39. Unity Based On Divinity

Embodiments of Divine Love! In the world today all those who are held in high esteem as great personages have earned their good name only by their character and conduct. To accomplish anything one wants, one should have firm determination. Those with fickle minds cannot achieve anything.

All religions and scriptures agree that going to the aid of fellow-beings in times of need and saving them from distressing situations is the greatest virtue of a person. Every human being has equal rights in the world. All belong to one family. To enjoy peace of mind, it is essential to practice forbearance and equanimity. There are persons good and bad, rich and poor, educated and uneducated in every country of the world. Though born in the same family and breathing the same air, some persons are narrow minded and have crooked ideas and indulge in selfish deeds, while others are good and selfless.

"Suhrudham Sarva bhuuthaanaam," "Ekaathma Sarvabhuutha antharaatma" are well known aphorisms from the scriptures. To be friendly towards all beings is the duty of everyone, since the same *A atma* is there in all beings. Comprehending this truth, it is the duty of everyone born as a human being to do good to others on the basis of love.

There is no need to search for God anywhere, since God resides in every being. The body is, therefore, to be considered as the temple of God. Today man is breeding bad thoughts in the mind, thereby polluting the heart which is the seat of the Divine.

Four kinds of potentialities of human beings

In every human being, there are four kinds of potentialities, namely, animal, demonic, human and Divine.

The one with the divine quality will be a *Brahma-Nishtha* or one engaged in the contemplation of the *Aatma* within and will enjoy *Aatmic* bliss and sanctify every moment of his life by doing good deeds. He realises that the same *Aatma* is them in all beings as the *Antharaatma* (Inner Self) and leads a blissful life, discarding selfish thoughts. He is a *Brahma Jnaani* or *Aatma Jnaani,* a realised soul, who is aware of the truth that revering others is revering the Lord and hurting others is hurting the Lord. Such persons radiate divinity though they are in a human body.

The "human" type of persons follow the path of Truth *and Righteousness--Sathya Dharma paro marthyah.* They are engaged in activities in strict accordance with *Sathya* and *Dharma* (Truth and Righteousness), using their sense of discrimination in the fight manner. They discharge their responsibilities without craving for position, power, pelf or fame. Such a person lives in harmony with his fellow beings and discharges his duties with firm belief in the three precepts: fear of sin, love of God and morality in society.

The next type is the demonic person. Such a person does not care for the code of conduct for human beings, indulges in the shameless pursuit of sensual pleasures, is filled with ego and pride, and does not hesitate to hurt others for selfish purposes. He goes on nonchalantly committing sinful deeds. Egoism is his life breath and attachment is his backbone. Such a selfish person is termed as demonic.

One who lacks wisdom is like an animal

"Jnaana Viheenah Pashubhih Samaanaha" (The man lacking wisdom is like an animal). A person who is steeped in ignorance is considered to be no better than an animal. Such a person's life is centred only on sense gratification. His thoughts never go beyond the senses because of his ignorance of the divinity within him. He deems the transient earthly pleasures as heavenly bliss and lives in delusion devoid of discrimination.

Every man must make an effort to rise to humanness, shedding his animal and demonic qualities, and then strive to realise his divine nature. Nowadays, we find that men are going down in the reverse direction, from the human to the demonic and animal states.

The message of Jesus Christ

On December 25th, when Jesus was born, three kings. came to his birthplace. These three gave expression to three different views about the new-born babe. One of them, looking at the infant, said: "This child looks like one who will be a lover of God." A second king said: "God will love this child." The third king declared: "Verily, this child is God Himself." The first one viewed the child from the physical point of view. The second saw the child from the mental viewpoint. The third saw from the *Aatmic* (spiritual) point of view.

The three declarations indicate how one can progress from the human to the divine level. What is needed is the destruction of the animal and demonic qualities in man. Man today worships inanimate idols and images, but makes no attempt to love his fellow human beings in flesh and blood. This was the first message of Jesus. Though one sees his neighbours day after day, he does not choose to love them. How can one believe that such a person can love an invisible God? If a man cannot love a fellow human being who is visible before his eyes, how can he love what is not visible to him? This is not possible. Only a man who loves living beings around him can love the invisible Divine. Love must start with love for beings that have form. It must be extended to all beings. This is the primary stage in spirituality.

