



UNITY IS DIVINITY

STUDY GUIDE





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Dedicated with love and reverence
at the divine lotus feet of
BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA
THE EMBODIMENT OF DIVINE LOVE

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FOREWORD

“Practice what I teach, that is enough. That is all I ask.”

–Sathya Sai Baba, 20 October 1963

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the universal teacher, the embodiment of love and truth, teaches us the way to reach the ultimate and supreme goal of human life – namely, to realise our innate divinity and the divinity inherent in all creation. In His love for us, He has given us two key aphorisms: Unity is Divinity and Purity is Enlightenment. To attain unity and purity, He has also given four practical divine commandments – Love All; Serve All; and Help Ever; Hurt Never.

Baba lent His sacred name to the Sathya Sai Organisation wherein, as brothers and sisters, we can come together to realize the goal of life easily by following these aphorisms and commandments. He said that we can reach the *summum bonum* of existence by following His teachings immediately, implicitly and completely, with sincerity and absolute faith.

Accordingly, the 11th World Conference of the Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO) will focus on two seminal teachings of Bhagawan, with the theme: **Unity is Divinity & Purity is Enlightenment**. To assist Sathya Sai devotees everywhere in their spiritual journey, two study guides, which are compilations of the essential teachings of Baba on Unity and Purity, have been developed.

Unity Is Divinity

The first Study Guide deals with the aphorism–Unity is Divinity. Swami says that just as we see different reflections of ourselves when we are surrounded by mirrors, the apparent multiplicity around us is just the many reflections of the one Self, which is our reality. Realisation of this fundamental unity leads to purity of mind. Through this purity, we are enlightened and realise our innate divinity and that everything and everyone is divine.

Baba says we are reflections of the one divinity, facets of the one immortal Self, and our essence is love—which is our own true nature, the *Atma* or divine Self. Although fundamentally One, unity manifests in many ways. At the fundamental level, all is God – *Isavasya Idam Sarvam*. The next level is unity in Nature – God is Nature; Nature is God. The one divinity is manifested in all of nature’s multiplicity, and humanity is an integral part of nature. Unity can also be manifested at the levels of the individual, the family, the Sathya Sai Organisation and society. Bhagawan reminds us that Man (*Vyakthi*) is part of Society (*Samashti*), which is part of Creation (*Srushti*), which is part of God (*Parameshti*). The Study Guide explores the linkages, principles and practices of seeing unity in all these manifestations.

Purity Is Enlightenment

The second Study Guide deals with the aphorism—Purity is Enlightenment.

Swami says that purity is essential for experiencing divinity and everlasting bliss. It is not possible to experience divinity unless we are pure – in fact, Swami says that all spiritual exercises, such as selfless service, devotional activities and education, are undertaken to purify the mind.

How to develop purity? This is the crux of the matter, and Swami beautifully dilates on the importance of developing purity at a young age, and the various aspects of external and internal purity. External purity refers to purity at the body level, which includes purity of food, speech and action and purity of the place and environment. However, it is not enough if the body is clean — purity of the heart and mind is essential and Swami's teachings on developing inner purity (*Antahkarana Suddhi*) are listed in this section. In His infinite compassion, Bhagawan recommends specific steps to develop ten types of purity in day-to-day life, and gives directives on spiritual practices such as *namasmarana*, selfless service, meditation, etc. and how they should be performed.

The Study Guide also deals with Swami's admonitions on the pitfalls in the process of developing purity. He warns us about the obstacles, as we undertake *sadhanas* such as devotional singing, service activities, study circles etc., and provides practical solutions to overcome them. He guides us to practice purity in thought, word and deed in our daily lives.

The Study Guide expounds on love as the basis for developing purity. The more we develop love, the more pure we become. Finally, there is a short discussion on what we can learn from the examples of various spiritual masters, sages and saints who achieved purity.

Conclusion

The simplicity and beauty of the practical advice given by the Lord is of lasting value to all devotees engaged in spiritual advancement, at all times, wherever they may be. It also has practical value for sustained peace and prosperity of society and the world, at large.

Let us study His nectarine words, understand them through discussions, study circles and workshops, and practice them sincerely. Let us resolve to move forward with unity, achieve purity and experience divinity in this very life.

Jai Sai Ram.

In the Loving Service of Sai,

Narendranath Reddy, M.D.

Chairman, Prasanthi Council

Sathya Sai International Organisation

WHAT IS UNITY?

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

The Basis for Unity

All beings are subject to *moha* or attachment but man is capable of breaking away and attaining *moksha* or liberation. This capacity for the transition from *moha* to *moksha* is once again an expression of the divine force within. Although divine capability finds greater expression in man than in other beings, Divinity is actually latent in all things in the Universe. It is this Omnipresence that provides a powerful undercurrent of unity to the otherwise apparent and bewildering diversity. What the eyes see is superficial; that which is true lies beneath.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000/Ch.7
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss2000/ss2000-07.pdf>

See the world with the vision of truth. All are one; all are essentially Divine. The *Vedanta* declares that the Atmic principle is the underlying unity in diversity. Bulbs are many but the same current flows in all of them. Likewise, the Atmic principle exists in all. Man's inability to understand this principle of unity is the cause of his ignorance. True humanness lies in understanding unity in multiplicity. You have to develop *samyak drishti* (correct vision) in order to develop unity. This was Buddha's first teaching.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.34/Ch.9: 7 May 2001
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume34/sss34-09.pdf>

Unity is not Combination, it is a Realisation

What does unity mean? It is not the combination of many; it is the realisation of oneness. When you have mirrors all around you, you see your many forms. These are all your different forms. But this is not the truth.

The one who asks the question and the one who gives the reply, both are one and the same. All are one. The same person appears in many forms. To consider these forms as different from each other is a mistake.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.42/Ch.19: 29 April 2009
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume42/d090429.pdf>

This vast gathering of people will appear to the spiritual intellect as a garland of multi-coloured flowers strung on the one single thread, God. Develop this vision; see the One behind the many; see the *Brahmasutra* — the string that runs through each flower.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.9: 4 April 1975
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-09.pdf>

When I am speaking in the microphone, you are listening to My voice. The speaker is only one but the same voice is heard by many ears. *Ekoham sarva bhutanam* (I am the only Reality in all beings), *Ekam Sat Viprah Bahuda Vadanti* (Truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.42/Ch.19: 29 April 2009
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume42/d090429.pdf>

The *Vedas* declare, *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman) and *Tat Twam Asi* (That Thou Art). Even these two *Vedic* declarations state two things: I and *Brahman*, That and Thou. True wisdom lies in seeing oneness. *Advaita darshanam jnanam* (experience of non-dualism is true wisdom). It is a sign of igno-

rance to see duality ignoring the underlying unity. Duality is not the truth. In this manner, Buddha enquired deeply and ultimately got the experience of “I am I”. That is true realisation.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/ss39-09.pdf>

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PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLE

The *Adhyatmic* (Spiritual) intellect recognises the Unity of creation and so, what the other person feels is felt by the individual too, to the same degree.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.9: 4 April 1975
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/ss13-09.pdf>

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EXAMPLES

Sun is only one. But we see its reflection wherever there is water, be it in rivers, tanks or in vessels. Pour water in a plate, and you can see the reflection of the Sun even in that water. Does it mean that the Sun is there in this water? No, it is only the reflection of the Sun.

