

Grow in Love

The magnificent Poornachandra Auditorium was packed to capacity on November 19th, when Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba inaugurated the Third World Conference of Sathya Sai Organizations by lighting a lamp on the elegantly decorated stage. A revolving globe appropriately revealed the many countries in every continent from which delegates had come for the Conference. After the chanting of Vedic hymns, Bhagavan delivered his address.

*Treat mercifully those who struggle to survive;
Help them as fully as you can; realize the responsibilities
of the family; move reverentially with others: win the blessings
of Sai and earn good fame among fellow men; examine your
daily activities on the touchstone of righteousness;
may you become individuals shining in virtue.*

Embodiments of love! The reconstruction of man is indeed the reconstruction of the world. Only when man becomes better can the world be bettered. Only when the individual becomes good can society be happy. Progress in externals like political, economic, and social spheres, is not enough. The mind of man must be reformed. This cannot be affected through food only. Materialists who argued that human problems can be solved by ensuring food, clothing, and shelter reached their climax when in the Twentieth Century the atom bomb was exploded. Man can reach fullness only when the three lines of progress—material, mental, and spiritual—are all pursued with earnestness.

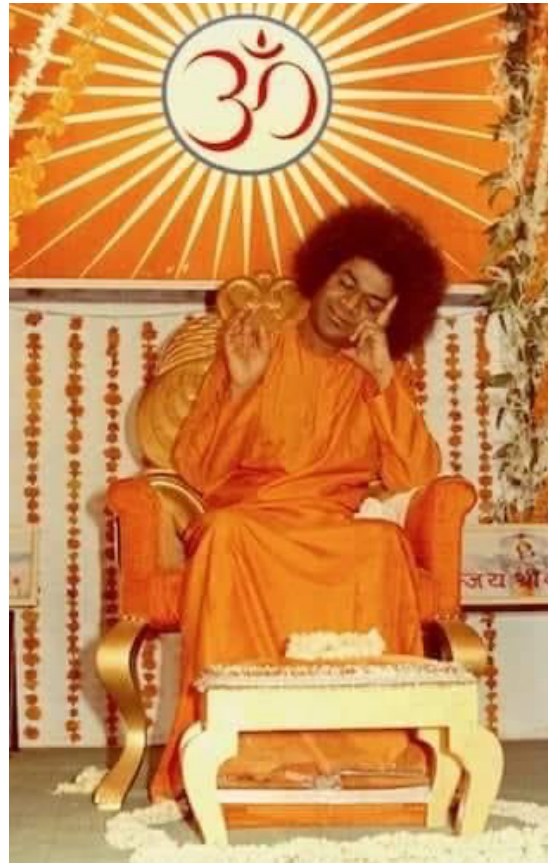
Sanathana Dharma [eternal order/religion] enables one to attain this fullness. Really speaking, very few have grasped the uniqueness and the importance of this religion. Nowadays, many elders and political leaders are afraid to utter even the name "religion" before the gatherings they address. They shape their lives in accordance with a new order, which has no religious slant whatsoever. In fact, they have not understood what religion really means. They do not attempt to discover the significance and the role of religion. Many speak from platforms on *Hinduism* and *Sanathana* faith but very few of them have understood the genuine core. The *Sanathana Dharma* is the very basis of living. It deals with the total personality. It embraces all faiths and has established worldwide influence. *Sanathana* means eternal; only a *dharma* that can win universal acceptance can be named *Sanathana*. The religions we know about are all derived from a person or prophet who is adored as the ideal. Islam has Muhammad, Christianity has Jesus, Buddhism has the

Buddha. But *Sanathana Dharma* is not derived from or through a person. It is the primal essence of all other faiths. It is the essence of all the messages prophets proclaimed. It is welcomed by all mankind, for it welcomes all mankind. It is therefore to be deplored that some Indians boast selfishly, "*Sanathana Dharma* is our religion."

