

Follow Divine Commands

The Vedas were classified so that people could find them easy to study and experience, yet they were ignored.

Selfishness has become the motivating force for all activities of man today. His mind is filled with all types of desires, and violence has become the way of life. He is wasting his life not knowing its purpose. He is straying away from the path of *dharma* [righteousness] and *prema* [love]. Desires of man are crossing all limits and are ultimately leading him to misery. Man is in a state of confusion as he is unable to comprehend the true objective of life.

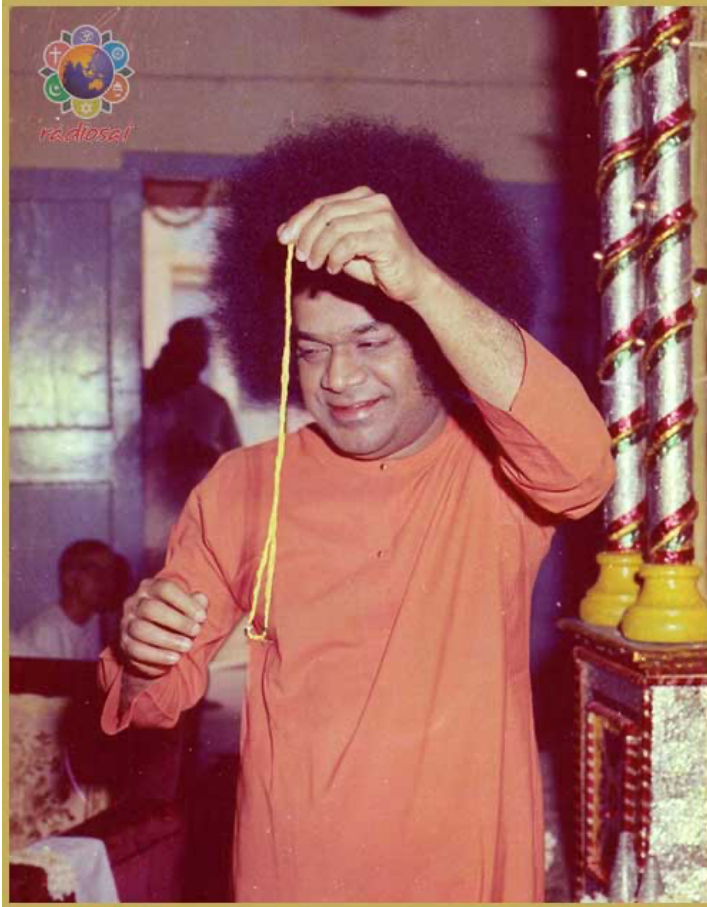
Put Bhagavan's Teachings into Practice

I have been giving discourses for the past 60 years, but you are not making any effort to put into practice even a few of the teachings. Students are like gold. Their hearts are suffused with sacred feelings. Their behavior should also be in accordance with their feelings. Man will be ruined if his behavior is not on the right lines. Not only the students, but the teachers and administrators are also not coming up to expectations. The situation is the same in the case of [SS] *Samitis* and Organizations. No doubt, devotees have immense love for Swami, but the same love is not expressed in the form of gratitude and *sadhana*. It is rather surprising, even to Me, that for the past few days I did not feel like speaking at all. As there was no marked change in you, I thought there was no point in continuing to speak to you. Hence, I decided to confine Myself to a few words. What do you expect Me to speak? I have already taught all that ought to be taught. There is nothing more to convey. I am pained to see that all My teachings have gone waste, and all My sweet words have become tasteless to you.

Today ego is on the rise in the devotees. They are becoming more and more ostentatious. They pose themselves as great persons before the world, thereby setting a wrong ideal to others. The knowledge acquired and the experience gained by them are not being put to any good use. They cannot recognize that their ego will lead them to their downfall. They are not following the ideals set before them by Swami and are also not grateful for the love and grace showered on them by Me.

Understand Profound Truths of the Vedas

Since ancient times, the *Vedas* have been teaching profound truths. They form the basis for a peaceful and prosperous society. The term '*Veda*' refers to 'wisdom,' 'discrimination' and 'being'. There are many people who chant the *Vedas* from dawn to dusk, but no one is trying to understand the utility and significance of the *Vedas*. What is the benefit derived by chanting them? Many people attend *Veda* classes to study the *Vedas*, but they do so only for the sake of money, name, and fame.