In the same way, *Atma* is only one. The mind, the intellect, the subconscious mind, and the ego sense are like different vessels. Therefore, divinity is one.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.42/Ch.19: 29 April 2009
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume42/d090429.pdf>

WHY IS UNITY IMPORTANT?

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

To Remove Disorder and Conflict from the World

In the world today we see disorder, violence and conflict. The world is like a sick man afflicted with many ailments. What is the cure for these ills? Man must shed his selfishness, greed and other bad qualities and rise above his animal nature. He must cultivate charity (unselfishness) to achieve purity. Through purity of hearts, men will achieve unity, which will lead to Divinity. The mansion of human life should be built on these four bases.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.16/Ch.24: Sept 1983
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/sss16-24.pdf>

The strife and conflicts between human beings started the moment humanity forgot its fundamental unity. It is time that this trend is reversed and that the fundamental unity among humans is re-established. Along with the unity, there should be purity. Where unity and purity go together, there is Divinity. The combination of unity, purity, and Divinity will result in realisation of the Atma Principle (Atma Tatwa). The Upanishads, especially the Taitiriya Upanishad, dealt at length with this Atma Principle. If only one develops faith in this Atma Principle, one will succeed in all his endeavours.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.42/Ch.4: 21 February 2009
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume42/sss42-04.pdf>

There is unity in the entire creation of God, but mankind causes many divisions in it. Unity of the entire mankind is the need of the hour.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-08.pdf>

To Remove Evil Thoughts from Within Us

Through sacrifice you will come to know that your real nature is charity. Charity does not mean that you have given some money to an individual or an organisation. The removal of all of the evil thoughts that are within you is true charity. Charity will, in turn confer purity upon you. Once you have purity, there will be unity. And once you have unity, you can reach Divinity.

Sathya Sai Newsletter USA, Vol. 13, No. 4, p.20
<http://saibaba.ws/teachings1/selflessservice.htm>

To Expand Our Love

There is love in every one of you. What is the form of love? What is the nature of love? When we analyse carefully, we will realise that love is not limited to human beings alone but is present in all living beings. Every being is endowed with the quality of supreme divine love. One has to give up enmity and cultivate unity and purity in order to understand this truth.

Everything in this world is bound to change except the principle of love. Love is the only true and eternal path which will lead you to

Divinity. Divinity pervades each and every limb of the human body. It can be visualised only when we understand the principle of oneness.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.20: 22 Nov 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/sss37-20.pdf>

I always speak about the principle of love. I do not know anything other than love. When Divinity is uniformly present in all, how can you share your love with some and deny it to others?

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.20: 22 Nov 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/sss37-20.pdf>

To Follow True Culture

In order to attain Divinity, first of all, man has to cultivate unity. In unity lies the true culture. Unity is the ideal that man should strive to attain. Any mighty task can be accomplished through unity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.35/Ch.2: 19 January 2002
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume35/sss35-02.pdf>

To Live Up to Being a Human Being

Man is enveloped by five *koshas* or sheaths. They are: *annamaya kosha* (food sheath), *pranamaya kosha* (life sheath), *manomaya kosha* (mind sheath), *vijnanamaya kosha* (sheath of wisdom), and *anandamaya kosha* (sheath of Bliss). Whereas other beings can at best reach out to three *koshas*, man can easily go to the fourth and even beyond, if he makes the effort. This is what makes man so superior. It is through wisdom that man can perceive the underlying unity between the individual Self and the Universal Self. If this capability is not an expression of the Divinity within, then what else is it?

Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000/Ch.7
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss2000/ss2000-07.pdf>

To Attain Bliss

Ego and pomp have become rampant today. Desires have become limitless. Man's heart is filled with selfishness, and compassion has no place in it. That is the reason why he is unable to have the vision of the *Atma* and experience bliss.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.20: 22 Nov 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/sss37-20.pdf>

You can never attain bliss if you do not give up the feeling of diversity and cultivate the spirit of unity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-08.pdf>

To Transform Our Conscience into Consciousness

Man has a name and form, but *chaitanya* (Awareness) has no form. The *chaitanya* that is present in the human body is called "conscience". The all-pervasive *chaitanya* is called "consciousness". When the individual understands the principle of unity in diversity, the "conscience" gets transformed into "consciousness".

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.36/Ch.1: 1 January 2003
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume36/sss36-01.pdf>

To Experience Advaita (Non-Dualism)

Shankara knew that non-dualism requires intense spiritual effort of will to remove all trace of ego and all idea of duality from the mind of the human being. So, as a preparatory discipline to the dawn of the awareness of one's real unity with the substance of the universe, he taught the rules of yoga (the practices which lead to union with God, devotion and karma (selfless action). These, according to him, will brighten the intellect, cleanse the emotions, and purify the heart. Non-dualism is the awareness of the Divine in everything, everywhere, and in full measure.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.3/Ch.12: 28 April 1963
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume03/sss03-12.pdf>

PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLE

Fine Tuning Our Spiritual Practices

Spiritual practices such as *japa* (repetition of the name of God) and *tapa* (austerity) will not yield the desired result unless you recognise the principle of unity. Many people count the beads of the rosary. But what is the use of rotating the rosary if the mind also keeps going round the world? Understand that the mind is most important. You should have a steady mind. Only then will your life be redeemed. What is the use if your mind hovers around on each and every object like flies which hover on dirt as well as *laddus*?

Do not allow your mind to vacillate between good and bad, unity and multiplicity. Focus it on all that is good and realise the principle of unity. That is the royal road which will lead you to the experience of truth. On the other hand, if you allow your mind to follow the crooked path, it will not lead you anywhere.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/sss39-09.pdf>

All of you should imbibe the spirit of unity. Whomsoever you come across, say, "He is my brother, she is my sister." In this way, consider all as your brothers and sisters and conduct yourself with unity. All are children of God. Therefore, if at any time feelings of hatred develop between you and others, remind yourself that you are not separate from them. Consider that all are one, attain unity, and experience its bliss. Seeing unity in diversity is Divinity and true spirituality. Study of scriptures, performing rituals, doing worship, etc. do not signify true spirituality. Recognising the unity of the Atmic principle is true spirituality. When you realise this unity, you will earn divine grace.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-08.pdf>

Firming Up Our Faith

Selfishness will not go as long as man identifies himself with the body and does not realise the Divinity in him. Diversity in creation is an obvious fact. No two human beings, not even twins, are identical. But diversity should not lead to differences and conflicts. We must learn to see the unity that underlies the diversity. This unity is based on the Divinity that is present in everything in the universe. The realisation of this unity can come, only through firm faith in God.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.19/Ch.18: 27 August 1986
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume19/sss19-18.pdf>

Serving with the True Spirit

You can get real urge and inspiration to serve others only when you get rid of the identification with the body. When a man suffers from acute stomach pain, his eyes water. Why? Because, the various organs like eye, stomach, etc. are all of the same body. So too, when one man suffers, your eyes must shed tears and you must be urged to alleviate it. This will happen if you know that you and he are limbs of the self-same Divine Body.