Newton, a Westerner, discovered after a series of experiments, that the earth had the force of gravitation. But we cannot conclude that the earth had no such force until Newton's discovery. So, too, though the principles of *Sanathana Dharma* are inherent in human consciousness, and have their impact all over the world, the people of *Bharat* [India] have long practiced and experienced them and discovered their value and validity. They have earned invaluable bliss therefrom. Just as atomic science developed in one country and later spread to other countries, the *Sanathana* faith, developed in India, has spread to other countries. Even a material process like atomic science cannot be held down in one place; in the same manner, this spiritual science too spreads all over the wide world.

Sanathana Dharma is bound to overcome today's rampant materialism, for it can harmonize the secular and the spiritual into a single way of life. It can bring together into closer kinship both man and God. It is based on the Divine that is the reality of the self. So, it is not limited to one country, one individual, one period of time, or one sect. It has a variety of procedures, points of view, disciplines, and guidelines, in accordance with the special features of the region, the age, and the environment. It is coeval with man on earth. This faith, though first explicit on *Bharat*, between the Himalayan range and the three seas, has become a world faith, through its innate divine strength.

The Divine is manifest in every human being. The religions professed may be different, the manifestations may differ; but the self that *Sanathana Dharma* posits is the same in all. "The thousand-headed, thousand-eyed, thousand-footed Person" posited there is the Divine Self, approachable through many paths, expressing in many forms.



The units of the Sai Organization have to exemplify and promote this Unity in Diversity taught by *Sanathana Dharma*. The very purpose with which the Organization

was formed is to stress on this Unity. The essence of all religions, the goal of all paths, the destination of all spiritual effort, is this *Sanathana* or Universal Eternal faith. It is like the Ocean; particular creeds are rivers that flow into it. It is the vital air on which humanity has to live.

In our Organization, there must be a constant attempt to cultivate love that transcends caste, creed, race, and class distinctions. This sense of equality is its special feature. It is not enough if the units undertake material, moral, and spiritual teachings. Emphasis is on the *atma* [soul] and the awareness of the Oneness of the *atma* is a must.

This day, we are holding the Third World Conference of the units of the Sathya Sai Seva Organization. There is no special teaching to be offered to the office-bearers of these Units during this session. The life of Sai, the message of Sai, the ideals Sai holds forth, the lesson that Sai teaches the world—are all enshrined in one word, love. Many are perhaps hoping for a special message on the occasion of the inauguration of the Conference. I do not attach any extra importance to a World Conference, nor do I feel any other gathering as less. These Conferences are held to satisfy your desire, to express your love. The petromax lamp needs pumping off and on; the pin must remove its grit sometimes. So, too, in gatherings like this, you can exchange thoughts and make a few additions, or changes, improvements or amendments, in your attitudes and thought styles.

You are trying through various means to live the ideals of Sai and to spread the love that Sai evokes in you. How far have these efforts succeeded? How far have they benefited mankind? How have they helped this identification of the humanness of man? Along with the process of listening to the exposition of the ideals and of the message, they have to be practiced in daily life. Only then can you declare that you have grasped the meaning and purpose of this Conference.

Everyone must become the embodiment of love. Love can be expressed only as love, through love. Lovelessness is at the root of the anarchy that stalks the world today. Unchecked self-interest misdirected activity, the wild antics of the ego, pompous living, and envious intolerance have caused this monstrous situation. Realizing this, you must be vigilant. Do not allow even a trace of ego, pomp, or cruelty to pollute your actions. Peace and prosperity can dawn on the world only when you move in society with love that is free from the taint of selfishness.

The question may be raised whether our organizations are free from this taint. They are not without it, for you are but humans. But you should endeavor ceaselessly to get rid of it and its attendant evils. When these bad traits are evident in others, you feel disgusted; how then can you tolerate them when they fasten themselves on you? During the discussions you hold, consider how best you can keep afar from selfishness, pomp, and cruelty; how best you can appreciate and emulate the equanimity and the love manifested by your fellowmen. Get rid of the desire to show

off, and to gather praise. These are considered to be but evidence of childishness. But those who have *atma* as the basis should never slide into this weakness.

