They asked why she was in tears. They tried to console her saying, "Ã Mother! Why should you shed tears, when you have such

brave sons who are more powerful than Lord Rama Himself? Do not underestimate our strength and valour."

Sage Valmiki, who was observing this dialogue between Sita and her sons, advised Sita, "Amma! Please control your emotions. These children are not ordinary children. They are not only well-read, they are capable of taking an appropriate decision after deeply contemplating over an issue. They have great sense of discrimination and analytical ability."

While Rama was ruling the kingdom, he desired to perform the Aswamedha Yaga (horse sacrifice) mentioned in the Vedas, for the destruction of all foes and to ensure peace and prosperity in the kingdom. For this purpose, a horse, immaculately white in colour, was selected and a gold plate with a message to all the rulers of the land was placed on its brow saying that those strong may hold it, if they dared; or else, they should accept Rama's sovereignty over them and should pay Rama tax and tribute; or else make themselves scarce. The horse was let out into the country followed by a huge army under the command of Satrughna. During the course of their march, they vanquished several kings and brought them under the rule of Rama.

While the horse followed by the army was thus moving, one day, it came near the hermitage of Sage Valmiki. The twin brothers, Lava and Kusa, saw the sacrificial horse and the army following it. They caught hold of the horse, read the inscription fixed to the forehead of the horse, and decided to confront Satrughna and his army. They took the horse under their control and kept it at Valmiki's hermitage. They came back to fight with the guardians of the horse. In the fight that ensued, the twin brothers subdued all their opponents one after the other.

First, Bharata and Satrughna confronted them. They made a last-ditch effort to dissuade the twin brothers from fighting the battle saying, "You are still children; you have not faced any difficulty in life so far, being under the loving care of your mother and Sage Valmiki. Please give up the idea of fighting a

battle with our army; return to your ashram. If you still insist on fighting with us, we are ready."

The children could not, however, be persuaded to return to their ashram. They had no fear of the battle at all. They therefore responded by saying, "We are also ready for the battle."

So saying, they started the battle against Bharata and Satrughna in right earnest. Bharata and Satrughna could not withstand the shower of arrows released by Lava and Kusa anymore and fainted. The news was conveyed to Rama in Ayodhya. Then, Lakshmana was sent to continue the battle. He too met with the same fate as his brothers Bharata and Satrughna.

Finally, the news reached Rama that the young boys had subdued Laksmana, Bharata, and Satrughna and their army and that they were eager to confront even Him. Rama now had no choice but to come to the battlefield with his army consisting of Hanuman and other warriors. A lengthy argument ensued between Rama and the twin brothers. Finally, Lava and Kusa decided to take on Rama for a full fight, though Rama tried to convince them to leave the horse and go away since He did not want to fight with them because they were too young. While the war of words was thus going on between Rama and the twins, news reached Sita through Hanuman that a catastrophic war was about to start between Rama and her sons Lava and Kusa. On hearing the news, for a moment, Sita closed her eyes and envisioned the turn of events.

She lamented, "Why has this great calamity fallen upon my sons? I understand they are going to fight with Rama. How great and invincible is Rama! On the other hand what is the strength of my sons! They are children still unable to realise the consequences of this disastrous battle, should they fight with their own father Rama! What a matter of shame!" Thus she lamented helplessly at the turn of events. She thought to herself, "Rama is a noble king and an ideal father. He will not fight with his own sons. He will

fondle and caress them lovingly. A father will never fight with his own children. He will teach them virtues."

Sita expressed her anguish to Hanuman thus: "Dear Son! These children are my own children. They are the sons of Ramachandra. But they are not aware of it. They know only that Rama had sent Sita to the forest and put her to great suffering. That is why they decided to fight Rama's brothers and their army and, if necessary, even Rama Himself. However, I am convinced that it is not proper on their part to fight a battle against Rama. It is up to Rama either to protect me or punish me. He might have put me to suffering as a consequence of my destiny. All this is for my good. They have nothing to do with it. I do not regret it at all and blame anyone for my suffering. The more frequently gold is put in fire and refined, the more it will shine. Its shining increases each time it is subjected to that process."

Hanuman himself is no ordinary being. He is a great soul. He is well known for his inner peace, virtues, and great physical strength. He felt great joy hearing the sacred words of Sita. He thought to himself, "Mother Sita is a woman of great virtue. None can excel her in virtue."