The idea of difference (*bheda bhava*), arises on account of the ignorance of the Truth. When people get angry, they gnash their teeth, but they take care not to bite the tongue, for the tongue is theirs; if by chance, the tongue is bit, they do not knock the teeth out, for the teeth is theirs. So too, the sick man, the poor man, the suffering man, the illiterate man, the wicked man, are all limbs of the same body, of which we too are parts. The same current activates all. To realise this and to merge in that Unity is the purpose of this life in the human body.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.5/Ch.38: 26 Sept 1965
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume05/sss05-38.pdf>

You must feel the pain of others as your own; you must be happy when others are happy. That is the way to realise the unity of all. Above all, be vigilant; for, the fruits of *sadhana* (spiritual practice) may be destroyed by negligence. When the rains come, the earth is again green, for the seeds of grass are underground, though you thought the land was dry and fallow. *Satsang, satkarma*, etc. (good company, good deeds) have to be kept up, all through life.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.11/Ch.21: 18 April 1971
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-21.pdf>

Fostering Expansive Love

Let your vision be suffused with love. Vision filled with love is the hallmark of a true human being. All are one, be alike to everyone. You can understand unity in diversity only when you develop sacred vision. *Samyak drishti* (correct vision — seeing things as they really are) makes you realise the presence of Divinity in all.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.34/Ch.9: 7 May 2001
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume34/sss34-09.pdf>

Love all beings—that is enough. Love with no expectation of return. Love for the sake of love. Love because your very nature is love. Love because that is the form of worship you know and like. When others are happy, be happy likewise. When others are in misery, try to alleviate their lot to the best of your ability. Practise love through *seva* (selfless service). By this means, you will realise unity and get rid of the ego that harms.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.12/Ch.4: 5 March 1973
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume12/sss12-04.pdf>

You are always chanting, “Sai Ram, Sai Ram, Sai Ram,” but this alone will not develop devotion in you. You should imbibe the spirit of unity and chant the divine name to develop true devotion. If you have even a trace of true devotion in you, do good to others and live in harmony with them. Do

not hate anyone. Love all. If you have love and faith, you will develop nonviolence. Only then can you experience bliss.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-08.pdf>

You claim that you are a devotee, but what is the use when you have hatred, anger, jealousy, hypocrisy, malice, etc. in you? These evil qualities will ruin your life. Talk smilingly to others and develop the spirit of unity.

Always love all. When you love everyone in this manner, all evil qualities like hatred, anger, and greed will leave you. When you become free from these evil qualities, you will attain liberation easily.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-08.pdf>

Live without hating others, condemning others, and seeking faults in others. Vyasa, who wrote eighteen voluminous *Puranas* summarised all the *Puranas* in one single line of a small couplet: “Doing good to others is the only meritorious act; doing evil is the most heinous sin”.

When you feel you cannot do good, at least desist from doing evil. That itself is meritorious service! Do not try to discover differences; discover unity. Creeds, castes, country of origin may differ but the inner hunger is the same for all men. Understand that the purpose of life is to know the Embodiment of love, namely, God, through love, and demonstrate through your own Love that you have known Him.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.9: 4 April 1975
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-09.pdf>

Another directive I give is: Be more concerned with your own progress, your own correction than with the good and evil of others. There is time enough to worry about the good of others, after you have become good, yourself. But, try as far as

you can, to give *Ananda* (happiness) to others; desist from causing pain to others.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.11/Ch.21: 18 April 1971
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-21.pdf>

Visualising Divinity Everywhere

One whose heart is filled with love will see the manifestation of Divinity everywhere. It is a mistake to think that Nature is different from God. People give various names to Divinity based on their own experience. Jewels are many, but gold is one. Likewise, names and forms are different, but Divinity is one. Where does gold come from? It comes from the earth. Similarly, God manifests in human body. *Daivam manusha rupena* (God incarnates in the form of a human being). Hence, consider everyone as Divine.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.20: 22 Nov 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/sss37-20.pdf>

People today have become playthings in the hands of selfishness. One does not take even one step forward without selfishness. You can understand the divine Atmic principle only when you get rid of selfishness and tread the path of Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.26/Ch.42: 9 April 1993
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/d930409.pdf>

Think God, see God, hear God, eat God, drink God, love God. That is the easy path, the royal road to your goal of breaking ignorance and the realisation of your true nature, which is one with God.

Conversations With Sathya Sai Baba, p.153
http://media.radiosai.org/journals/Vol_05/01FEB07/02-conversations.htm

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EXAMPLES

Rama and Lakshmana

There was such a strong bond of love between Rama and Lakshmana as well as between Bharata and Shatrughna that they never left each other's company. See how much power this unity holds! Union is strength. When you don't talk to each other and don't develop unity, you achieve nothing.

Even if some feelings of enmity arise in you, try to adjust with each other. Devotees should conduct themselves gracefully with proper understanding and adjustment. Even if someone criticises the deity you worship, do not react to that criticism. Rather, think only that your deity has assumed the form of the critic. Praise and censure make no difference to God.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-08.pdf>

Mindset of Dhritarashtra

When man realises that the Divine is all-pervasive, there will be no room for acquisitive selfishness or divisiveness. When Dhritarashtra made a distinction between "his" sons and the Pandavas, he revealed his spiritual blindness and the ignorance of the unity that subsumes the multiplicity in the world.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.21/Ch.3: 9 January 1988
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-03.pdf>

Dog in a Room of Mirrors

A dog entered a room fitted with mirrors and saw many dogs in the mirrors. It was afraid to see so many dogs in the room, considering them as danger to its life. In order to escape from the situation, it jumped upon one of the mirrors, considering its own reflection in it to be another dog. As it did that, it saw that the dog in the

mirror also jumped upon it. In the process, the mirror broke.

Then, it felt that there was no other dog at the place and escaped from the room. It felt greatly relieved that it could save itself from so many other dogs. But where were so many dogs? It saw its own reflection in so many mirrors.

The same is the case with people today. If one sees all other forms as his own reflection in the mirror of the world, one will realise the principle of unity.

So, there are no such separate entities like father, mother, brothers, and sisters. But one develops worldly relationships due to one's delusion and says, "She is my sister, he is my brother, he is my father, she is my mother." These are all only physical relationships and not the relationships based on your divine reality. Try to understand that the same *Atma* is present in all. But you develop worldly relationships, forgetting the principle of the *Atma*.