Sage Vyasa thought that it was well-nigh impossible for man to study the infinite *Vedas* within his limited lifespan. Therefore, he classified the *Vedas* into four broad categories—*Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sama Veda* and *Atharvana Veda*. *Yajur Veda* was further divided into *Krishna Yajur Veda* and *Shukla Yajur Veda*. The vastness of the subject of the *Vedas* is conveyed by their several other names, such as *Shruti*, *Trayee*, *Chandas*, *Swadhyaya*, *Nigama* and *Agama*, etc. Each name is pregnant with a deep inner significance. Each *Veda* consists of three parts: *Mantras*, *Brahmanas*, and *Upanishads*, including *Aranyakas*. The *Mantras* are the hymns in praise of gods. The *Brahmanas* deal with the

performance of sacrifices—*Yajnas* and the *Yagas*. *Aranyakas* consist of the *Mantras* chanted and practiced by the *Vanaprasthas* in the forest.

Though the *Vedas* were classified so that people could find them easy to study and experience, yet they were ignored. Unfortunately, no one is giving due importance to the *Vedas*, which are very sacred and are replete with profound truths. As a result, Indian culture is on the decline. People from other countries understand the value of the *Vedas* better than the Indians. The Japanese and the Germans studied the *Atharvana Veda* deeply with the result that they could excel in the manufacture of arms and ammunition. But, unfortunately, the *Bharatiyas* are not trying to comprehend the greatness and the grandeur of the *Vedas*. They are ruining their lives in the pursuit of materialistic desires. They undertake even spiritual practices only to fulfill their worldly ambitions. They can nourish this sacred culture only

when they develop steady faith in divinity. They are taking to *Pravritti Marga* (outward path) and forgetting the *Nivritti Marga* (inward path).

Wrong Concept of Education

Modern man wants everything to be done in a trice without any hard work on his part. He is not prepared to put in any effort or bear any hardship. Today people are not prepared to accept truth; they are carried away by untruth. This is like the situation wherein people refuse to take milk delivered at their doorstep but are prepared to traverse long distances to consume illicit liquor.

What is the meaning of education? Education is meant to know oneself, not to amass wealth. Despite his education, a mean-minded person cannot give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation but not to total wisdom. If the elders themselves take to the wrong path, the young are likely to follow in their footsteps. Modern man thinks he is highly educated, but in fact he is totally ignorant. As he is unable to understand the significance of education, he is using it only to earn his living. He is going through various scriptures and joining various spiritual organizations but is not making any effort to put into practice even a few sacred teachings. There is no sin worse than this. It is all right if a mistake is committed unknowingly, but committing a mistake deliberately amounts to great sin. Though man is fully aware of what is good and what is bad, he cannot practice good and give up evil. This is the reason he is unable to progress in the field of spirituality.

Since ancient times, *Veda Purusha Saptah Jnana Yajna* has been associated with a profound spiritual significance. *Yajna* means sacrifice. In this *Yajna*, you have to sacrifice your bad thoughts, wicked feelings, and evil tendencies and cultivate noble qualities. Before the commencement of the *Yajna*, fire is produced by keeping one piece of wood over the other and churning vigorously. The piece of wood that is below can be compared to the mother and the above to the father. The resultant fire, the son, burns the parents themselves. You must understand the mystery and inner significance of such concepts of the *Vedas*.

First Deserve, then Desire

Students!

Many of you are feeling bad thinking that Swami is angry with you and is not talking to you. I do not have even a trace of anger or dislike toward the students or the elders. I consider students as My very life. In such a case how can I be angry with them? But I do not wish to talk to anybody because I do not want My words to be devalued. I feel it is better not to speak than to speak and lose the value of My words. There is no point in feeling bad that Swami is not talking to you. Make efforts to attain the deservedness, so that Swami would talk to you. I have taught you on innumerable occasions, but have you made any sincere attempt to practice even one of My teachings? When you do not give up evil tendencies like hatred, jealousy, pomposity, how do you expect Swami to talk to you? Hatred is the greatest enemy of man. Ostentation gives rise to ego, which will in turn ruin humanness. Love is the common property of one and all. You can attain happiness and peace only when you

develop love. But today love is on the decline, and hatred is on the rise. We find hatred among the members of the same family, students of the same college, and inmates of the same *Ashram*.

What is an *Ashram*? It is a place where there is no *shrama* (hardship). But you are making this *Ashram* into a place of burden! You have no right to stay in the *Ashram* if you do not obey Swami's command and understand His love and Divinity. No benefit accrues to you if you merely stay here without putting Swami's teachings into practice. It is better that I do not speak to you if you do not practice what I say. In fact, overseas devotees have better understanding of Swami's love. They go into ecstasy if Swami talks to them even once. On the other hand, you do not understand the value of love and grace showered on you day in and day out. You merely waste your time by indulging in mean actions like slander and backbiting. Slander is the worst of sins. Do not criticize or abuse others. The *Upanishads* declare that man is highly valuable. But he is losing his value, respect, and honor by his wrong acts. Man alone is to be blamed for this.