Bear burdens bravely, declaring, "I am a man." Try to raise yourselves into the Divine. Or, at least, try to live up to the standard expected of the human. The thought in the mind, the word on the tongue, and the deed by the hand—try to make all three, one. Many people hope to lead good lives by doing good deeds, and uttering good words. But I do not believe this is possible. You can never become good, by means of good deeds. You *must* be good, in order that your deeds and words can be good. First, endeavor to be a good person. Thereafter, it becomes possible for you to do good. Be good; do good. It is not possible to predict when and where or for what reason a person's life blossoms or expands. You may pray underneath a tree that yields bitter fruit, it cannot give you a sweet fruit. But, when a branch of the sweet-fruit—tree is grafted on that tree, it can yield sweet fruits, though originally it could not. This process of grafting is equivalent to *satsang* [good company] in human affairs—getting involved with the good and godly. So, do service to your fellow-men with pure intentions and seek always good company. Then, you can transform yourselves.

The evil traits that have grown through many lives and generations cannot be wiped away in an instant. So, mix in godly groups, cultivate good habits and attitudes, and involve yourselves in good activities.

In this gathering, people from many countries, speaking many languages, belonging to many races, are present. They are all single-mindedly united in love for Sai and in the love from Sai, in spite of differences in nationality, race, creed, color, and dress. This is the real lesson of *Sanathana Dharma*. This is my real task. This is the consummation of the yearnings of the ancient seers and sages of this land. Develop this one-ness, this unity in love, hold it ever before you as the ideal. Religions arise from the minds of men; they are not external to him. When minds are polluted, religion too suffers pollution. Those who deny religion can be denoted as having distorted or polluted minds. Of course, religion is not related to practices and prohibitions like "Don't touch me! Don't touch this." Every religion teaches only good principles and disciplines. When the mind of man is steadfast in the good, how can religion be bad?

Therefore, acquire the love that draws all into the One. By this means, you can put down the fears and anxieties, the greed and envy, the hatred and haughtiness that are today infecting the peoples of the world and establish an era of peace and joy. Let all the worlds be happy, this is the prayer that comes naturally from every human heart. This is the goal to which *Sanathana Dharma* leads. Everyone must sing of this goal; live in the melody of that song, and merge through that melody in the highest bliss, the *Paramatma*.

Embodiments of Love! Do not seek to find differences between one person and another. Seek rather ways and means to strengthen the bonds of kinship, through love. Factions and fighting emerge among the followers of the same religion and members of the same family because they have not learnt to love. From oneself—same mind, many conflicting feelings emerge. Why? love has not been nursed and grown therein.

You must sow love and grow love and destroy the weeds of fear and hatred that have spread over the world. Make the world the happy 'Home of Love.'

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Jan. 1981

Let Us Be Grateful

If God's love for man is another way of describing His grace, what prevents us from responding to His love? The greatest impediment to responding to His love and making use of His grace, it appears to me, is our ingratitude. How soon do we forget the helping hand of God! He hears our prayer, responds with grace, and saves us from a very difficult situation. We thank Him. That's the end of our using His grace! We do not remember His kindness, His love, His concern for us and want Him to prove it again and again. But when God wants us to prove our loyalty to Him and faith, we grumble and complain!

God does not mind that. But we are the losers. Even though He allows us to share His power, when we need it most, because of our lack of proper communication with Him, of faith and love, we fall to grasp the moment and make best use of it. Even if we use a particular moment of revelation, we



fail to sustain it. Thus, while we grumble, grunt, whimper, curse, He only turns His sad face away regretting: "Dear one, when will you learn gratitude?" Thus, the magnificence of life turns into a living misery because we are too blind to see, too weak to hold on, and too ungrateful to love—and all this is not because God has denied us anything; we have denied ourselves that which has come to our doorstep.

