53. Realise God through love

ASTHIRAM Jeevitham loke (Life in the mundane world is impermanent). Life in this phenomenal world is not permanent. *"Asthiram yauvvanam dhanam"* (Youth and wealth are not lasting). They are like passing clouds. *"Asthiram dhaara-puthraadhi"* (Wife and children and other relatives are liable to vanish like white mist in a moment). *"Dharmam Keerthi* dhvayam sthiram" (Righteousness and fame endure forever). In human life, righteous living and a good reputation are the two that are everlasting.

In the history of mankind several religions arose to promote the moral advancement, the prosperity and the welfare of humanity.

Vaishnavites have esteemed Vishnu as the Supreme Shaivites have
given the highest place to Shambhu

The worshippers of Ganapathi accord the highest
place for Ganesha;
Saraswathi is adored as the Supreme
by the seekers of knowledge;
Muslims regard Allah as the Supreme Lord
While Christians hail Jesus as the Saviour;
Buddhists worship Buddha as the Supreme
Enlightened One;
Jains accord the highest place to Mahaveera;
Paarsis adore Zoroaster
Sikhs deem Naanak as the Supreme teacher
Baba devotees adore Sai as the Supreme
The wise regard all of them as equal.
All religions should be revered equally
Because God is one and the same God for all of them.
God is Truth. He is Righteousness.
He is peace. He is the embodiment of love.
(Thelugu poem).

Embodiments of Love! It is essential to realise and act on the basis that the purpose of religion is to promote unity in diversity, banish divisive tendencies and make human beings lead ideal lives.

The common essence of all religions

The essence of all religions, the message of all scriptures and the destination for all mankind is the same. But because of selfishness, narrow-mindedness and concern for self-interest, religion is

used as a pretext for promoting differences and conflicts. "All religions teach only what is good if they are studied intelligently. If your mind is good, what religion can be bad?" says a Thelugu poem. Morality and integrity, righteousness and charity, truth and tradition, forbearance and non-violence are basic tenets of all religions. These basic truths are common to all religions. But over the years men have forgotten these truths and have fostered divisive tendencies in the place of unity. As a result, respect for human values has gone. It is essential to recognise the Divine unity that suffuses all the diversity in human existence.

The life of Jesus

(Bhagavaan gave a brief account of the Jewish concept of the creation, of the cosmos and referred to the birth of Jesus as the son of Mary and Joseph). As the name and fame of Jesus spread, opposition to him developed among a section of Jews. After his father's death, young Jesus considered it his duty to help his mother and revere her as divine. Jesus preached the primary obligation of everyone to show one's gratitude to the parents. Jesus came with his mother to Jerusalem when he was eleven years old. His mother was worried about the activities of Jesus. Jesus was critical of the ways of the Jews in the temple in Jerusalem.

He came out against the harmful practices in the temple and preached the omnipresence of God in all living beings. He exhorted the people not to cause harm to anyone.

What he preached was in accord with the basic teachings of all religions. He engaged himself in a mission of mercy to the sick and the poor. He offered food to the hungry. Seeing his acts of love and kindness, people declared that he was a "Messenger of God." Jesus constantly referred to God as the father. Later he declared: "I and my father are one." Jesus dedicated his life to the propagation of faith in one God who is common to all mankind.

Men today celebrate the birthdays of great holy men but they do not follow the teachings of the masters. There is nothing great about the celebration of birthdays. People must resolve to uphold their ideals and act up to their teachings.

A unique book

There is a book compiled in Britain around 1530 A.D, containing all the information about Jesus gathered during the preceding centuries. The Russians condensed all this material in a small book which they preserved in a place on the Black Sea coast. (Svaami produced the little book by a circular wave of His band and held it before the audience). This is the book. You can see the cross on the cover page. The book was designed to demonstrate the common features of all religions. What is contained in this book is not to be found even in the Bible. It contains an entirely new account of the life of Jesus.

It is not open to all to understand the ways of the Lord. To know about God one has to develop godly feelings. In this book, there are bookmark threads which distinguish every faith by a *shloka* relating to it. There is one page which contains the *shloka* from the Bhagavath Geetha in which Krishna exhorts Arjuna to give up all beliefs and take sole refuge in Him and assured Arjuna that thereafter he will absolve Arjuna of all the sins (Cheers).

The essence of all creeds is one and the same thing. Man's primary duty is to surrender to God. "Surrender" means attaining the state in which the devotee feels he is one with God. This feeling arises out of the conviction that the same divinity is present in all. Bodies of human beings are varied like bulbs, but the current passing through them is the same. The colour of the bulbs or their wattage may vary. But the current activating them is the same.

This book contains the *Vedhic* saying: *"Ekoham bahushyaam."*

Follow the conscience

The same God dwells in all beings. There is no justification for differences on the basis of religion. It is attachment to the body which accounts for religious differences. Do not regard the body as permanent. It is a water bubble. The mind is a mad monkey. Don't follow either of them. Follow the conscience. That is the main message contained in this little book. The culture of Bhaarath has experienced this truth in the concept of *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being-Awareness-Bliss).