Here is an example. You are all worshipping Me. But the *Atma* in Me is the same as the *Atma* in you. So your worshipping Me amounts to the *Atma* worshipping itself. If an individual indulges in criticism, he does so as he considers himself separate from others, not understanding the oneness of the *Atma*. The *Atma* does not criticize itself. If you want to be near and dear to Swami, develop the principle of love. All the *mantras* you chant and the worship you do will go waste if you give scope to evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, pomp, and show.

Wisdom of Gargi

Embodiments of Love!

Love everybody just as you love Swami because Swami is present in one and all. There is the same divinity present in all beings. *Easwara Sarva Bhutanam* (God is the indweller of all beings). One who realizes this truth can achieve anything in life.

Once a great *Yajna* was performed by King Janaka. Great scholars, both men and women like Yagnavalkya, Gargi, and Narada, were present on this occasion. The King told the assembly to ask any question they wanted. Gargi enquired if she being a woman was permitted to ask questions. Janaka was wisdom incarnate. He said, "*Advaita Darshanam Jnanam*" (knowledge of non-duality is true wisdom). There is no difference between man and woman in the domain of true wisdom. Hence anyone is free to ask." Then Gargi addressed Yagnavalkya, "You are preparing to leave with cows given to you by the King. You may do so after answering my questions. My first question is—what is the basis of all the objects in this universe?" All the scholars present were astonished that a woman could dare to put such a bold question to Yagnavalkya. "*Aakasa* (sky) is the basis for all that exists," he replied. She then asked, "What is that which is above the sky, pervades the earth and extends below the earth?" "The substance that pervades all these is *Aakasa* only," replied Yagnavalkya. In this manner, the assembly of great scholars went on discussing the ultimate source of *Aakasa*. It did not merely mean what was above

our head. Gargi then explained the uniqueness of the sound principle by defining *Aakasa* as *Shabda Brahman*. It was also explained that for everything in this universe *Aakasa* was the basis. And *Surya* (the Sun) was the basis for *Aakasa*. The source of the Sun was *Prakriti* (Nature). In this way, Gargi participated in this discussion. All were amazed at the discrimination and wisdom of Gargi.

People generally think that Narada loves quarrel. He got up and asked Gargi, "Respected lady, what is your life's ambition?" "My only desire is to attain Divinity," she replied. "It is impossible," replied Narada. "Why?" asked Gargi. Narada replied, "Moksha and the attainment of Divinity are not ordained for unmarried women." Then Gargi said, "The only difference is in the body and the mind, and not in the *Atma*." Narada said, "The moment you are married, you will attain *Moksha*." Gargi said, "That is impossible, for I have surrendered myself entirely to God already. Such being the case, do I have no possibility of attaining *Moksha*?"

As this dispute was going on, Janaka intervened and said, "Mother, you can get married. What are you going to lose?" She thought for a while and considered the contents of all the *Upanishads* and *Shastras*. She then said, "All right then, I shall have a one-day marriage." Even Narada was perplexed as to what this one-day marriage meant. Gargi then said, "A marriage is a marriage, be it for a day or a 100 years. So I shall have a one-day marriage; who is ready to accept this?" One of the sages named Sringi agreed.

Tadeva Lagnam, Sudinam Tadeva, Tarabalam Chandrabalam Tadeva, Vidyabalam Daivabalam Tadeva—as the *Mantra* was being chanted, and the sage tied the marital knot, Gargi immediately broke it, and promptly attained liberation. Thus, Gargi attained her goal without transgressing her vows or any of the *Shastric* injunctions. Janaka said, "Gargi, your entire life is devoted to the fulfillment of the Divine Will. Then how can *Moksha* elude you? You are destined for *Moksha*. You are, indeed, a great scholar. Today I shall get myself crowned by your hands." Gargi then explained the *dharma* of the householder in the court of Janaka and said that such worldly relationships were temporary and not permanent.

Countless such illustrious women were born in this sacred land of *Bharat*. It is unfortunate that people born in this sacred land are going down to such a low state. Ego and attachment are the cause for this situation. Whatever I say is for your good and not for My sake. Many of you do not realize this. Arrogance of one's own level of knowledge is the main cause for this state of ignorance. Educated people should have humility. Education confers humility, humility confers deservedness, the deserving one obtains wealth, and when wealth is used to practice *dharma*, one attains true happiness. You can thus attain the goal of your life here and hereafter through true education.