You say, "She is my wife" but prior to the marriage, she is separate and you are separate. Only after the marriage do you say, "My wife, my wife." How you have developed this relationship of husband and wife?

It is due only to your delusion. It is because of delusion that one makes many mistakes and indulges in many undesirable activities.

Wherever you see, there is God and God is one. People say, "He is Rama, He is Krishna, He is Shiva, He is Vishnu." What does it mean? Does it mean that Vishnu, Shiva, Rama, and Krishna are separate entities? These are the different names of the same God. God appears before you in a particular form based on your own imagination.

When you contemplate on the form of Krishna as portrayed by artists like Ravi Varma, God will manifest before you in the form of Krishna. In the same way, God will appear before you in the form of Rama. But God is neither Rama nor Krishna. Both Rama and Krishna are you only. The forms of Rama and Krishna are nothing but your own reflections. When you say, "I want Rama", God manifests before you in the form of Rama. Similarly, when you say, "I want Krishna", He appears before you in the form of Krishna. All these forms are nothing but your own reflections.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.29/Ch.19: 29 April 2009,
<https://sathyasai.org/discour/2009/d090429.pdf>

UNITY AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL (VYASHTI)

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

Unity of Thought, Word and Deed

Heaven and hell are dependent on the conduct of people. The body is a home wherein reside three entities called *manas* (mind), *vak* (speech) and limbs (organs of action).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.28/Ch.2: 14 January 1995
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-02.pdf>

The harmony between thoughts, words and deeds is the first step in spiritual growth. The generation, expression and efflorescence of humanitarianism depends on the proper integration of thought, speech and action. It is the greatest virtue.

Lack of correlation between ideas, utterances and actions leads to self-deception, hypocrisy, and spiritual bankruptcy. In other words, the rapport between mental and physical activities is an essential ingredient of spiritual training.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1979/Ch.3:
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1979/ss1979-03.pdf>

Unity of thoughts, words, and actions is the hallmark of humanness.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.26/Ch.42: 9 April 1993
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/d930409.pdf>

In Vedantic parlance, this unity was described as *Trikarana Shuddhi* (triple purity). '*Manasyekam, vachasyekam, karmanyekam mahatmanam*' (Those whose mind, words and deeds are in complete accord are noble souls). '*Manasanyat, vachasanyat, karmanyanyat duratmanam*' (The wicked are those whose thoughts deviate from their words and actions).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.28/Ch.2: 14 January 1995
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-02.pdf>

When one's words are in accord with one's thoughts, they become truth. When the spoken word is translated into action, it becomes *dharma* (right action).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.27/Ch.9: 11 March 1994
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume27/sss27-09.pdf>

We say, "The proper study of mankind is man." Head, heart and hands should co-operate and function in harmony. This is 3HV. There is no human value greater than this.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.17: 29 Sept 2000
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/sss33-17.pdf>

PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLE

Synergising Thinking, Speaking and Acting

What you think, you should speak; what you speak, you must put into practice. That is real humanness. It is *Trikarana Shuddhi* (triple purity).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.14: 6 Aug 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-14.pdf>

How are you to decide in any particular case what is *dharma* and what is not? Make the *manas*, the *vak* and the *kayam* (thought, word and deed) agree in harmony. That is to say, act as you speak, speak as you feel.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.2/Ch.44: 5 Oct 1962
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume02/sss02-44.pdf>

The thoughts that emanate from the Indwelling Spirit (conscience) should find expression in speech. If the inner feelings are different from what is spoken, can the words be treated as truth or untruth? Clearly, it is untruth. When one's action is not in accordance with his words, it is *adharma* (unrighteous action). Truth and right action are expressions of the promptings from the depths of one's conscience.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.27/Ch.9: 11 March 1994
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume27/sss27-09.pdf>

Do not lay false to your own conscience. Do not cover your thoughts in a cloak of falsehood. Do not suppress your conscience by forcibly enslaving it and embarking on actions not approved by it. That is the *dharma* way of life.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.2/Ch.44: 5 Oct 1962
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume02/sss02-44.pdf>

Frequently doing right makes it easier and easier, habit grows into conscience. Once you are established in right conduct, you will automatically follow the right. What you do depends on what you are; what you are depends on what you do. The two are interdependent to a great degree.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.2/Ch.44: 5 Oct 1962
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume02/sss02-44.pdf>

How can one who is too weak to control himself be able to control others? There must be unity in word and deed. Only then can one achieve great things.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.23/Ch.23: 2 June 1990
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-23.pdf>

Love is very important. There should be love in your thought, word, and deed. There should be unity of thought, word, and deed.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.42/Ch.20: 19 Dec 2009
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume42/d091219.pdf>

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EXAMPLES

Adi Shankara

Shankara's teachings were spreading far and wide. The *pandits* of Benares arranged for a grand assembly of scholars in the holy city.

Many scholars had gathered there in all their regalia. Nothing was lacking in terms of ostentation at that assembly. Shankara entered in a simple way, wearing a *dhoti* covering up to his knees and a towel over his shoulder. On seeing him, the *pandits* seemed to feel that it was all a joke. Some *pandits* remarked: "He does not even wear a *rudraksha mala* (a garland of beads). A *pandit* should have an imposing figure. What is it that this stripling can tell us?" They addressed him thus: "We have come to know that you are proficient in all the *Vedas* and *Shastras*, an authority on grammar and logic and a great exponent of the *Advaita* (non-dual unity) doctrine."

Shankara then sang the *Bhaja Govindam* songs, pointing out the transitory nature of material wealth and exhorting all to give up worldly desires. He declared that *pandits* should be equal-minded and should give up the desire for wealth, which is the result of one's actions. "Give up this thirst for money. Develop the thirst for God," declared

Shankara in strident terms. Then he gave a superb exposition of the metaphysics of *Advaita* (non-dual unity).

All the *pandits* and their disciples were astonished at the performance of the young Shankara. They realised that here was one who was not only a great teacher but one who practised what he taught. This unity in thought, word and deed is the mark of greatness. Shankara was the very embodiment of unity and purity in thought, speech and action.

Many *pandits* got up and plied Shankara with questions. He answered them all with perfect ease. He declared that *Advaita* means oneness of the spirit and awareness of this oneness is true *jnana* (wisdom). Spiritual wisdom alone is true wisdom. *Pandits* today, he declared, are not having this realisation.

