

2. Seva is the highest *Sadhana*

HUMAN beings have forgotten their true nature and are behaving like demonic creatures. Though they call themselves as human beings, they do not know the essence of human qualities. Today's educational system emphasises textbook knowledge and ignores morality and character. Seventy percent of the world's population consists of 'youth,' who are the potential leaders of tomorrow. Unless they are properly trained to take up their role in the future, the society, the nation and the world will not progress in peace.

In order to train the younger generation in the proper way, the Sai Organisation has prescribed the five guiding principles of their movement--Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-violence. We should understand first, the real import and significance of these five principles. *Sathya* (Truth) is not just relating events exactly as seen, heard or experienced. It is the eternal Truth which is beyond time and space, which does not ever change. If Love forms part of your nature, *Sathya* will be there.

Love is the common denominator

When your thoughts emanate from a mind purified by love, they will result in Right Action, which is *Dharma*. When Love becomes part of your experience, thought and action you get *Shanthi* (Peace). When we comprehend Love clearly, *Ahimsa* or non-violence will result automatically. So Love is the unseen undercurrent binding all the four values. It can be summarised thus: Love plus thoughts is *Sathya* Love plus feelings is *Shanthi*; Love plus action is *Dharma* and Love plus understanding is *Ahimsa*. Love is the common denominator for all these values. It is the form of God, for God is love. One who gives Love is a man and one who fails to nourish this love is a beast. Love, or absence of Love makes one an animal, man or God.

The nurturing of Love is possible only in a tender heart. Because of attachment to worldly objects, that tenderness is lost. When the mind is directed towards the sensual world, life becomes artificial. When you go to your office, you greet people artificially. The *namaskaram* is done with *ahamkaram*. Respect is given artificially for the position and does not emanate from the heart. That which emanates from the heart is Truth. When you see a person doing service to others with Love, you have to respect him. It is not the formal action that counts. Only the good heart behind the action is entitled to respect and regard. So we should develop a tender heart filled with love rather than act mechanically. If there is no love in the heart, there is no use in doing anything whatsoever.

The role of teacher

The teacher is like a water storage tank. If there is clean and good water in the tank, you will get good water in the taps. Students are like the taps and will prove to be good only when the teachers are good. Teachers should have lofty ideals so that these can be reflected in their students, who are the future citizens and leaders. Teachers should first practise themselves what they want to teach to the students. They should have a feeling of Thyaga (sacrifice) for the sake of the well-being of the nation so that the students will have a similar ideal. Before they try to correct the students, they should first correct themselves.

Human values are not commodities sold in the market. They should be reflected in one's behaviour and one's way of life. They should be taught not as academic subjects but as the basis on which right living should be built up. The teacher should do *Sadhana* to ensure control of

senses and achieve harmony in thought, word and deed. When you achieve this harmony, you will become an ideal teacher.

Address to the Bal Vikas teachers from Tamil Nadu at Abbotsbury, Madras, on 20-1-1985.

Seek God in the temple of your heart

The temples play a vital role in awakening the spiritual impulse in man and directing him towards the realisation of his inherent divinity. The real temple for man is his heart, and forgetting this fact, man goes after temples outside. Temples are erected to remind men about God, but the Divine dwells in the heart and should be sought there. Men go through any amount of difficulties, hardships, trials and tribulations in life, but few try to understand their essential Divinity, which should be the primary aim of life. Men devote considerable care and attention to the preservation of the body which is perishable. But they do not cultivate good thoughts and do good deeds through which they can attain enduring bliss.

Temples serve to provide the company of the good and the godly and should be used for cultivating such company and acquiring mental peace. It is not enough merely to go to temples as a mechanical ritual. You must cultivate good thoughts in tune with the sacred atmosphere of the temple. Even in uttering the names of the Lord, the words should come from the depths of the heart and not merely from the lips. Acquiring the name of the Lord is like getting a precious pearl from the deep ocean. Having got it, you should not let it go out of your hands. Faith in the Lord must be strengthened by the repetition of the name. Faith is the foundation of all activity. Spiritual effort is needed to develop faith in God, just as curdling and churning are necessary to obtain butter from milk. The fire in the matchstick will be seen only when it is struck. Likewise God can be realised only through spiritual effort.