It may seem that I write as if I know everything about grace! God forgive my impertinence if I think so! I do not know how God's grace works in my life. But should I not know *when* He works? I may not know how His grace functions in our lives; but I must be able to recognize it when it functions and when I see God's hand shaping my life, my thoughts and deeds, re-arranging and re-ordering things around me favorably, saving me from critical situations and awarding me more than my efforts. I should then be filled with humility and reverence, not complacency and self-esteem. I should not feel that God gives me special attention because I deserve it and I am better than all the others to whom apparently, He denies these favors! That is the most dangerous thought. It cuts the life-line between me and God. I thoroughly miss the meaning of that God-touch, and by fostering ego, build a wall that blocks out further grace!

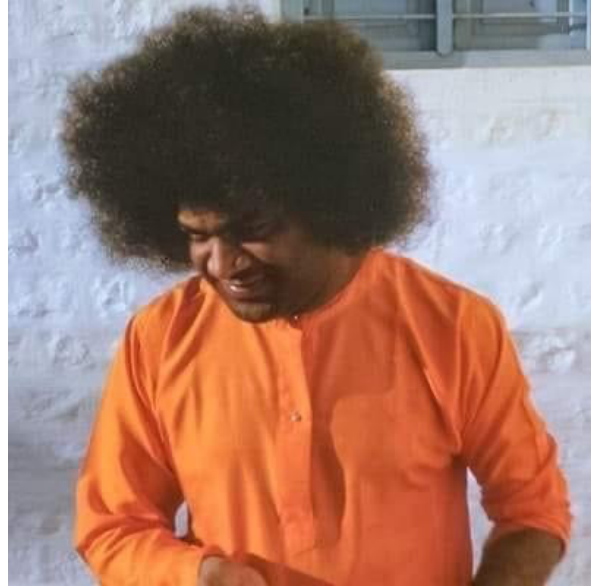
Recognizing grace

That means, I am pleading here for a very important thing, recognizing and then preserving grace. Grace need not necessarily be a downpour. It may consist in the simplest incidents of our life. A letter received in time; a bus in time to the place of my work; a little headache that holds me from attending a party; a passage in a book and so on and on are God's self-announcements. Silently does He come to us to give us a silent, unmixed, and very personal joy because He personally cares for us.

A very valid question may be asked at this moment. How do I know my getting a certain letter and meeting a certain friend on a certain day is grace, not chance? Likewise, all the daily incidents that fill my interminable days and nights might be pure chances, mere coincidences. Why should God be credited with showing His special care for me, while all this may be just natural? I cannot refute you; just as you cannot prove yourself. But let us not leave it there for the individuals to take it as they like. Could we judge this, look at this, from a different angle, and see whether that is acceptable to us?

Granting that these incidents are revelations of God's grace, what happens to me? I am profoundly grateful to God; I realize He is always with me and takes care of me in all ways. My worries are reduced; my understanding becomes deeper; I am cooler and more collected in my activities—in which state my intelligence, discrimination, efficiency are more effective and manifest; above all my days become an endless song, and nights an endless dream. On the other hand, if I explain them away as chances, coincidences, or accidents, I see no nobility and meaning in the business of living. I vegetate like a tree and life becomes a confused lyre. I learn no humility, no

reverence, am full of doubts and divisions, whimper, shout, avenge, and die. I establish no contact with God, the fountain source of all beneficence; become a bitter man with the Iron in my soul. My days are filled with dark shadows, and nights with nightmares. Which is better?



Proof of grace

The first section of people makes the natural supernatural; the second section treat the supernatural as natural. If a blooming rose early in the morning doesn't give us a touch of the supernatural, of the miracle, of the grace of God, I wonder whether we can see any other revelation of God's grace in the right spirit. If the smile of a baby, the love of a friend, the concern of a mother, the devotion of a brother, and the faith of your boss are only 'natural' and nothing else, I do not know how God can convince me of His love. The most natural is the most wonderfully supernatural, for God's will is reflected in it.