Shankara pointed out that though names and forms may be many, the Self is one only. That Self resides in everyone's heart. He exhorted the *pandits* to purify their hearts and follow the dictates of the conscience. Shankara made it clear that creeds may vary but God is one.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.29/Ch.43: 7 Sept 1996
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/sss29-43.pdf>

Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln is the best example for this. He thought of what he said, adhered to what he professed, and finally achieved what he believed. Hence this threefold unity is essential; otherwise humanity is lost.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.17: 29 Sept 2000
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/sss33-17.pdf>

UNITY AT THE SOCIETAL LEVEL (SAMASHTI)

Unity in the Family

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

The Connection between the Family and the World

A family is the most important functional unit in the world. If the family is running on sound lines, the world will also run smoothly. If the unity among family members suffers even to a small extent, the world will face the repercussions. Unity gives strength to the lives of the family members. Therefore, every family should strive for achieving unity and harmonious relationship among its members.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.36/Ch.4: 2 March 2003
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume36/sss36-04.pdf>

Peace must begin in the family, in the home. When there is understanding and harmony in the family, peace will spread to the community and from there to the nation and the world. Hence unity is the primary need today. Unity confers joy and peace.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.23/Ch.31: 20 Nov 1990
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-31.pdf>

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PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLE

Understanding and Adjustment

Understanding and adjustment between each other are very essential for the smooth functioning of any family. For example, when there is proper understanding between wife and husband, the wife will not mind even when the husband returns home very late from office. In fact, she will be anxiously waiting for him thinking that he may be busy in the office or is held up in a traffic jam.

But if there is no proper understanding between the two, even if there is a delay of just five minutes, there will be a fight between them. Adjusting will become easy only when there is proper understanding. Whether it is among students, teachers or members of a family, understanding is very essential.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.17: 29 Sept 2000
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/sss33-17.pdf>

Regard yourselves as brothers in a family. But do not stop there. Go beyond kinship to the *Atmic* unity... Shed completely all selfishness and self-interest and enter into service activities as the highest purpose of life. Service must become your life-breath. You must become ideal *sevaks* (servants) and set an example to the world.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.20/Ch.26: 19 Nov 19, 1987
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume20/sss20-26.pdf>

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EXAMPLES

Five Fingers

Anything can be achieved with unity. Take for example, the five fingers in the hand. It is only when the five fingers join together that we can accomplish any task. The Kuravas were one hundred in number, but they were not united for a good cause. Ultimately, what fate had befallen them? Similarly, Vali and Sugriva in the *Ramayana*. They were in fact brothers. Due to some differences, they developed hatred against one another. In the end, Vali met his end in the hands of Rama.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.36/Ch.4: 2 March 2003
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume36/ss36-04.pdf>

Shiva's Family

Shiva is the supreme exemplar of serenity! Shiva, according to the scriptures has a curious assortment of family members. Yet, each one is so calm and without agitation, that the divine family exists in peace and concord.

Shiva has snakes on His arms, round His neck, on His head, around His waist! One of his sons, Subramanyam rides on a peacock, which attacks snakes; Ganesha rides on a mouse, which the snakes feed on! Ganesha has the head of the elephant, which is the prey of the lion, which is the vehicle used by Durga, the consort of Shiva, who is so inseparable that she is the left half of the body of Shiva Himself. Nor is the lion friendly by nature to the bull, which Lord Shiva Himself has as His vehicle! Shiva has fire on the central point of His brow, and water, the river (Ganga) on His head, both are incompatible! Imagine how loving, how co-operative the various components have to be, to render life in Kailash smooth and happy!

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.11/Ch.25: 15 May 1971
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/ss11-25.pdf>

The Human Limbs

Each limb of the body has a specific role to perform. While accomplishing a bigger task, all limbs coordinate and work in unison. When the eyes spot a fruit on the top of a tree, the legs walk towards the tree, the hand picks up a stone and pelts at the fruit. When the fruit drops down, the fingers pick it up and put it in the mouth where it is masticated by the teeth and sent to the stomach. Thus, we see that all limbs of the body have to work in a coordinated manner to perform even a small deed. With such unity prevailing in the house, anything can be achieved.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.17: 29 Sept 2000
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/ss33-17.pdf>

The Pandavas

The brothers in a family should never fight; they must be united, like the Pandavas. Only by their unity could the Pandavas obtain the divine grace of Lord Krishna. Anything can be achieved with unity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.36/Ch.4: 2 March 2003
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume36/ss36-04.pdf>

UNITY IN THE SATHYA SAI ORGANISATION

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

Sai Organisations' Foremost Duty

The foremost duty of the Sathya Sai Organisations is to promote unity on the basis that all are sparks of the Divine and constitute one family. Without realising this basic truth, there is no use in rendering any kind of service. There can be no sacredness in service, if good thoughts and good feelings are absent. Service as an act of *dharma* can be offered only by one who is pure in heart, selfless and equal-minded towards everyone.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.20/Ch.26: 19 Nov 1987
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume20/sss20-26.pdf>

The Organisation must help people to realise the Unity behind all this apparent multiplicity which is only a super-imposition by the human mind on the One that is all this.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.20: 29 March 1976
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-20.pdf>

In the Sai Organisations, the primary requisite is unity and mutual trust. Only with unity can you promote the well-being of the world. If there is discord within the Organisation, how can you serve others? Make forbearance your ornament. Through love, eliminate your bad traits.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.26/Ch.31: 7 Oct 1993
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/sss26-31.pdf>

The sole object of Sathya Sai *Seva Samitis* (Sathya Sai centres), the very breath on which they thrive, is the consciousness of unity, of all as One. But the politics of proliferation attacks the *Samitis* (centres) too and ten men develop into eleven institutions. As in politics, here too, faction, competition, clamour for power and authority, greed for office raise their heads. People are not able to resist the infection of the atmosphere of elections and parties. Such tactics and tendencies will not fit in with associations of aspirants towards the goal of spiritual unity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.8/Ch.40: 1 Oct 1968
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/sss08-40.pdf>

The units of the Sai Organisation have to exemplify and promote the Unity in Diversity as taught by *Sanatana Dharma*. The very purpose with which the Organisation was formed is to stress on this Unity.

In this gathering, people from many countries, speaking many languages, belonging to many races, are present. They are all single-mindedly united in love for Sai and in love from Sai, in spite of differences in nationality, race, creed, colour and dress. This is My real task. This is the consummation of the yearnings of the ancient seers and sages of this land. Develop this One-

ness, this Unity in love, hold it ever before you as the ideal.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.14/Ch.55: 19 Nov 1980
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume14/sss14-55.pdf>

Only when five fingers of the hand come together can any task be accomplished. One may be the President of the Organisation. That does not mean that one can act according to one's whims and fancies.

Everyone is a member of the universal family. Similarly, all are great, be it the president, secretary, coordinator, or a member. But, to make the work successful, all should unite. All the wings of the Organisation — *samithi* (Sai Centres), *sevalal* (Service Wing), *bal vikas* (Education Wing), etc.— should work in harmony. Consider different wings as the fingers of the same hand and work unitedly. So, unity is very essential. You feel the stress and strain when you walk or work alone; not so when you are in a group.

*Let us all grow together, enjoy together,
Let us perform heroic deeds by
working together,
Let us live without any conflict.*

[Telugu Poem]

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.31/Ch.41: 20 Nov 1998
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume31/sss31-41.pdf>

Selfless Service

Service without idea of self is the very first step in the spiritual progress of man. For, it trains you to transcend all the distinctions artificially imposed by history and geography and realise that the human community is one and indivisible. Learn this truth; experience it in action. That is the duty of the *Seva Dal* Organisation (Service Wing).

