The gift I like most

EMBODIMENTS of Love! For the past five days various activities in Prashaanthi Nilayam have kept you busy. But. none of you noticed the passing of time. The reason is, that you become oblivious to time when your minds are concentrated on Timeless Divinity with all your actions and thoughts merged in the Divine. Just as rivers which join the ocean become one with the ocean, your minds when immersed in the Divine become one with the Divine.

The Universe is the manifestation of God. In every human being exists Divinity, subtle and invisible. Association with good people and saadhana (spiritual discipline) are essential for discovering the Divinity that is latent in the individual. The real purpose of human life will be achieved only when all our time and all our efforts are concentrated on realising the Divinity that is inherent in us. This realisation is possible for every human being.

But, today people are engaged in actions contrary to this objective. They are anxious to know all about what is happening in America or England. They wish to study Geography or Astronomy, but few are keen to find out their own true nature and their real essence. This is due to a defective education. In the present educational system, there is no place for ethical, *dharmic,* spiritual studies with the result that the students do not make any attempt to understand the purpose of human life. One seeks to learn all about the physical world. One learns all about America but does not know the route to Benares. One learns all about geometry, but knows little about the dimensions of his own house. One does all kinds of physical exercises but does not know how to sit in *Padhmaaana* (Lotus posture). One studies Botany, but does not know the uses of the *Thulasi* (basic) plant.

God is the seed of all living things

This is the deplorable deficiency of the existing system of education. If students wish to realise their true divine nature, they have to turn their minds to spiritual studies. *Aathma vidhya* (Spiritual study) is not a separate branch of knowledge. As has been described in the Bhagavathgeetha, it means seeing the Divine in the entire Universe. The Lord says: "I am the seed of all living things in the *Universe---Beejam Maam Sarva Bhoothaanam."* The Universe is a tree of which the seed is the Lord and the fruit is humanity *(Maanavathwam).* Without trying to discover the Divinity that is in the human form, people are wasting their lives. If you examine the great scriptures of the world, you will find that they all emphasize the supreme preciousness of being able to discover one's Divine nature, without which one cannot achieve real bliss. Man seeks worldly pleasures and prosperity but does not seek that inner Divinity which will give him permanent happiness.

Uphold the good name of your country

It is deplorable that people born in this *thyaaga-bhuumi* (sacred land of sacrifice) a *yogabhuumi* (land of spiritual practice, *saadhana)* have become slaves of western civilization and are acting contrary to the genius of their own motherland. To ignore one's mother and develop attachment to others is pitiable. For a child it is the mother who is endowed with a blissful face, however much she may be lacking in good features. That is the natural attitude of a child. But, what shall I say about students who for the sake of making a living, go to foreign countries after acquiring some kind of a degree? Instead of using your knowledge, your attainments, your abilities, your energies and your education in the service of your own motherland, if you go to foreign countries and serve them like beggars, is this not utterly deplorable?

In the *Thretha Yuga,* after the destruction of Raavana, Raama, Lakshmana and Seetha were getting ready to leave Lanka for Ayodhya. At that time, Lakshmana spoke to Raama, "If we return to Ayodhya, I doubt, we will get back our kingdom. Kaikeyi might have installed Bharatha on the throne. We left Ayodhya for the forest in response to the command of our father. Ayodhya may not be in a prosperous condition now. You know that Lanka is more prosperous than heaven itself. Would it not be better for you to be the ruler of Lanka and enjoy all that this country can offer?"

Raama replied: "Lakshmana, however ugly one's mother may be, I am not so insensible as to look upon some other beautiful woman and regard her as my mother. My motherland is the land of my birth. However attractive and prosperous Lanka may appear, with all the treasures of the earth, I have no use for its attractions and wealth." We, who are born in the sacred land of Bhaarath, should be prepared to face whatever difficulties and hardships there may be in our country and use all our talents, knowledge and abilities to serve our country to the utmost and thereby uphold the good name of our country.