Students!

First get rid of your ego. Cultivate humility. Respect your elders. Speak sweet words. When you practice these virtues, Swami will always be with you and will guide you

always. You do not know, many marvelous things are going to happen soon. You will be delighted to see, hear, and experience these divine events. Do not miss this sacred opportunity that is before you. If you lose it, you will never get it again. Once you obtain it, you will never lose it. Keep these sacred thoughts in your heart, respect your parents, please your elders, and make your life meaningful. This is My blessing to you all. With this blessing, I bring My discourse to a close.

Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan* (devotional song), "*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi...*"

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Nov. 1999

Devotion

Devotion is not a uniform to be worn on certain days when you gather for worship and then to be laid aside when the service is over. It must mean the promotion of an attitude that is ever present.

—Baba

Line up! March on!

"I am ever with you. Don't worry. Do you know how hard it was to save you from that train disaster? Your son, too, was there, caught underneath the bridge in the flood. And then that heart attack you had! That was yet another job! On the second day, your condition was indeed very critical. The doctors were certain of that."

These were the words with which Baba greeted this insignificant schoolteacher on the 26th day of June, 1970 at Brindavan, when I first met Him face to face. A thrilling sensation of trepidation and consolation overcame me.

My memory flashed back to that horrid night of the 23rd of December 1964. I had fallen into the surging waters of a roaring river through the open side of my railway coach and was being pressed down by the weight of the debris that descended on me. Shrieks and pathetic cries of agony were heard from all sides. Many floated desperately along. I called out the name of my Lord, Sai Ram.

In a moment my feet touched a flat rock, and I could keep my head over the water. I called out into the darkness the name of my son. O, how merciful is Baba! I heard my son's voice, not far from me, answering, "I am safe, father. How are you?"

And close by me, on the same rock of refuge, stood the doctor with whom I was holding a long conversation when the gap in the line that yawned on the bridge

pulled us all down into the catastrophe! Baba had not only saved him, but He made him come up to me so that he could administer first aid to both father and son. Baba was referring to this incident, which took place six years previously, when He said I had assigned him a 'job'!

It was in 1969, five years later, that I was struck by a severe heart attack. The self-same doctor who treated me during the train disaster looked after me then, as the Providential Instrument of Sai Mata.

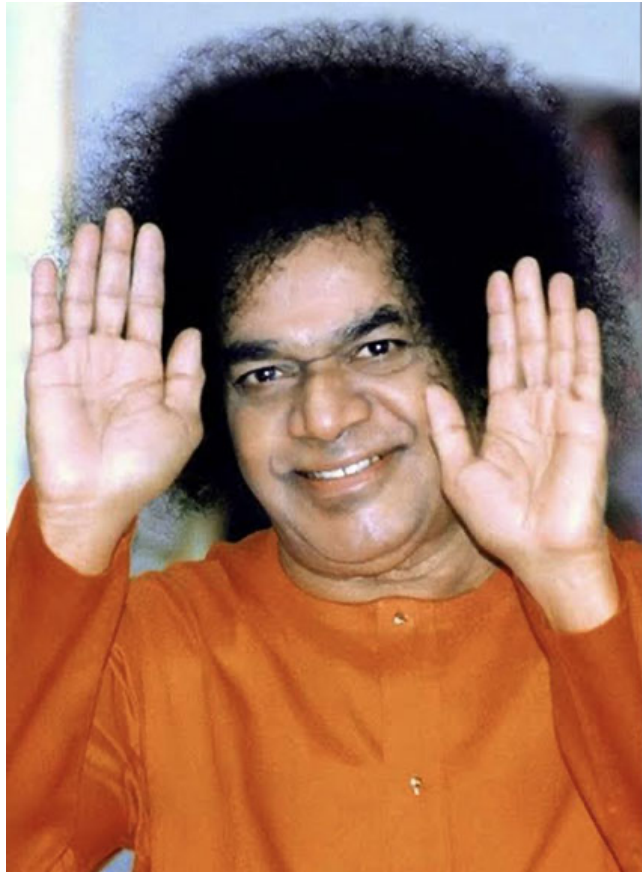
And now I stood before my Lord to receive from Him the mantle of faith and the assurance that He would guard me for the rest of my life. I had struck gold. I knew that Baba was radiant, loving, wise, and full of power and mercy.