With this awareness, a simple act like eating your lunch can become exciting and an occasion to remember God, thank God, and love God. That is supernatural. Grace need not transcend the natural laws always. It can operate, and most often does operate within the natural laws. That does not take out of it its essential qualities. Moreover, how much of the so-called 'natural' do we claim to understand? Are we able to have a very rational and related explanation of all that happens to us? Then why fret about 'natural' 'chance' and 'coincidence'? If we perceive how they come to us and make life a challenge, we may see the supernatural in the natural; we can see God's glorious hand even in a flower and a letter. Then we shall sing with Shelley "Our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught"; and "I fill upon the thorns of life, I bleed"! We will probably join the *Upanishadic Rishi* and sing, "I will live for a hundred autumns, I will hear (noble songs) for a hundred autumns" etc.

Man is a spark of the Immortal light in a speck of dust. There is always close correspondence between the mortal and the immortal. When the mortal perceives it. It is dyed immediately with the color of the immortal. If it does not perceive that, the immortality as well never exists. Divine grace and human effort are only two sides of the same coin, the front and the rear wheels of a car. They are not independent of, separate from, each other.

—Bejoy K. Misra, *Prasanthi Nilayam*
Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Feb 1985

This is the Face, I shall always See

O, God! Into your precious Presence, I come
Hoping I am sufficiently humbled
And worthy to be at Your Feet
To bask in Your Radiance and earn Your Grace.

I already have Your Love, for, I am Your child,
Your image incarnate,
And, I await the moment
Of complete Union with Thee, in all dimensions,
That I may serve You more completely.

I am the breath of Your Breath;
The Light of Your Eye;
I am the sum-total of all your dreams for me
Though not yet totally fulfilled
Totally aware, totally consumed by the Flame,
Yet, I know, the moment approaches—
When I stand before you naked in the Flame,
For the moment of total fusion
With Your Divine Energies
With Your Divine Self.

O Sweet Lord, beckon me to come to You
That I may sit at Your Feet
And breathe Your Fragrance
And hear Your Words, and know Ecstasy...

O Sweet Lord, Emit the thought Divine
That will bring me into Your Presence
Even as You are always in mine.
O Sweet Lord, make me an Instrument of Thy Love
That I may more ably serve You.
O Sweet Lord, into the essence of matter
You cast me, in Your Image
And, so I formed, time and time again.

Honed on the stone of Life, to a fine edge,
Molded by tides of ego like fine clay
To emerge—in Your Time, in Your Presence—
A rare jewel, a fine porcelain,
That I may grace Your Being,
And, be exceedingly pleasing, to You.
O Sweet Lord—thank You, Thank you, Thank you.

At the Foot of the Lotus, I take my place
And, looking up, I see Your Face.
From this moment on, for all of me,
This is the Face I shall always see.
The eyes with which you look into mine
Reinforces my life Divine.
And, Oh, the smile upon Your Lip
Puts me firmly into Your grip.
If this is all I'll ever see
Then, let it be, Lord, let it BE.
For, though I smile and laugh and jest
Within the Sight of You is best!

I close the petals of this flower
For it has known its final hour.
When next I bloom, with blossom bright,
I'll radiate within Your Light.

~Dawn Godes, San Bernardino, CA, USA

Source: Sanathana Sarathi, Feb. 1979

Baba and the Moon

Often as a child I had heard about the "Man in the Moon" but was never able to discern any such person no matter how hard or how often I looked.

Then one evening in Hawaii in 1975, while my wife and I were walking together along the ocean beach, discussing a recent trip that I had just returned from India, I looked up and with utter astonishment saw Bhagavan Baba looking back at me from the moon. It was unmistakable and I was in utter amazement to the point of being put into a stupor. I said to my wife "Honey, Baba is giving us his *darshan* [sight of a holy person], I can't believe it." She asked where and I pointed to the moon. She looked up and she too in utter amazement said, "My God."