How can a person be held 'divine' (as every man truly is), unless he has established himself in the sense of this Unity and shaped all his actions thereby? Man has been brought forth so that he may enjoy his

heritage, namely, the Bliss that comes of the realisation of the One. Any activity solely intended for the individual is, on that very account, barren.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.12/Ch.49: 16 Oct 1974
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume12/sss12-49.pdf>

The Sai Organisations should function on the basis that the indwelling Spirit in everyone is the same *Atma*.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.20/Ch.30: 24 Nov 1987
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume20/sss20-30.pdf>

Spirituality is not a business activity. Spirituality is a divine mansion. It is associated with unity. This unity in diversity alone will bring you happiness. I wish that you cultivate that principle of unity. It is only then that the service undertaken by you will acquire value and sanctity. There is no use polluting the sacred service activity with all sorts of differences.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.36/Ch.1: 1 January 2003
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume36/sss36-01.pdf>

An act dedicated as an offering to the God resident in all becomes as sacred as the highest *seva* (selfless service). Devote yourselves to this *seva*. Avatars (divine incarnations) of God are engaged in *seva*; that is why Avatars happen. Hence, when you offer *seva* to mankind, the Avatar will naturally be pleased and you can win grace. This is a great chance you have as members of the Sathya Sai *Seva Dal*. I hope you will make the best use of this chance. I bless you that you may.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.29: 6 March 1977
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-29.pdf>

Only those who can pour out compassion to fellowmen can claim a place in the Grace of God. This is also the highest spiritual discipline; it impresses on you the unity of the human community and the glory of God's immanence. May this discipline which the *Seva Dal* (Service Wing) has taken up with genuine delight spread all over

this country, and may the land be happy and prosperous. May the world have peace and happiness, and loving trust. That is My blessing. I want you to pray for the welfare and prosperity of all mankind.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.10/Ch.39: 25 Dec 1970
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/sss10-39.pdf>

Not Money, Morality is Important

People dodge the main issue of limiting their desires and instead, donate some token amount for the activities taken up by

Sathya Sai Organisations. Money was never desired by Sathya Sai Organisations. The main agenda of our Organisation is to ensure that people stand as ideals for others to emulate. We should change our mindset gradually to be able to achieve this. Sathya Sai Organisations should work for this with unity without any discriminations of caste, creed or nationality.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.21/Ch.31: 21 Nov 1988
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-31.pdf>



PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLE

Following the Example of Sai

Lack of unity can lead a country, community, or society to fragmentation. So, we should first and foremost achieve unity. Members of Sai Organisations should consider unity as their very life breath. They should not differentiate between people on the basis of caste, creed and nationality. Follow the example of Sai! When Sai Himself treats everyone equally, why not you? Never give scope for any differences.

True independence lies in fostering unity. Therefore, to develop sacred divine human values, you should have unity first.

Keep in view the prestige and honour of Sathya Sai Organisations. Whatever you do, be it good or bad, will reflect on Sathya Sai. To keep up the dignity of Sathya Sai, act in a truthful way. There should not be any differences or in fights among the members of the Organisation. Resolve all conflicts through love and understanding. Love is God; live in love.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.31/Ch.41: 20 Nov 1998
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume31/sss31-41.pdf>

Three Salient Qualities

What should be the characteristics of persons in the Sai Organisation? Their hearts should be cool like the moon. Their minds should be pure like butter. Their speech should be sweet like honey. It is only when you have these qualities, will you be a worthy member of the Organisation. When these three are present, there will be Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.28/Ch.33: 20 Nov 1995
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-33.pdf>

No Politics

Do not infect these Associations of Aspirants for My Grace with the virus of rivalry and factions.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.9/Ch.32: 20 Nov 1969
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume09/sss09-32.pdf>

Your activities should not be on the lines of political activities. By associating with various types of people, this turns into a political activity. I am not happy with that. Do come together for *bhajans* wherever you are. But do not allow separatism. All should be united.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.36/Ch.1: 1 January 2003
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume36/sss36-01.pdf>

Do not import into the Sathya Sai Organisation political faction-mongering, group formation, scandal spreading and vote catching in order to win positions of authority or oust others from them. Do not create splits and parties among the devotees in order to establish yourselves over others. Even when you are slandered, you should not lose balance. Put up with slander and scandalising talk. Anger is the chief enemy of *sadhana* (spiritual practice) as Vishwamitra discovered. One attack of anger exhausts three months of health and efficiency.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.11/Ch.24: 14 May 1971
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-24.pdf>

Acquire Love through Love

Acquire love through love. Only through love can unity in diversity be experienced. This kind of unity through love can be witnessed only in Prasanthi Nilayam and nowhere else.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.23/Ch.35: 24 Nov 1990
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-35.pdf>

Scatter the seeds of Love in dreary desert hearts; then, sprouts of Love will make the wastes green with joy, blossoms of Love will make the air fragrant, rivers of Love will murmur along the valleys and every bird, beast and child will sing the song of Love. Now, we have *Seva Dals* (Service Organisations) only in some villages and towns. We must have them in all villages and all towns, so that the service of man by man can lead to the discovery by man of the God that is his reality.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.10/Ch.23: 4 Oct 1970
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/sss10-23.pdf>

Differences should not divide us. Members of the Sai Organisation should foster such unity. Let there not be any conflicts. Live like children of the same family. Get a good name, so that there is no other organisation comparable to the Sai Organisation in the world. Develop love and work unitedly.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.31/Ch.41: 20 Nov 1998
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume31/sss31-41.pdf>

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EXAMPLE

Yudhishtira

Today there is a great need for everyone to dwell upon the axioms that Dharmaraja (Yudhishtira), the eldest of the Pandava brothers, kept before himself.

When Krishna asked him one day where his brothers were, he replied, "Some of them are in Hastinapura city and the others in the forest."

Krishna was visibly surprised. He said, "Dharmaraja! What has happened to your brains? All of you, the five brothers, are here in the forest as you know. None is in the city of Hastinapura!"

Dharmaraja replied, "Pardon me, Lord! We are 105 brothers in all." Krishna pretended

that the statement was wrong. He recounted the names of the five and queried the reason why he added a hundred more.

"My father's sons are five; his brother, the blind Dhritarashtra has a hundred sons. When we fight with them, we are five and they hundred. But when we don't, we are a hundred and five."

Thus when hatred and greed end in fighting, brotherhood is broken and hearts drift apart. Today this fractionalisation is evident in every field, including even our *Samitis* (organisational units)! As a natural result, anger, envy, faction and friction are fast increasing.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.14/Ch.42: 22 Nov 1979
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume14/sss14-42.pdf>

UNITY OF FAITHS



UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

Truth is One, But Faiths are Many

Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish. Let the glory of God be sung in all languages and in a variety of tunes. That should be the ideal. Respect the differences between faiths and recognise them as valid, so far as they do not extinguish the flame of unity.