He is the *Avatar* of the Age. Baba has come to resuscitate all sinking hearts, not merely the physical sinking, but the morally (and) spiritually sinking. We all have narrow constricted hearts; we all have fallen into the flood of doubt and distress. He pulls us out of the mire; He gives us something to stand upon and keep our heads above the surging fears. He toughens us for the battle of life. He has come to cure the twin ills of complacency and lassitude, which hamper the efforts of the *sadhaka* in every field.

Love is the only agency adopted by Him to transform us. Grace is the vehicle of this Love. The gift of Grace from Him is but His prompting to develop the divine qualities latent in us. It is but a means to that end. It is often the first lesson we get to become aware of Him as our reality.

Selfishness, the exaggerated notion of 'I' and 'Mine', is, according to this Teacher the root cause of the anxiety and fear, of hatred and envy, that afflict human society everywhere at the present time. Eradication of this evil weed, which is ruining the field (*kshetra*) of the heart of man is possible only by the *sadhana* He lays down.

Baba's teachings are sweet and simple. They take us step by step, gently but steadily, from the gross animal level to the sublime Divine level. The method that can guide us nearest to Him is the Practice of the Constant Presence of Sai. Sai as we



have all experienced is the unfailing Companion on the Pilgrim Path. He is the *antaryami*, the Inner Motivator, the Inspirer, the Guide, the ever-vigilant Witness.

Do we ever make a start on this *sadhana*? Once we are lined up under the influence of some miraculous experience, material or spiritual, that sheds His Love on us, our duty is to march on.

He says to all who have decided to march on, "If you take one step toward Me, I take ten toward you."

Meanwhile, let us recapitulate the preliminary disciplines one must impose on oneself. Start every day with Love, fill the day with Love, fulfill the day with Love. Dedicate the activities of each day as offerings to Baba, for, "Work is worship." Let us be ashamed of that weakness—worry. For when we worry, we are doubting Him or denying Him. Let us do good turns to those He places in our path; but let others not know that we did them. For it is all His, and there is nothing specifically ours. Let us not be drawn into anything wrong, anything that Baba would not approve. Let us not harm or injure anyone by harshness of speech or hurting comment. Let our words be few and soft and sweet. Let us be content with what Baba is pleased to give us and act well the role He has assigned. Let this be our resolve until the curtain falls.

~Prof. G. B. Pillay

Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Nov. 1974

My Volunteering Experience at Sai Rao Public Library of North Bergen

Volunteering at the library was an unforgettable experience that taught me that small acts of kindness can make a big difference. I am truly blessed to have had this opportunity in my life. In my mind, I was expecting simple tasks to be done, but I quickly realized how much dedication and effort goes into maintaining a library. As I worked, I realized that volunteering is not just about completing a task—it is about contributing your time and effort to create something better for everyone. It made me realize that when people work together and contribute their time, they can accomplish something meaningful.





I am especially grateful to Sai Lakshmi Auntie for guiding me, encouraging me, and advising me on what I should do in the future. I truly appreciate her for giving me this opportunity and taking the time to guide me throughout this experience. Her support and encouragement made the experience even more meaningful and helped me understand the importance of responsibility and commitment. This experience showed me that volunteering is not always about doing something huge or extraordinary. Sometimes it is about dedicating your time, working diligently, and making someone else's job a little easier. I left the library feeling proud because I knew that the work I did would help the library become a better place for everyone. What started as a

morning of helping at a library became an experience I will always remember in my life.

Saisha Prabusai
Sai Center of Scotch Plains, NJ.



Saisha Prabusai is pictured with Sai Rao, Executive Director of the North Bergen Library, who also serves as the Service Coordinator for SSSIO Region 2 (Mid-Atlantic).



The Five Garlands

Once I brought five garlands for Thee, O Baba!
 The first is of flowers rare and fair.
 I wove the garland with my heart
 And it gleamed
 With inner joy, on feeling Thy Touch!
 But Thou..... O Baba!

Took the garland and kissed, but did not wear it
 Round Thy Neck..... Soon, the flowers faded
 And let fall their petals,
 Shorn of beauty, fragrance and life.

Another garland—of pearls,
 I gave Thee, O Baba!
 Thou didst see it and didst smile and took the garland
 In Thy soft and gentle Hand;
 And in the end,
 Thou didst pluck each one of them
 From golden string that held them together
 And didst throw them
 One by one, on the dust
 Caring not for their worth
 And glistening whiteness!
 I wove

A third garland out of lace
 Which shone like a stream of Light
 Circling in joy and mirth and spreading its luster
 Far and wide
 As if it was of Heaven and not of Earth.
 But Baba laughed and took it in His Hand
 And crushed
 With His flaming Fingers
 And threw it away!