Today people read all kinds of books and go after all sorts of "great persons." They do not enquire about what constitutes greatness. Realise that there is no one greater than each of you. But you have not discovered the real truth about yourself, like an elephant that does not know its own strength. A mahout with a goad is able to control it.

Recognise the fact that the whole universe is within you. You have all the powers in you. They are derived from the Divine Spirit within you. It is the Divinity which endows you with a Free Will. Forgetting the supreme power of the Spirit, people place their reliance on the powers of the body, the mind and the intellect.

Love binds all people

Embodiments of Love! If you want to realise God, if you wish to experience the Divinity within you, if you want to know your true self, you have to develop pure, unsullied love. It is this that binds all people. It is described as the *Prema-paasham (*tether of love).

Today there are numerous sects within Christianity all of which are engaged in propagating their respective doctrines. While this preaching goes on, there is very little of practice in daily life. Practice is most important. People may be entitled to propagate their creed. But that does not achieve anything lasting. Only practical example matters. When you practise what you preach, others will be inspired by your example. No one will care for the teaching of a person who does not practise what he preaches.

I have often told the students that of all forms of knowledge, the one that is most beneficial is practical knowledge which is relevant to everyone. You have to act on the conviction that the same Divine Spirit dwells in one and all.

Oblivious to this truth, man is immersed today in selfish pursuits. This selfishness is degrading man to the lowest levels. To develop true humanness, everyone has to foster the feeling of spiritual oneness. This sense of oneness constitutes true religion. Religion means "realisation" of your true self.

Develop the love of God. All other forms of love are not love at all, but only fleeting and impermanent attachments. Man's biggest folly is forgetting his divinity. All should realise that they come "from God." All are children of God. Everyone should seek to get nearer and nearer to God. That is *saadhana.* You must feel that God is *Hridhayavaasi* (dwells in the heart). You must develop compassion in the heart, because without it the heart is only a stone.

That is the message of Jesus--the message of love. Love is God. Live in love. Start the day with love. Spend the day with love. End the day with love. This is the way to God. Only the person who is filled with love will be dear to the Lord.

God is your unfailing friend

This book contains the declaration: *"Yo madhbhakthah."* "The devotee who is filled with love of God is dear to me," says the Lord in the Geetha. God is your unfailing friend in weal and woe. You must acquire His friendship.

There are many devotees from overseas here today. They should be firm in their devotion whatever changes in the situation they may face.

You may begin worshipping God with specific form and name *(saakaara).* But when you are faced with difficulties you experience God as a helper. When you have some desires, you pray to God for fulfilling them. You are then an *artharthi* (seeker of favours). In these different ways the devotee has to develop his relationship to God.

To illustrate how God responds to the prayers of devotees, I would relate the story of a rich man with four wives, who expressed what they wanted him to get for them during a trip abroad. The first wife, who was spiritually enlightened, prayed for his safe return. The second wife wanted him to bring some sacred books. The third wife, who was ailing wanted him to get some medicines. The fourth wife, who was a "modern", asked him to get her sarees and jewellery. The merchant on his return gave the three wives what they wanted and stayed with the first wife because she had no other desire except to have him back.

How God responds to devotees

God responds to devotees in the same manner. To those who aspire for wealth, he gives wealth. Those who seek knowledge, He will help them to acquire it. Those who are ailing and who pray to God will get the relief they pray for. God builds hospitals for their treatment. Those who pray to God for oneness with Him, will realise Him. This is the way God responds to the four kinds of devotees.

The devotees should consider God alone as important and not other mundane desires. If you have God with you, all other things are got easily. So, God is your real wealth. Real health is God.

Men should strive for God-Realisation because they came from God and should go back to Him.

Today there are devotees here from many countries--Germany, Japan and others. Whatever happiness you may have experienced here, you will have to go back to your countries when your money is exhausted or your visa expires. Your aim must be to acquire a permanent visa to stay here permanently. That is got by God's grace. You can get it through love and love alone. When you have that love, your proximity to God is ensured for ever.

Embodiments of love! There is love in everyone of you. Develop that love. Share it with others. When you have this love there is no need for you to go in search of *aashrams.* There are some foolish, persons who go on hopping from one aashram to another. This is sheer folly. There is no need to go anywhere. The Divine is in your heart. Adhere to one belief firmly. Do not change your faith from day to day. Follow one path with firm faith. That is the Love principle.

Discourse on 25-12-1996, in the Sai Kulwant Mandap.

Grace takes away the malignity of the karma which you have to undergo; you know there are dated drugs, which are declared ineffective after a certain date; well, the eject of karma is rendered

null, though the account of karma is there and has to be rendered or, the Lord can save a man completely from the consequences, as was done by Me to the bhaktha whose paralytic stroke and heart attacks I took over, some months ago, in the Gurupuurnima week!

Baba