Sita rushed to the battlefield and advised Lava and Kusa to withdraw from the battle saying, "Dear sons! It is not proper to fight a battle against your father. It is a great sin. The father has to be revered, worshipped, and persuaded to agree to your point. But one should not try to subdue him by waging a battle against him. It is foolish to entertain such ideas. Whatever be the circumstances in which you are placed, a father is a father and revered as such. You should not go against his command. Dear children! You are deluded to think that you are great warriors and adepts in the art of archery. You think you can win over any great warrior, with your battle skills. All this is your arrogance born out of ignorance. Keep yourself away from such ignorance. Rama is Lord Narayana verily. He is the Divine in human form. You should not embark upon a path of confrontation against such great Rama. If, in spite of all my advice, you still decide to fight a battle against your own father Rama, I will not live on this earth anymore. It will be a matter of great shame to call you as my sons. Please do not indulge in such heinous acts." Thus Sita

warned her sons Lava and Kusa.

It was then that Rama realised that Lava and Kusa were none other than his own sons. Likewise, the twin brothers also realised that their fight was against none other than their own father and immediately fell at Rama's feet, begging for pardon.

Thus, Valmiki composed the great epic Ramayana exactly as the events took place without any imagination or fabrication of events. The great sages and seers in those days spoke nothing but the truth.

Sri Rama always followed the twin principles of sathya (truth) and dharma (righteousness). His entire life was a saga of these great human values. Not only he followed these great values, but he also used to exhort everyone, sathyam vada (speak truth) and dharma chara (follow righteousness). His emphasis was not on mere lip service for dharma, but sincere practice of dharma. Since then, the practice of daily parayana (reverential reading) of Ramayana has come to stay in the Indian culture Indian ethos. You might have observed that, even in our ashram, it is the practice to sing / recite the glory of Ramayana, Bhagavatha, and Sapthasathi during the Veda Purusha Sapthaha Jnana Yajna held every year.

You must develop faith in God. If you give room for doubt, even that flicker of faith you have will be extinguished. Hence, faith in God is the essential prerequisite for every human being. What is the meaning of the word manava (human being)? It means one who has faith in God. In present times, unfortunately, man is gradually losing that faith. God fulfils His avataric mission through the medium of human beings. The essential commands that God expects man to obey are sathyam vada (speak truth) and dharma chara (follow righteousness). But man today is going against the wishes of God and distorting these principles as sathyam vadha (kill the truth) and dharmam chera (imprison righteousness). The country will prosper only when this trend is reversed and people follow these principles in their proper perspective. Truth is eternal. "Truth is God; speak Truth." Truth only will protect you. I will elucidate this point tomorrow in greater detail.

Embodiments of Love!

God protects always; He does not punish. People are not able to realise this truth. Unable to realise this truth, some people attribute unworthy emotions to God and accuse Him of making innocent people suffer. Several books are being published now on "God", "Divinity", etc. But none of these books glorifies the human values as were practised in the Ramayana. The great epic Ramayana was translated into several languages in the world, including Russian. It is a widely read classic in the world. Several non-Indians not only read Ramayana in their own language but even worship and revere the great epic. The other day, the first lady of Kazakhstan, a former Republic of the erstwhile Soviet Union, visited Prasanthi Nilayam and heard My discourse on Ramayana with great reverence and joy. In fact, Ramayana is held in high esteem in the erstwhile communist countries. They have developed great faith and devotion in Ramayana and the Ramayana way of life. Unfortunately, the Indians are still lagging behind in this regard. The Ramayana is a great spiritual text, which everyone should read with utmost reverence and devotion.

God loves every human being. He does not hate anyone. In fact, terms like anger, hatred, and violence do not exist at all in the kingdom of God. Such a "Loving God" is being criticised now-a-days in ever so many ways. The avataric mission is meant to bring about a transformation in the hearts of human beings.

You must be able to recognise one fact. The global transformation of human beings has already begun. Within a short period, you will notice that the entire human community will come together and live in peace and unity in keeping with the ideal cherished in the Vedic prayer:

Let us live together, let us grow together.

Let us grow in intelligence together.

Let us live in harmony with each other.

I assure you that the golden era is very near. The personal rivalries, differences, and hatred against fellowmen will become a thing of the past in Bharat (India) and the world at large.