Spirituality does not mean preoccupation with meditation, worship, etc. It involves total extinction of the animal and demonic qualifies in man and the manifestation of his inherent divinity. When the attachments and hatreds in which man is enveloped are removed, the inherent divinity in man, the *Sath-chith-ananda* in him will manifest Itself.

There is no need to search for the omnipresent Divine in any specific place. When you are yourself divine, why search for the Divine elsewhere? It is a mark of ignorance.

How Jesus Christ's message was accepted

Jesus performed many miraculous deeds, relieved the sufferings of many in distress, preached sublime truths to the people, and ultimately sacrificed his life. For over a hundred years after his martyrdom, Christ's message did not have any impact. Four centuries later, Christianity was accepted by Roman emperors. Even after many centuries humanity is yet to realise the inherent divinity of man.

Man is searching for a reason for every belief or action. Should you seek a reason for sanctifying the time spent by you on any action? When you are engaged in unselfish activity for the common good of society and discharging your duties with dedication, you are sanctifying your life.

There are four basic elements in every action. They are *Kaarana, Karma, Kaala* and *Karthavyam. Kaarana* is the reason, *Karma* is the action, *Kaala* is the time and *Karthavyam* is

the duty that has been discharged. We can cite an example for this. Supposing you want to go to Madras to see your relatives; you go to the bus-stand in the morning, sit in the bus, travel for eight hours and reach Madras in the evening. Now,-seeing your relatives is *Kaarana* (cause). Sitting in the bus and travelling is *karma* (action). Spending eight hours is *Kaala* (time factor) and seeing your relatives in Madras and getting satisfaction therefrom is *Karthavyam* (goal).

If you do the same things in your dream, there is no time factor. The cause and action factors are also absent. As soon as you wake up, you find that you are only in the bed and discover that your seeing your relatives in Madras was unreal. All the four factors are absent in the dream state. Only where all the four are present will it be real.

The purpose in view is termed *Lakshyam.* You are born as a human being for doing your *Karma* (duty). Life is given to you only to recognise Divinity and the body is the instrument for achieving this *Kaarana* (purpose). When you have spent your life, you have done the *karma* (action) in the duration of your *life--kaala.* You should have the satisfaction of having achieved the *karthavyam* (goal).

Christ preached only this truth and taught the people that the body should be used for service to society. This is the teaching of Vedanta. Vedanta declares that the body is intended only to do actions in the world in a selfless way.

The genesis of the Christmas tree

Jesus was crucified on a Friday and He rose from the tomb on a Sunday. That is why Sunday is taken as the day of worship and service in churches. Catholics gave importance to Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, while Protestants gave importance to the birth of Christ. Catholics celebrate Christmas by worshipping Mary on the evening of 24th and Protestants celebrate the birth of Christ on the 25th. There is a custom of putting up a Christmas tree on this day and worshipping it. The genesis of this custom can be traced to Germany. A preacher by name Jensen from England once visited Germany. When he was travelling in Germany on his mission, he noticed some Germans attempting to offer a child's life as sacrifice to propitiate God who, they believed, lived in an oak tree. The priest was worried and questioned them why they were offering an innocent child as sacrifice to a tree. As they asserted that God lived in the tree, he took an axe and cut the tree. To his surprise, he was shaken by an inexplicable vibration from head to foot. He noticed the form of a child between the two portions of the tree that was cut by him.

System of worshipping Divinity in many forms

This incident teaches the truth that God lives not only in human beings but also in plants and trees. From that time onwards people started putting up a Christmas tree and worshipping it on this Christmas day. The system of worshipping Divinity in many forms including plants and stones, which originated in Bharath, has been prevalent for a long time in other countries also.