The residents of this colony should live in harmony, cultivate a fraternal spirit and cooperate with each other for their material and spiritual betterment.

(The residents of Thirumangala expressed their unanimous desire to rename the colony as Sathya Sai Nagar in commemoration of Bhagavan's visit and the varied services rendered by the Sai Sevaks).

Discourse at the consecration ceremony of the idol Thiruveedhi Amman at Thirumangala Colony, on the outskirts of Anna Nagar, Madras on 21 - 1 - 1985.

Serve Daridra-Narayana

God has two forms--Lakshmi-Narayana and Daridra-Narayana. Most people prefer to worship Lakshmi-Narayana for ensuring their personal prosperity and welfare, but few chose to worship Daridra-Narayana (the Lord in the form of the poor and the forlorn). Members of the Sai Organisations should think only of service to Daridra-Narayana. If the hungry are fed, they are easily satisfied. Service to Daridra-Narayana can never go waste. It is the highest form of *sadhana*. Man is the product of the society and service to society is real service to God. Such service should be rendered without regard to caste, creed, race or nationality. The essence of all religions is one and the same, like the current that serves many different purposes but is the same energy.

In serving society, they should bear in mind the four ideals of *Sathya, Dharma, Shanthi* and *Prema*. Service is like a bulb, which cannot shed light unless there is a wire to convey the

current. *Sathyam* is the current. *Dharma* is the wire through which the current flows. When the wire of *Dharma* is connected to the bulb of *Shanthi*, then you have the light of Love.

One may encounter difficulties in rendering service. But one should not be overwhelmed by them. The Pandavas have become immortal because of the sufferings they underwent for the sake of *Dharma*. Jesus sacrificed his life for the sake of those whom he came to serve. Prophet Mohammed had to face similar troubles in his mission. Do not aspire for comfort. Greater than all other forms of worship is *Seva* (service to one's fellow-men) done in an unselfish and dedicated spirit. There is an element of selfishness in forms of worship like *Japa Dhyana* etc. But when service is done spontaneously, it is its own reward. It must be done as an offering to God.

Address delivered to Active Sai Workers of 300 adopted villages of Tamil Nadu, at the Prayer Hall, Sundaram, Madras on 22-1 - 1985.

True Seva

Seva is a small word but is filled with immense spiritual significance. Hanuman is the supreme exemplar of the ideal of service. When the *Rakshasas* asked Hanuman, during his search for Sita in Lanka, who he was, he replied simply: "*Daasoham Kosalen-drasya.*" He was content to describe himself as the humble servant of Rama. *Seva* must be viewed as the highest form of *sadhana*. Serving the poor in the villages is the best form of *sadhana*. In the various forms of worship of the Divine, culminating in *Atma-nivedhanam* (complete surrender to the Divine), *Seva* comes before *Atmanivedhanam*. God's grace will come when *Seva* is done without expectation of reward or recognition. Sometimes *Ahamkaram* (ego) and *Abhirnanam* (attachment) rear their heads during *Seva*. These should be eliminated altogether.

In speech what matters is the inner feeling. The purpose of speech should be to promote heart-to-heart understanding. Develop the love of God in your hearts. The heart is like a musical chair in which there is room for only one. Give in your heart place only for God.

Address delivered to Seva Dal workers at the workshop on Health and Hygiene at Abbotsbury, Madras on 25-1 - 1985.

See God in everyone you meet; see God in every thing you handle. His Mystery is immanent in all that is material and non-material; as a matter of fact, it has been discovered that there is no matter or material. It is all God, an expression of His Mystery! Derive joy from the springs of joy within you and without you; advance, do not stand still or recede. Every minute must mark a forward step.

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