Embodiments of Love!

No one can describe God's love as this or that. If you hate such a loving God, it amounts to hating yourself. Hence, all of you, love God. The Navaratri celebrations and the Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna are coming to a happy end. On the final day of the Yajna, the Purnahuthi ritual will be performed. The Purnahuthi is a symbolic ritual wherein all of you will offer your evil qualities in the sacrificial fire and come out pure and sacred. Once again, I remind you all to constantly chant the Ramayana wherever you are and in whatever circumstances you are. Never forget this great Ramayana. Continue to chant it till your last breath.

(Bhagawan concluded His divine discourse with the bhajans, Rama Rama Rama Sita and Srimad Ravikula)

Alternative Link to Discourse:
<http://www.sathyasai.org/discour/2005/titles2005.html>

26. Vision of the Divine

Date: 11 October 2005 / Location: Prasanthi Nilayam / Occasion: Dasara

Dear students!

All people in the world desire to have the vision of God and, in fact, crave for the unique opportunity to merge in His divine effulgence. This intense yearning for that great privilege is not a novel phenomenon. It has been there ever since human beings appeared in the world. In consonance with this yearning, several sages and seers in the past have craved for the vision of God and ultimate merger with Divinity. This is truly an ancient tradition. Thus, the singing of the divine glory has been passed on from generation to generation in the country of Bharath (India). Right from the start, Narada has been an incessant singer of the glories of the divine name. What is the use of mere chanting of the divine name for one's own satisfaction? Therefore, he advocated the nine-fold path of devotion:

Sravanam, kirthanam, Vishnu smaranam, padasevanam,
vandanam, archanam, dasyam, sneham, and Atma nivedanam

Listening, singing, constant contemplation on God,
serving His lotus feet, salutation, worship,
servitude, friendship and self surrender.

One day, Narada prayed to Lord Narayana "Lord! we are only chanting the divine name, but the essence of the divine name is in you. It is only when you bless us to partake of that divine essence, our life will be sanctified."

Some people misunderstood the prayer of sage Narada and started doubting the efficacy of namasmarana (repetition of the name) in attaining the lotus feet of God. Opinions differed. Arguments and counter arguments for and against following a particular path continued. Such differences of opinion have been there right from ancient times.

Some people tried to argue with Narada saying, "Sir, we are not able to visualise God." Narada replied, "As much is your yearning, in proportion shall be the grace." Each individual in this world follows his own chosen path. But, the Paramatma (supreme self) is one for all!

In the Dwapara Yuga, Radha, a great devotee of Lord Krishna continued to pine for His darshan and constant proximity. She had a sister by name Prabha. Prabha was, however, against such intense yearning for Him. One day Radha was going to Brindavan singing the divine glory of Lord Krishna. Her sister Prabha and her husband were accompanying her. Prabha used to be constantly in the company of her husband. She could not bear her separation from him even for a moment, just as Radha could not bear the separation from Krishna. However, Radha continued to pray to Krishna to change Prabha's mind and develop devotion in her for Krishna. Krishna, however, counselled patience saying, "Why do you worry? A time will come when she will also develop intense devotion and yearning for Me."

Krishna used a variety of plays to bring about a transformation in the hearts of several people. He used to display several leelas (plays, sports) for this purpose. Since Radha was longing for a change of heart in the case of her sister Prabha, Krishna told her, "You wanted Me to change the mind of your sister and develop devotion in her. Let her witness the glory of My leelas and develop faith in My divinity gradually. Once she realises the nature of My Divinity, she will herself become an embodiment of Divinity, in keeping with the saying 'Brahma vid Brahmaiva bhavathi (one who realises Brahma will

become Brahman verily).¹ Some people worship Me with devotion (bhakthi), others constantly contemplate on me with hatred (dwesha). I am indifferent to both dushana (abuse) and bhushana (praise). I am beyond all dushana and bhushana. I accept all in an equal attitude."

Prabha continued her hostile attitude toward Krishna for some time. In course of time, there was a perceptible change in her attitude. One day, she accompanied Radha to the place where Krishna was happily spending His time in the midst of gopikas (cowherd maids), singing and dancing. Prabha from then on continued to spend her time blissfully in the divine presence of Krishna. Both Radha and Prabha used to share this divine experience daily. Thus, Krishna could bring about a change of heart in Prabha with His divine leelas.