Greed is the breeding ground of suffering

Our ancients have declared that greed is the breeding ground of suffering. What has happened to those who went to Iraq, Iran or Dubai? Many of them are coming back with barely the clothes with which they left. Wealth is evanascent, like a passing cloud. Money comes and goes. Morality comes and grows. It is unworthy of our people to give up their culture, their way of living, and their principles solely for making a living by selling their services to foreigners. This is totally un-Indian. Is it not possible to lead an honest life by working with your two hands and serving your motherland? Why do you entertain improper desires?

It is insatiable greed which is today responsible for destroying the human quality in man. As long as desire is uncontrolled, you cannot discover the *Aathma.* The *Purusha Sooktha* (hymns on the Supreme Person) has declared that "not by action, not by progeny, not by wealth but only by sacrifice can one realise Immortality *(Na Karmanaa, Na Prajayaa, dhanena; Thyaagenaekena Amruthathwam aanashuh).* Sacrifice, strength and wisdom are qualities of the Divine. Use all your talents for the service of your country first and then do whatever you can for other countries. How can you conquer the outside world without having established your control over your own house? If you cannot derive satisfaction by utilising your education, your abilities or skills and your intelligence for your country, how are you going to achieve it in foreign countries.

Desire is something alien to Sai

Dhivya Swaruupas (embodiments of divine nature) whether you believe it or not, I shall tell you one thing. There is not the slightest trace of self-interest in Me. Whatever I do, whatever paths I pursue, everything is intended for the happiness of all, for the good of all and for the improvement of all. Not a single action of Mine is undertaken for the satisfaction of My own personal desires. Desire is something alien to Me. All My wishes are only to promote the welfare of the World. *"Lokaasamasthaah Sukhino Bhavanthu"* (May all the worlds be happy) is the only objective of Sai.

It is not by plans of one kind or the other that the world can be bettered. It is only when a spiritual revolution takes place in man that the prosperity and welfare of the world can be

achieved. If the mind of man is not reformed and purified, all plans to reform the world will be futile.

As today's youth, are the future citizens of Bhaarath, they have to promote the welfare of the country. Sai's main purpose is to develop the minds and attitudes of these young men on right lines, so that they may work for the progress and welfare of Bhaarath. Students are the only wealth that I cherish. All My hopes are concentrated on them. To reform them and train them to serve as exemplars of righteousness is Sai's sole resolve.

Understand Sai's true nature of Love

It is not easy for people to understand the Universal *Prema Thaththwa* (true nature of Love) of Sai. I shall give a small example. We took the students to Jammu, Kashmir, Delhi and Prayaag. Wherever we went, we looked after the needs of the students and complied with their wishes. I should like to reveal to you how My Love manifests itself so that you may know My true nature. At a time when this great World Conference is being held, I was concerned after the welfare of the students from all the Sathya Sai educational institutions, who had come from Puttaparthi, Ananthapur, Bangalore, Jaipur and Bhopal.

All My thoughts have been concentrated on how to make them happy, how to see that they were comfortable and how to improve their discipline and character. It is not my desire merely to see them in bright uniforms and engage them in activities like drawing water or cleaning the streets. My idea is to develop real discipline and character and at the same time see that they are happy. For this purpose, I brought 50 tailors here to work night and day and for two months to stitch uniforms for the boys.

I did not get any new dress stitched for myself. I do not need new clothes for any occasion. Even the robe which I am now wearing was offered to me by the old students of the Kingdom of Sathya Sai as an expression of their love and so I agreed to wear it. Similarly I do not have any particular desire with regard to food or any other need. My *Aanandha* (divine bliss) is My food and to secure that food I promote happiness in others and derive delight from their joy. That is the significance of my statement, "MY LIFE IS MY MESSAGE." To feel blissful in the enjoyment of the happiness which others experience is a quality of the divine.

The Universe is permeated by the Divine

Let Me illustrate this with a small example. We plant a small seed, which grows into a big tree. The tree bears thousands of fruits in each of which there is the seed of tree. Even so, when the seed of divinity is planted in this vast Universe, the tree of humanity bears fruits in which the seed of divinity is to be found. Just as the fruit of a tree contains the seed from which it grew, this Universe carries the seed of its Creator. *"Ishaavaasyam idham Sarvam,"* says the *Upanishath*---the Universe is permeated by the Divine. *"Ishwarah Sarvabhuuthaanam"---the* Lord resides in every living thing. When man respects his human character and realises his obligation to discover his divine nature, the divine in him will manifest itself.