Sathya Sai Baba, Light of Love p.64, 4 July 1968

The whole of mankind belongs to one religion — the Religion of Man. For all men God is the Father. As the children of one God all men are brothers. This Conference is therefore a family gathering. It is not a meeting of nationalities and religions. It is a meeting of minds. It does not relate to any one culture or philosophy. It is concerned with the divine way of life that is implicit in the teachings of all religions. Its purpose is to see Unity in Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.16/Ch.29: 30 Oct 1983
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/sss16-29.pdf>

There is only one God; He is Omnipresent. There is only one religion, the Religion of Love; there is only one caste, the Caste of Humanity; there is only one language, the Language of the Heart.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.11/Ch.54: 24 Dec 1972
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-54.pdf>

The *Vedas* teach that man should adore and worship God in gratitude for His benedictions. The Bible teaches that he should pray for peace and practise charity. The Quran would have man show mercy to the suffering and to surrender his will to the All-High. The Buddhist texts teach the lesson of detachment and sense-control. The *Zend Avesta* exhorts man to get rid of evil propensities and shine in his own innate glory. The guru has to imbibe all these qualities and then teach them to his pupils by precept and example.

Sri Sathya Sai Educare – Human Values,
6 June 1978, pp.12, 20-21

<http://sathyasai.org/files2008/wec/WEC2008Small.pdf>

Whom the Muslims adore as Allah, Whom the Christians adore as Jehovah, Whom the Vaishnavas adore as Phullabia, Whom the Shaivites adore as Shambhu, Who grants in answer to their several prayers, health, prosperity and happiness to all, wherever they may be, He, the One God, is the God of all mankind.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.23: 1 Oct 1976
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-23.pdf>

I have come not to disturb or destroy any faith, but to confirm each in his own faith — so that a Christian becomes a better Christian, the Muslim, a better Muslim, and the Hindu, a better Hindu.

Sathya Sai Baba, Light of Love p.64, 4 July 1968,

Religions are many, but the road is the same. Flowers are many, but worship is the same. Professions are many, but living is the same.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.2/Ch.8: 30 April 1961
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume02/ss02-08.pdf>

The Unitive Aspect of Creation

Religions may be different, but all of them lead man to the same goal—God. Garments may be different, but the fabric is the same. Ornaments may be various, but the gold is the same. Cows may be of different hues, but the milk is one. The electric bulbs may have varying wattage, sizes and colours, but the electricity that lights them all is the same.

Similarly, the *jivas* (individuals) and the animals are myriad and multiple, but the life-force in all of them is essentially the same. The realisation of this unitive aspect of creation is *jnana samathva* (equanimity of Self-knowledge).

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1979/Ch.29
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1979/ss1979-29.pdf>

Religions are many but goal is one.

Clothes are many but yarn is one.

Jewels are many but gold is one.

Cows are many but milk is one.

... I have been saying, "Religions are many, but goal is one."

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/ss41-08.pdf>

The Fundamental Truth of all Religions

The basic truth in all religions, irrespective of country or race, is one and the same. The philosophic ideas or the practices and methods of approach may vary. But the final objective and goal is only one. All religions proclaim the Unity of Divinity and preach the cultivation of Universal Love without regard to caste, creed, country or colour. Those who are ignorant of this basic Truth develop pride and ego because of their own religion. Such people are creating great confusion and chaos by fragmenting Divinity. To confine and divide the Infinite Divine into such narrow compartments is treason to the Divine. The basis for a spiritual, God based life is the indwelling Spirit — the *Atman* (Divine Self). The body is the home of Spirit.

Life in society should also conform to this spiritual basis. Man, however, bases his life on the belief that the body alone is real. It is to rid him of this error that he has to be taught about the Self. Mankind has to realise that both the individual and society are manifestations of the Divine Will and that the Divine permeates the Universe. Only by recognising this Truth can man give up his ego and lead a life of devotion to duty. Society should not become a cockpit of selfish individuals, but a community of divinely guided Individuals.

With the progress of science man imagines that he is the lord of the universe and he tends to forget the Divine. Although man today has gone to the moon and is exploring outer space, if he were to consider the innumerable mysteries and wonders in creation yet to be known, he will realise that these are far beyond the limited capacity of mind and intelligence. The more man discovers the secrets and mysteries of the cosmos, the more he will realise that God is the creator and motivator of all creation.

All religions are agreed upon this Truth. All that man can do is to strive through his limited intelligence and knowledge to understand the invisible and infinite Divine and learn to worship and adore Him.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.16/Ch.29: 30 Oct 1983
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/ss16-29.pdf>

All religions teach one basic discipline; the removal from the mind of the blemish of egoism, of running after little joys. Every religion teaches man to fill his being with the Glory of God and evict the pettiness of conceit. It trains him in methods of detachment and discrimination, so that he may aim high and attain liberation.

Believe that all hearts are motivated by the One and Only God; that all faiths glorify the One and Only God; that all names in all languages and all forms man can conceive, denote the One and Only God; His adoration is best done by means of love. Cultivate that *Eka-bhava* (attitude of Oneness), between men of all creeds, all countries and all continents. That is the message of love, I bring. That is the message I wish you to take to heart.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.8/Ch.22: 4 July 1968
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/ss08-22.pdf>

This country has been emphasising the fundamental unity of mankind; this truth can be fixed in the experience, by means of dedicated service. India is a garden of flagrant colours; it has a variety of faiths and creeds, all emphasising this Unity and this path of service, in order to realise it. All creeds here declare that everyone is brother or sister to everyone else — that is the message of every saint and sage in this land.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.10/Ch.39: 25 Dec 1970
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/ss10-39.pdf>

All religions exhort man to cleanse the heart of malice, greed, hate and anger. All religions hold out the gift of Grace as the

prize for success in this cleansing process. Ideas of superiority and inferiority arise only in a heart corrupted by egoism. If someone argues that he is higher or that his religion is holier, it proves that he has missed the very core of his faith. Leaves, flowers, fruits — these may be peculiar to each species; but pay attention to the trunk, and you will find similarity emerging. Likewise, *sadhana* (spiritual practice) will reveal the unity in the fundamental teachings of all religions. It is, of course, a hard path; but it is a path that everyone has to take now or later.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.9/Ch.1: 13 Jan 1969
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume09/ss09-01.pdf>

World Conflicts Based on Religions

Religions attempt to implant holy ideals in the heart of man, but man does not allow them to sprout and grow. His egoistic craving for power and competitive success has, in most cases, persuaded him to use religion as an instrument of torture and persecution.