A fourth garland I wove
 Of my smiles
 And handed it to Him, for His Joy.
 He saw my smiles woven well and skillfully
 But they were not the sparks of my soul!
 So, he grinned and mocked at them.
 He did not care
 For my smiles free and fine

At last
Tears flowed from the eyes;
I gathered them in drops and strung them together
Into a sad, shining garland
And offered Him. Ah! Baba closed His eyes and Joy
And heaving a deep breath, extended His Hand
And though it drenched His hand, Face and Heart,
He felt a peculiar joy
And there, my garland rested Round His Breast

~K. Vaidyanathan, M.A. Ph.D.
Source: *Sanathana Sarathi*, Oct. 1960



Bag the Habit

The Region 2 EnviroCare Wing is launching **“Bag the Habit,”** a new initiative encouraging Sai families to remember their reusable bags whenever they shop.

It is a small habit with a potentially large impact. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Americans generated about 4.2 million tons of plastic bags, sacks, and wraps in 2018. More than 3 million tons ended up in landfills, while only about 10 percent was recycled.

“Bag the Habit” asks us to make bringing reusable bags as routine as taking our keys or wallet. Keep them in the car, near the front door, or wherever you are most likely to remember them before leaving for the store.

Centers and Groups are encouraged to find simple and fun ways to remind one another, and members can invite family and friends to join in. Every reusable bag we carry means one less plastic bag entering circulation.

One small habit, practiced by many people, can make a difference for Mother Earth.

Take a Bag. Make an Impact.

Sri Sathya Sai International Organization
ENVIROCARE WING

REGION 2

A REGION 2 ENVIROCARE DRIVE

BAG THE HABIT.

Carry a reusable bag every time you shop — it's a small switch that keeps **plastic out of our landfills, oceans, and streets.**

- One plastic bag can take up to 500 years to break down.
- A reusable bag replaces **hundreds of single-use bags** over its life.
- Every reusable bag you carry is **one less plastic bag** in circulation.
- Play an **active role** in saving Mother Earth.

500+ years for one plastic bag to decompose

1,000s of single-use bags one tote replaces

1 habit: bring your own bag, every trip

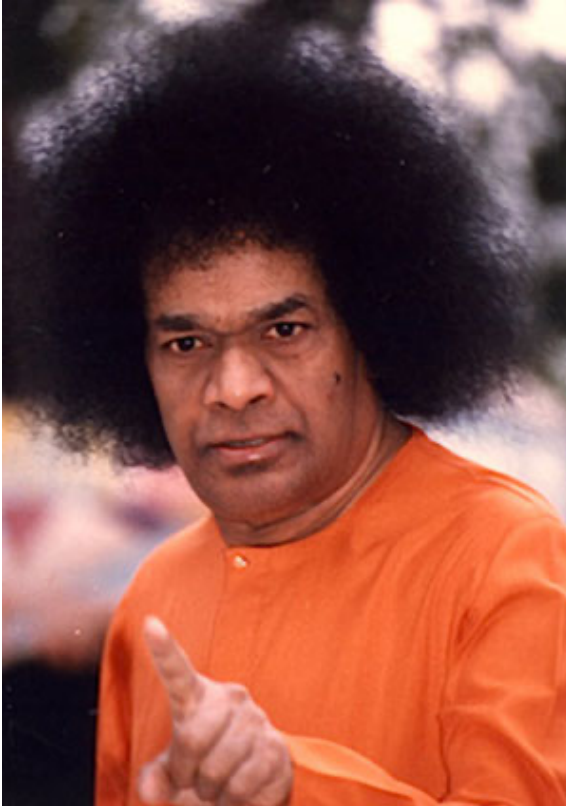
Start Now. Make a Difference.

"Take a Bag. Make an Impact."

SSSIO ENVIROCARE — REGION 2

Happiness is Union with God

After having been in the Divine fold for the last many years, after having observed Him, after having talked with Him many a time, the only thing of which I can be sure about Bhagavan is that He is love, love, and nothing other than love. The way He looks at everyone, the way He smiles at everyone, the way He moves, are all reflections of His inner being, of what He really is, and that is Love alone.



Often, we may feel that He is 'angry' with us, but we should never forget that He is the greatest actor in this drama of life. He acts so well that we fail to recognize the Love. He acts 'angry' in order to correct us, for we do not change otherwise. So, His main aim is our happiness. Isn't that Love?

When He gives discourses, when He sings *Bhajans*, we are all exhilarated and feel overjoyed though we may be far away from Him. How does this happen? It is because His love is like a wildfire that spreads out, making everything and anything burn in the same fire. At that moment we really feel happy. The only problem is that we do not keep that fire alive, we let it die out, and thus we return to our normal state.