God is unblemished and pure. In fact, He corrects the mistakes that are there in the devotees and takes them into His fold. He will not distance Himself from anyone. Lord Krishna is a Leelamanusha vigraha (donning a Human vesture as part of His divine sport).

Both Radha and Prabha firmly decided that they would not move away from the company of Lord Krishna. In fact, Krishna gave a glimpse of His Divinity to Radha on one occasion and explained to her, "Radha! Human beings are entangled in maya (illusion). They are deluded to think that God in human form is also a human being like them. You can not develop love toward a person without developing attachment to him. This is true in the case of God in human form also. Hence, first you will have to develop attachment to a particular form of God, in order to love God. In order that people should develop attachment to the form of their choice, God assumes several forms. However, God is unblemished and remains an embodiment of purity."

None can fathom the divine leelas of Lord Krishna. Sometimes, He manifested in His full divine glory. Sometimes, He behaved like an ordinary human being.

Yet another time, He acted as a simpleton. Nevertheless, Krishna was Krishna, i.e. God in human form! In fact, even the gopalas and gopikas who moved constantly in the company of their dear Lord Gopala and were witnesses to several divine leelas of could not fully appreciate His divine nature.

The question that constantly baffled the minds of people was why Krishna should indulge in such divine leelas. It was only to develop in the minds of His devotees intense attachment to His form and thereby develop devotion in them. He had no desires at all, excepting this. The constant company of Radha developed intense devotion in her sister Prabha. Finally, as is the company so is the transformation. "Tell me your company I shall tell you what you are!" Accordingly, Radha and Prabha became one in the end. In fact, Prabha's real name was Chandrika, and her mother used to call her by that name. All others used to call her Prabha.

It is very difficult to bring about a transformation in the human mind. Only God can accomplish this task. Several people approach Me and pray "Swami! Please change the mind of my son. He has developed hatred toward his parents for some reason; we do not know why. Normally, he is a good boy. He never takes to bad ways. Please Swami! Change his mind so that he will behave well toward his parents."

A mind is a mind after all! Sometimes, some people are beyond redemption. I therefore express My inability in such cases. It is said "Manomoolam idam jagath (the mind is the basis for the entire objective world)."

A knotted gnarled tree trunk may be made straight as a pole
A shapeless hunk of rock can be carved to form a beautiful divine idol
Is there a one who can make the wavering human mind unruffled?
(Telugu Poem)

It is only when man develops faith in God that God will come to the rescue of man. In fact, Divinity is not confined to any form. It is a power, and that power is infinite. Such an infinite power can accomplish any difficult task. God may assume a number of forms, but divine power is only one and the same. The same Atmatattwa (Atma Principle) that is residing in this body as the indweller is present in every human being as well. For example, you may refer to the electric current as DC or AC, but the basic nature of the current is the same. Similarly, the Atmatattwa is the same in every human being. Considering the prapthi (deservedness) of the concerned individuals, God interferes to bring about transformation in them.

While doing so, God will conform to some form of self imposed norms. Transformation of the human mind can not be brought about by a human being or by chanting some mantra. Only when God wills so is it possible. God can accomplish anything and everything. He can be present anywhere and everywhere. In keeping with the declaration "Ekam eva advitheeyam Brahma (Brahma is only one, without a second)," God does not change. If He changes, the whole universe will change. It is a serious misconception to think that God has changed. God is truth, eternal, and unblemished. None can change such a Paramatma (supreme self). It is not easy to comprehend the divinity.

Embodiments of Love!

No human being's love equals that of God. God's love is unchanging. He may assume any number of forms, but His love toward human beings remains unchanged. God is attributeless, pure, eternal, unsullied, final abode, enlightened, liberated and embodiment of sacredness. You may call God by any name - Venkateshwara, Rama, Krishna or Sai Baba. Only names differ, God is only one. That is why Divinity has been explained as "Ekam eva advitheeyam Brahma (Brahma is only one, without a second)." Some people may think that God has assumed a human form like Rama or Krishna and hence now there is no God. What has really happened in this example is that God has not changed, He remains changeless irrespective of the form He assumes. It is only a change in our perception of God. God's will is immutable.

Embodiments of Love!