Experience of the Divine must be sought in the company of good people. It is an illusion to imagine that you can see God in some temple or shrine or in some kind of meditation. Only in the Divine manifesting in a human form can you experience the Divine. If one cannot experience the Divine in a living human being, how can one experience it in an inanimate stone? It is only when one perceives with love that one realises one's true nature. Those who are in the Sai

Organisations will be achieving their real purpose only when they rise above good and evil, look with equal regard upon all those around them and see divinity in them.

What man does is based on faith

Sai is unaffected by praise or blame. Sai is happy in whatever context Sai is remembered. Let no Sai devotee attach any value to the praise or blame offered to Sai. Here is an example of what happened the other day. A large group came to see Me. They had come to Prashaanthi Nilayam out of curiosity, after seeing some big reports in a newspaper. I told them that, if you have come only after seeing the papers, you are mere paper yourselves. To come or leave after reading newspapers or books means that your devotion is to the paper or the book and not to the Lord. If you wish to be real devotees of *Bhagavaan,* you should seek, for your own sake and not because of what you have read in books or papers.

Embodiments of Love! All human life is based upon faith. No one can subsit for a single moment without faith. Here is a small example. A man lays the foundation stone for a house to-day. If he does not have the confidence that by next year this house will be ready and that he would live till next year, will he seek to build a house at all? One gets up in the morning, takes up a bag to go to the market to buy vegetables. Without the belief that he will return home after buying the' vegetables from the market, will be leave the house at all? From the time of waking till going to sleep, every thing that man does every moment is based on faith and confidence.

How is it, then that there is lack of faith in the Divinity which has given life, which has created this vast world and provided so many objects for man's comfort and sustenance? We develop faith in innumerable petty things, but we have doubts about the most sacred and the most vital requisite for good living viz., God. If we have faith in God all other beliefs are irrelevant. There are in the ocean certain rocks, which remain unshaken however much the waves may dash against them. Likewise, if you are resolute in achieving your aims, objectives or desires, you should never give up your efforts till your objectives are achieved and you should not be swayed by all kinds of passing thoughts. Only then will you be a true devotee!

Birth and death are action and reaction

Embodiments of Love! You are experiencing great joy in feeling that you are celebrating to, day as My birthday. For Me there is no birthday to be celebrated. It is for your happiness, for your sake and to fulfil your own wishes that I have agreed to take part in various programmes arranged for today. If one has no birth, there is no death. If there is death, then one must have been born. Birth and death are action and reaction. I am beyond both.

The body has no permanence. It is like a bubble on the water; it arises in water, expands in water and merges in water. Man is like the bubble; Naaraayana is the water. Without water the bubble cannot come into existence. All human bubbles are born in Naaraayana, grow in Naaraayana, and ultimately merge in Him. Why rejoice over the birth of the bubble or mourn its disappearance? As long as you have a body, engage yourself in sacred tasks, dedicate all your thoughts, and actions to the Divine.

Embodiments of the Divine! I must ask you to give Me as a birthday offering, only one thing--- REDUCE YOUR SELFISHNESS; Abate your wrong desires. Foster your spirit of sacrifice and grow into noble human beings. If you dedicate yourself to these objects, you will have realised

the purpose for which you attended this great World Conference, this Birthday Celebration and derived immeasurable bliss.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 23-11-1980

Love your religion, so that you may practise it with greater faith; and, when each one practises his religion with faith, there can be no hatred in the world, for all religions are built on universal love.

Love your country, so that it may become strong, happy and prosperous, an arena for the exercise of all the higher faculties of man.

Feel that Delhi or Calcutta is as much a part of yourself as your own town or village; any pain in the toe is as much a matter of concern for you as a pain on the top of the head.

Sri Sathya Sai