Our life as a student seems to be like in paradise for we have everything that we need around us, and to top it all we have Bhagavan Himself who lives with us. But why is it that He then emphasizes the point, "Look within, start your inner journey"? A journey within! And where is the destination? First of all, what could we possibly find inside us that is not already outside us?

I am reminded of a small poem that answers all these questions beautifully. It goes like this:

*God wanted to hide, He said:
"If I hide on top of the highest mountains man will climb it and find Me,
If I hide in the atom, He will split it and find Me,
If I hide on the stars, He will spy me out with His telescopes."
So, God decided to hide in the place where man would never search,
And that is in the depths of His heart.*

So God is there inside us, in our heart. That is what our Dear Lord means when He asks us to look within. He gives us a clue to this treasure hunt, and the treasure is immense, immeasurable. It is up to us to find this treasure so well hidden. It is said that the best way to hide something from someone is to keep that object right under his nose! That's exactly what Bhagavan has done. The biggest treasure of all is not under our nose, it is with us already, but we do not know it! How foolish is it of us to go around searching for what we actually already have.

'God', 'Consciousness', 'Bhagavan' and 'Inner Being' is all synonymous. Bhagavan is no different from us except that He knows that He is God while we do not. In the Bible, too, it is written: "God made man in His very form." Does it mean physically? I don't think so. Our soul is the same as His. We are just a part in His endless whole.

How beautiful it is to think of this! We are God, God is we. So, if we are God, we can achieve anything! We can do what others can't. We can now do the things we were afraid of. This is great. All this would be true only and only if we really believe that we are God. Another poem springs up in my mind in this connection:

*A small boy looked up at a star and began to weep.
And the star said: "Boy, why are you weeping?"
The boy said: "You are too far away,
I will never be able to touch you."
And the star answered, "My dear boy, If I weren't
Already in your heart, you would not be able to see me."*

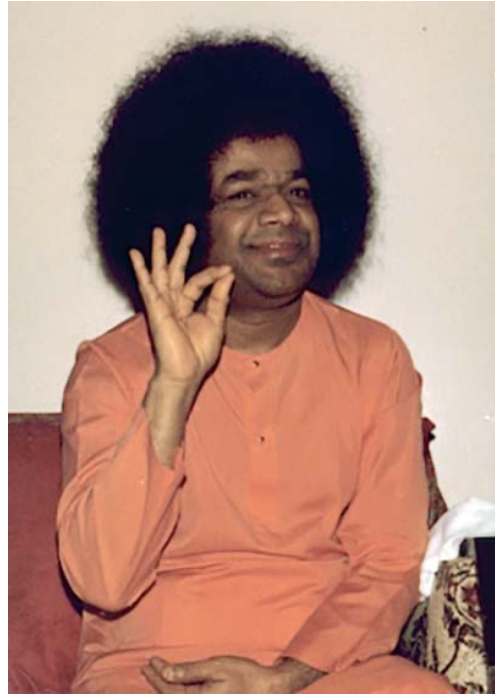
When I read this poem for the first time, I was out of breath. I was really astonished. This poem clearly describes the way we are living today. We are like the small boy weeping for the worldly things around us knowing not that we have them already inside us. This is in accordance with what Bhagavan says: "Everything is a reflection of your inner being." Everything we see around us, if at all we are able to see anything, it is already inside us. The worldly things we see are just reflections, and reflections are not real. This is what is called *Maya*. The whole world is *Maya*; it is unreal. But we are very much attracted by it. You may ask me how it is possible to have everything inside. This is indeed possible because we have Bhagavan inside us. Then we have the whole Universe and much more, too! It all comes back to the point that we have God inside us.

Then how is it that we do not hear Him or why doesn't He talk to us? It is because we do not try to listen, and also we do not give Him the necessary time to talk. Once a student went to Socrates and asked him: "Master, how can I find God?" The great master then took him to a river. The boy obediently followed him into the river. Suddenly, Socrates pushed the boy into the water. The boy began struggling for breath but in vain. When the boy became blue in color, Socrates pulled him out. The student was very angry and abused him. Socrates then said, "Dear boy, when you were under the water, what did you want most?" The boy answered "Air." Then the

great truth was revealed: "My dear boy, you can find God only if you want Him as badly as you wanted the air then."

We can hear the Lord inside us only if we really want to. The choice is in our hands. It is up to us to make this choice fast, for God is waiting.