There are sanyasis even among Christians. The men are called monks and the women are called nuns. There is no difference in this regard among the various religions. In all religions the goal is one. Christianity propagated this oneness of God. But nowadays the pure, permanent *Aatmic* principle is forgotten in the preoccupation with worldly pursuits. (Bhagavan then described how the practice of having grandfather Christmas wearing a red robe and distributing gifts to children on Christmas day came into existence. Swami related the story of Nicholas, who began this practice when he became head of a church).

Heart is the seat of Truth

In all religions, birthdays of great personalities are celebrated but the ideals for which they lived are not remembered and followed. If you do not care to follows their teachings the celebrations lose their meaning and become artificial observances. It is not doing justice to the good people whose birthdays are being celebrated. Christ taught people to love all beings and serve all with compassion. It is only by practising these ideals that one can truly celebrate His birthday. The Divinity within should be reflected in every action. The seat of Truth is in your heart. Worship means loving others with your full heart. You must live in love and lead a life of selfless service based on love. This is the only fight way of celebrating the birth of Christ.

God, in fact, has no birth and no death. No change is there in God, who is changeless and permanent. The *Aatma* within is but a reflection of God and it is the same in all beings as an eternal witness. Birth and death pertain only to the body. It is not correct to worship the body. Through *Saakaara* (the transient body) man has to merge in *Niraakaara* (the ultimate Supreme Reality).

Embodiments of the Divine Aatma! Christmas is celebrated in innumerable places all over the world. Nowhere in the world is it done in the way it is celebrated here in Prashanthi Nilayam. People elsewhere may attend some church service and revel in drinking and dining parties. But, here, people from many countries in the world, speaking many languages, following different faiths and cultures, assemble together unitedly, start the day with singing God's name and glory regardless of their differences, join in spending the day in carrying the message of Universal love. This is Unity in diversity and true Adwaitha in action. Every minute we are experiencing this. Whenever one makes *Namaskaram* to elders, what is its significance? It signifies the bringing together of the five senses of perception and the five senses of action into one, thus unifying the different senses. In *namaskaram* you have *"na"* and *"maskaram"; "na"* means "*no",* which indicates that your ego is given up, and you have no body consciousness. The unity of all the sense organs will wipe out the *Ahamkaara.* This will lead to purity and purity will lead to divinity. This unity can be seen only in Prashanthi Nilayam.

Nowadays politicians and preachers talk of unity and purity but in practice it is not followed by the preachers themselves. It is only in Prashanthi Nilayam that this unity and purity are pervading naturally without any effort from anyone. All are living here like brothers and sisters of the same family.

The power of love in Prashanthi Nilayam

There are a number of foreigners here,, who are very affluent and command princely comforts in their places, who have to put up with an austere life. They live in sheds in a spirit of fellowship and camaraderie though bereft of even the minimum comforts. They could not enjoy their life in their big mansions as much as they enjoy their stay here in such uncomfortable conditions. The reason is the Divine Love in them. If there is no such love in you, you cannot live here in such uncomfortable conditions even for a minute.

Embodiments of Divine Love! Devotees who have come from far off countries! You are putting up with the life here in spite of the lack of amenities to which you are normally accustomed back home and are feeling happy. This is indeed a big *Sadhana* and can be termed even as *Thapas* or penance.

The foreigners, in spite of their discomforts and difficulties, radiate joy through their smiling faces. This is because of their love for Swami. They are spending a lot of money to come here and undergo the rigours of the disciplined life here most willingly and yet are always happy. But in spite of all comforts, the people of our own country who gather here do not present a cheerful countenance.

Embodiments of Love! One who is having constant remembrance of God, with love and devotion, will ever be happy whether he is in a village or a city, flying in the sky or in a forest, because God dances in his heart and confers delight.

Because of the lack of unity, this nation is experiencing a lot of difficulties and turmoil. Promotion of unity is essential for peace in the nation and the word. There is no use in simply greeting others with words coming from the lips; greetings should come from the heart with sincerity and love.

Poornachandra Auditorium, Christmas day, 25 Dec 1992

The grace of God cannot be won through the gymnastics of reason, the contortions of yoga or denials of asceticism. Love alone can win it, love that needs no requital, love that knows no bargaining, love that is paid gladly as tribute to all living. Love that is unwavering.

Sathya Sai Baba