Cultivate pure love; for, purity is unity and that unity is divinity. Let your individual love be transformed into pure love for God. Sometimes, people have a doubt whether God's love toward them had undergone a change. Never. God's love will never undergo a change. For example, you have a log of wood. You can make any kind of furniture with it, like a chair or a bench. But the basic material, that is, wood, remains the same. Similarly, God's love always remains unchanged.

God can accomplish any task. Sometimes He may give darshan to some people, while others may not have this benefit. Much depends upon their mental attitude. Cultivate unflinching faith and single-minded devotion to God. Several yogis and renunciants yearned for the darshan of God, but few could win that grace with unflinching faith and single-minded devotion to God.

Sometime ago when I visited Rishikesh, I gave darshan to Swami Purushothamananda living in the Vasishta cave located on the way to Badrinath in the Himalayas. He was doing thapas, living alone in that cave. He used to keep a small oil lamp in that cave. The cave was located a little interior from the road point. He used to purchase milk and make some tea with it. That was his only food. The rest of the time, he was always immersed in thapas. Days rolled by. After sometime, he did not have enough strength to come to the road point to purchase milk and again get back to his cave. Hence, he made his trips less frequent, that is, once in a week, to obtain milk.

One day, he came to know that Bhagavan Baba was staying in the Sivananda ashram for a few days. He was longing to have Swami's darshan. He, therefore, sent a letter through a messenger praying "Bhagavan! Please come to our cave and grant darshan to me."

I was aware of his intense devotion towards Swami. I saw his letter and

immediately rushed to Vasishta cave to give him darshan. The entrance to the cave was closed with a door. Purushothamananda had no energy left in him to get up and open the door. Kasturi accompanied Me during My trip. He was quite strong then. Both Kasturi and Myself tried to open the door. At last we could succeed in opening the door. Purushothamananda was extremely happy on seeing both of us. He wanted to spend a few minutes alone in the Divine Presence of Swami. He, therefore, advised Kasturi to go inside the cave and have a look at it. Kasturi, with his journalistic inquisitiveness went in.

Purushothamananda fixed his gaze on Me and was lost in bliss. After a few moments, he regained his normal self. I told Purushothamananda that I would visit his cave once again. The very next day I visited Purushothamananda and spent some time with him again. After My return to Sivananda ashram, Swami Sivananda was a bit disappointed that I visited Purushothamananda's cave twice and did not find much time to spend in the Sivananda Ashram.

On my second visit to Vasishta cave, I took a piece of paper from Kasturi and wrote a particular date for My next visit to Purushothamananda's ashram. On the scheduled date, Purushothamananda took a holy bath in the Ganges and was eagerly waiting for My darshan. Deeply lost in contemplation on my divine Form, he had divine vision after sometime. A few minutes later, he left his mortal coil in that deep samadhi state itself.

The news was conveyed to Me while I was in Delhi. I was informed by a telegram that Purushothamananda merged in Swami. I confirmed the news saying, "yes, yes." Strangely, his birthday and the day on which he attained samadhi were one and the same. Later on, when the door of the Vasishta cave was opened, the entire cave was smeared with vibhuti! The body of Purushothamananda was later let into the river Ganges by the disciples of Sivananda.

From then on, the name and fame of Purushothamananda spread far and wide. The disciples of Purushothamananda thereafter visited Prasanthi Nilayam to have My darshan. They stayed in the ashram for a full ten days. I provided them good accommodation and all conveniences. They enjoyed Swami's darshan, sparshan, and sambhashan in full measure and finally left for their place, carrying with them the love and blessings of Swami. Purushothamananda was a noble soul. He was really a Purushothama (the best among men). This is the story of Purushothamananda.

Every one was happy to read in newspapers that Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba had visited on two days the ashram of Swami Purushothamananda. Your happiness is My happiness. The Vasishta cave is still as it was when Purushothamananda lived there. It is perfectly clean and holy, permeating divine atmosphere in the entire ashram. The disciples of Purushothamananda told Me, "Swami! The entire atmosphere in the ashram is permeated by divine vibrations. We feel as though Swami Purushothamananda is still with us."

I told them: "Fine! You continue to feel his presence there and enjoy bliss."

During My last visit to Delhi, I arranged for conducting bhajan on Purushothamananda's birthday, keeping a photo of Purushothamananda there. Thus, several sages and seers display intense love and devotion toward Me and pine for My divine darshan.

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