What was such a shock to us on that full moon night turned out to be an ever-present physical phenomenon that occurs with every moon. It is constantly a delight to see the waxing and waning of Bhagavan and His full portrait on all full moon nights. It is particularly beautiful on those certain full moon nights when the moon comes up and He is facing us directly rather than at an angle and especially on certain mornings in the United States when the moon is still up at dawn with Bhagavan Baba looking straight at us in all His Godly splendor. The *Lingam* outline

of His hair is unmistakable and takes up the top part of the moon and the rest of His features are more or less strongly fixed depending on the weather and my own heart.



We have come to expect Bhagavan Baba in the moon as such a natural occurrence that we hardly think about it except on those few occasions when we may be speaking to another devotee on a night when the full moon is up and look at the moon and say to the devotee "Oh, Bhagavan is giving us his *darshan* again," and are quite surprised when the devotees will say "where" and for the first time see His magnificent presence.

I have always been slow in expressing those things that seem so natural to me but have realized that it is time to share with everyone the constant evening *darshan* of our beloved Lord as another one of his *leelas* [Divine play]. He is constantly looking after us and shining His *darshan* onto the whole world whether we believe or we do not believe; whether we know of Him or do not know of Him. His face, His features, and His portraiture covering the moon are undeniable.

~Robert D. Silver, Attorney at Law, Ventura, CA
Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Feb. 1979

Q&A

WITH BHAGAVAN

Happiness & Sorrow

Hislop: What does Swami say about the three states of consciousness?

Sai: There is waking, sleeping, and dreaming and deep sleep. In deep sleep there is no mind. All are changing states. The past is gone, the future is coming, the

present is leaving. None of these changing states is the truth; for all agree that truth is real and the same whether in past, present, or future. You are always that truth; changeless, constant, unaffected by change, always the same.

Hislop: Swami says that 'I' refers to the body. But when one thinks of himself he sees not just the body, but also his mind, his conditioning, and his tendencies.

Sai: 'Body' means all the five senses and all that is implied by any extension of these.

Hislop: In deep sleep, the body is gone, and the mind is gone. But there is a strong happiness. However, that happiness is only known afterward as memory, and memory is just a thought. It has no reality.

Sai: The difference between deep sleep and *samadhi* is that in *samadhi* the happiness is known at the time it occurs.

Hislop: Swami says that in *samadhi*, happiness is known at the time that it occurs. But how could the person, the subject, be aware of himself as happy? Surely that implies a subject-object relationship. Subject-object is unreal, so experience in those terms must also be unreal, is it not?

Sai: If one looks in the mirror and sees dust on the brow, he will at once remove it, even though he was unaware of it before looking in the mirror. The *guru* is the mirror.

Hislop: What did Baba mean about the spiritual rays that comprise a human being, being projected into the vastness, instead of the limited ego?

Sai: When the world melts away, when there is bliss, or even when there is a temporary feeling of happiness, hold to that state and stay with it, and do not allow yourself to fall back into ego emotions and thoughts. From man comes a series of spiritual rays whose quality is delight, bliss. All man need do is to manifest that bliss. The idea of search is in error. Everyone already knows the truth. All that is needed is to put that truth into practice, to manifest it. The humanity of man is just these spiritual rays of delight. It is very easy to crush a flower, or to wink an eye. Self-realization is as easy as that.

Hislop: Swami said that it is man's duty to be happy.

Sai: Happiness is essential for God-realization. It is one of the major gates to divinity. It is not just a fault if a person is not happy; it is one of the most serious of all faults. It is a barrier to realization. Mostly, people are unhappy because of worldly pursuits, attachments, enjoyments. Too much interested in the world. To get free of this fault, a person has to be told of the seriousness of the fault. He should realize that desire is never-ending, like the waves of the sea.

Hislop: Swami says that pleasure or happiness is the interval between two sorrows. What is the implication?