Finally, another big question arises. Why should we create a bond with the inner Lord when we have Him physically with us? This question makes real good sense right now. But in the future, when Swami sends us into the world to spread His love and mission to everyone, it would make no sense at all. Then we wouldn't have Bhagavan physically anymore. What would we do then? Should we just forget everything that we have learnt here in Prasanthi Nilayam? No. It is then that an inner Lord takes over. This is why we should create a very strong bond with Bhagavan within. Just imagine, we would have Him however we want Him to be, wherever we want Him, whenever we want. There would be no physical limitation then. He would be available to us at any time ready to love us, help us, and rescue us. He will then surely guide us on to the right path. He will enact through us. He would become us.



And that is the final stage of our life, where we would feel the real happiness that we feel so often in Bhagavan's presence, so often but for so less time. But now it would be a never-ending happiness, for "Happiness is Union with God."

I would like to conclude with a poem. But this is a poem with a difference, for it was written by Bhagavan Himself:

*Come one, come all; See Yourself in Me, for
I see Myself in You all. You are My life, My breath, My soul.
You are all My forms. When I love You, I love Myself.
When You love Yourself, You love Me.
I have separated Myself from Myself so that I could love Myself.
My beloved ones,
You are My Own Self.*

~Marcello Sandri, Student (1992-2001)
Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School, Prasanthi Nilayam
Currently, Senior Software Engineer, Italy
Source: Sai Nandana 2000 (75th Birthday Offering)

Thought of the MONTH

Mind

Faith is like a live volcano. Doubts are like seeds. No seed will sprout on a live volcano. If your doubts are multiplying, it means your faith is weak and unstable, and akin to an extinct volcano. Where there are doubts, there can be no faith. Your doubts arise or disappear because of your past *karma* (actions). No doubts will arise if your faith is strong. To realize Divinity, you must first get rid of all your doubts. From time to time, God subjects you to various tests. These are not intended to be punishments as you may imagine, but to strengthen your faith. Always remember that the Divine acts as a witness. The Divine shows you the path to self-realization.

Divine Discourse, July 24, 1983

Do not entertain in your mind the idea of purity or impurity while undertaking a spiritual practice. There is nothing impure in the world. When the Lord is immanent everywhere and in everything, how can anything be impure? Even if something appears to the eyes as impure, the moment it contacts the Name of the Lord, it becomes purified. Purity and impurity are the result of the mental reactions at a particular moment. When one is giving money to someone, one talks of choosing an auspicious time. But when one gets a chance to take money, every moment becomes auspicious! The mind is the reason for both the attitudes. Remember that everything is pure, everything is Divine.

It is the youth and youth alone who can set this world right. No nation can stand without its youth. Never underestimate the capabilities of young people, thinking that they are inexperienced and immature. Only the youth can protect this world; they are endowed with immense power. If they take a firm resolve, they can achieve anything! When they realize their power, they can emancipate nations. You must face all difficulties with forbearance. Accept all trials and tribulations with love. Accept both pleasure and pain with love. Fill your heart with love and not with the poison of evil qualities. Everything is love. The very word 'love' is suffused with sweetness. Treat each other with love, converse with each other with love; lead a life full of love and enjoy bliss.

Divine Discourse, Mar 30, 2006

There is milk in the body of the cow; the milk has *ghee* (clarified butter) latent in it. But the cow cannot derive any strength through that latent *ghee*. The milk must be taken out of the animal, boiled, and a little sour curd poured into it in order to curdle it. Then, when the milk is transformed into curds, it must be churned and the butter

separated and rolled. After this, the butter must be melted and clarified, only then can *ghee* be obtained. The *ghee* thus prepared can be fed to the cow that would make it stronger. So, too, God is omnipresent. Yet, He is not easily available or perceivable to individuals unless they undertake the required *sadhana* (spiritual practices).

- *Sathya Sai Vahini, Chap 12*

A farmer clears and levels the land, removes the stones and thorns, ploughs and prepares the field, manures and nourishes the soil, waters and applies fertilizers on it. Then he sows the seeds and transplants the saplings. This is followed by the process of weeding and spraying of pesticides. Finally, after a long wait, he reaps the harvest. Once the crop is harvested, he then winnows it, threshes it and finally stacks the produce. All these various processes are for the sake of feeding the stomach. So, too, one must feel that hunger, thirst, joy and sorrow, grief and loss, suffering and anger, food and appetite are but impulses that impel us toward attaining the Presence of the Lord. If you have this attitude, no sin will ever tarnish your actions. Over time, these impulses, too, will vanish without a trace.

~ *Prema Vahini, Chapter - Sankalpa is the Path for Attaining the Presence*

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