Sai: Pleasure is an interval between two sorrows. Remove the sorrow and only pleasure, delight remains. But nobody troubles to find the cause of sorrow. It is like the lady who went to look for a lost needle under the streetlamp because there was no light in the house where she had lost the article. The house is lighted by the light of wisdom. The lost item must be found where it was lost. Actually, sorrow or pain is caused by desire. The cure is to use that same desire and turn it to God, to desire God. Instantly, suffering will cease because the cause, turning from God to worldly desire, has been eliminated. The incidents that caused sorrow will cease to cause sorrow. If a person called 'my' suffers, there is a direct pain in oneself. But if one's desire is for God only, that pain will cease.

Hislop: But one suffers also because of the pain he is aware of in another.

Sai: The suffering one feels for other people who one sees suffering, is from imagination. That sympathetic suffering will leave, but the sympathy remains. Compassion is when love is mobile and flows. Personal love is when love is not mobile but remains fixed on husband, wife, child, etc. Devotion is that free mobile flow of love to God.

Thought of the MONTH

New Year must usher in a new step in spiritual discipline. The old must be rung out; the new must be rung in! How do we celebrate the New Year day? We sweep, we clean, we remove the cobwebs, we whitewash the walls, we hang up festoons and greens, floral garlands, and croton leaves; we wear new dresses, we feast on new types of dishes. For one day, we feel fresh and renovated. At this time of the year, Nature too puts on a new garb of green... In this festival of renewal, man alone continues with his old prejudices and tendencies, outworn habits, and moth-eaten principles. Should not he too brush the cobwebs from his mind? Should he not get rid of opinions and motives which tarnish and demean?

As a matter of fact, life is a series of acceptances and rejections, of attachments and detachments, of joys and griefs, benefits and losses...Take-everything that happens to you as the gift of grace. Of course, on your path, you must act with all the skill and devotion you are capable of. Do this with as much sincerity as you worship God. Then, leave the result to the All-powerful, All-knowing, All-merciful God. Let whatever ensues ensue! Why do you hold yourself responsible? He prompted it, He got it done, through you; He will give whatever result He feels He must! Without

grief, there is no relish in joy! The orange has a bitter rind, the bitterness guards the sweet juice from marauders; you cannot have a sweet sugary rind, for the sweet fruit, for, then, it will be consumed entirely by all and sundry, then and there! The urge of the fruit is to travel far, so that the seeds may grow into trees in open spaces in the distance and not under the shade of the parent tree. The tree desires its progeny to spread far and wide. So, if the rind is bitter, the eater will take it with him and travel some distance, while removing it and start scattering the seeds only many paces away! You cannot keep gold safe in a gold box! You must have a steel almirah, for it! The gift of joy comes packed in the rind of grief. Do not pray God to give you only joy; that will be foolish. Pray for the fortitude to realise that grief and joy are but the obverse and reverse of the same coin.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 11 (1971 - 72)

People talk about the new year but do not care to develop new feelings and new attitudes. They must develop new ideas and new enthusiasm. If they are all the time depressed, when will they learn to express the joy of good living? They must exude happiness. That is the mark of the Divine within. Happiness is union with God. God is eternal bliss. Get rid of your evil tendencies and fill your hearts with love of God. You will become one with God.

I am ready to give you all happiness. Are you prepared to receive what I wish to offer? Banish all worries. They are temporary like passing clouds. Do not allow anyone—whether it is the father, the mother or the preceptor—to come between you and your duty to God. This is the lesson taught by Prahlada, Bharata, and Emperor Bali. Their allegiance to the Lord transcended all other obligations. God takes care of such devotees. Surrender yourselves to God and dedicate yourselves to the service of mankind. You have my blessings. Foster love and serve society.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 31 (1998)

Be devoted to the Universal; be eager to become That. When you pray to God for a job, or a son, or a prize, you are devoted, not to God, but to the job, to the son and to the prize. Pray to God for God; love because it is your nature to love, because you know nothing else, because you cannot act otherwise than love. Expand your Self, take in all! Grow in Love. That is the new dress you have to wear and shine in, this day.

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 11 (1971 - 72)



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