Instead of uniting mankind in a common endeavour, it has become a system of walled enclosures, guarded by hate and fanaticism. So each religion is an armed camp sunk in self-aggrandizement, trying to wean others into itself and preventing defections from itself. Religion, therefore, is being condemned as the root of chaos and conflict. In spite of great progress in many other areas of life, religious animosity is aflame even today in many parts of the world.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.23: 1 Oct 1976
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/ss13-23.pdf>

It has to be emphasised that religion is not the root cause of this state of affairs. The factional fights and fanatic hatred are due to the unruly ego that is given free play. Religion strives to destroy just this vicious tendency. So it has to be supported, not condemned. What has to be condemned is

the narrow, perverted attitude of hating those who do not agree with you or who hold different opinions of the mysterious force that animates the universe.

Religious wars and conflicts breed in the slime of ignorance and avarice. When people are blind to the truth that the human family is one indivisible Unity, they grope in the dark and are afraid of strange touch. The cultivation of love alone can convince man of this truth that there is only one caste — the caste of Humanity, and only one religion — the religion of Love. Since no religion upholds violence or despises love, it is wrong to ascribe the chaos to religion.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.23: 1 Oct 1976
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-23.pdf>

All beings are images of the Universal *Atma*, in the names and forms they have apparently assumed. This is the truth, enclosed, elaborated and demonstrated in the spiri-

tual texts of India, which form the basis of *Bharatiya* (Indian) culture. The essence of all religions and faiths then, is this: the merging in this Unity. The goal of all spiritual endeavour is this: the merging in this Unity. The object of all enquiry is this: to cognise this Unity. But this patent fact is ignored, and persons create strife, anxiety and unrest for themselves and perpetrate horrors to hold forth the support, the disunity so dear to their fractioned minds.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.11/Ch.54: 24 Dec 1972
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-54.pdf>

Believe it or not, in the next 25 to 30 years, the entire human race will become one. People of all religions like Hindu, Muslim, Christian, etc. will be united. There will be complete unity in the world. It is from *Bharat* (India) that the spirit of devotion for God will spread to all other parts of the world. Treasure this truth in your heart.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-08.pdf>

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PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLE

Cultivating Mutual Respect

Whatever one's religion may be, everyone should cultivate respect for other faiths. One who does not have such an attitude of tolerance and respect for other religions is not a true follower of his own religion. It is not enough merely to adhere strictly to the practices of one's own religion. One should also try to see the essential unity of all religions. Only then will man be able to experience the oneness of Divinity. There should be no kind of coercion or compulsion in the sphere of religion. Religious matters should be discussed calmly and dispassionately. Do not entertain the feeling that one's religion is superior and another's inferior.

Conflicts on the basis of religion should be totally eliminated. To divide men on grounds of religion is a crime against humanity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.16/Ch.29: 30 Oct 1983
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/sss16-29.pdf>

Serving with Selflessness

The fulfilment of human life consists in the service that man renders, without any thought of return, in an attitude of selflessness. Service rendered in this spirit sheds light in the dark interior of man, it widens the heart, it purifies the impulses and confers lasting *Ananda*.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.10/Ch.39: 25 Dec 1970
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/sss10-39.pdf>

How did differences arise within each religion? After the passing of the founders of these religions, the followers violated the teachings of the founders and quarrelled among themselves on account of their selfish interests. With the passage of time, schisms developed in each religion and separate sects were formed. This is the result of individual, selfish motives and not the fault of the original founders.

People must first of all get rid of self-interest and self-centredness. They must develop love, forbearance and compassion. They must try to live harmoniously. Only then can we claim to be lovers of peace in the nation and of the well-being of the world. Service should be the guiding principle. There should be no room for any kind of differences in rendering service. When you wish to serve society, you must be prepared to sacrifice your individual and communal interests. Such sacrifice alone will sublimate one's life.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.23/Ch.36: 25 Dec 1990
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-36.pdf>

Engaging in Collective *Sadhana* (Spiritual Practices)

Learn to live in love and harmony with all the members of your society. This is the basic teaching of Christianity and Islam. Guru Nanak favoured community prayers in preference to individual prayer in isolation. When all people join in unison to pray to God, their prayers will melt the heart of God. In a large gathering there must be at least one who prays with a pure heart. That prayer will reach God. Hence, devotees should take part in community *bhajans*. They should participate in community service and involve themselves in the life of the community. This is the noblest path.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.23/Ch.36: 25 Dec 1986
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-36.pdf>

Sometime ago a devotional exercise called *Likhitha japam* (writing the names of the Lord as a form of worship) was started in Tamil Nadu. It was a collective (*Samashti*) exercise. Large numbers of devotees assembled at one place and wrote the name of the Lord as a (spiritual exercise). The joy to be derived from such a collective effort is indescribable.

The community *bhajan* in which all join to sing in unison is an equally blissful experience. This community singing was started by Guru Nanak. During community singing divine vibrations emerge sanctifying the whole atmosphere. The same result cannot be expected when one sings alone. Community singing promotes unity which leads to purity and Divinity. Today there is no unity, purity or Divinity. What mankind needs today is unity based on the spiritual oneness of humanity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.27/Ch.32: 18 Dec 1994
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume27/sss27-32.pdf>

UNITY IN SOCIETY

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

Fundamental to Human Life and Spirituality

Human life is based on *samata* (equality), *samaikyata* (unity), *saubhratrutvam* (fraternity) and *saujanyam* (nobility). They constitute the very foundation of the mansion of life. Life will be meaningless even if one of them is absent.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.35/Ch.10: 21 July 2002
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume35/sss35-10.pdf>

The most noteworthy characteristic of *Sanatana Dharma* is its concern for the well-being of humanity as a whole. This concern stems from the consciousness that all are children of one mother. There may be differences among people in mental and physical prowess, or in the doctrines they profess and in the knowledge and skills they have. Even in qualities there may be variations. But in respect of one thing there is no distinction. This relates to the process of creation which is common to all. It is this which must make us accept the equality of all beings. It is on the basis of this idea that the new society should be established.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.17/Ch.14: 13 July 1984
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume17/sss17-14.pdf>

Man is not merely a *Vyashti Jeevi* (individual), he is a *Samashti Jeevi* (part and parcel of society). *Vyashti* relates to *Jeevudu* (individual), *Samashti* (society) relates to *Devudu* (God). Man has to travel from the level of individual to the level of society. What is the path prescribed for this? Firstly, man has to recognize the common principle of *Jeevana Jyoti* (light of life) that is present in all. The principle of *Samatvam* (equality) can be experienced and practiced only when man understands the principle of *Ekatvam* (unity).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.35/Ch.10: 21 July 2002
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume35/sss35-10.pdf>

Society is very important. You are born in society, you grow up in society and you die in society. You can never be away from society even for a moment. Get a good name in society. When you are one with society, it is true unity. This unity will lead you to purity. This purity will in turn take you to Divinity. Unity, purity and Divinity. Where there is no unity, enmity enters. Today there is no unity, no purity and no Divinity in society. There is only enmity. So, there is need for unity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.26/Ch.42: 9 April 1993
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/d930409.pdf>

Embodiments of Love! Many people perform different types of spiritual practices such as *japa* (repetition of the Name) and *dhyana* (meditation) without recognising the principle of unity. The tongue utters the name of Rama but there is a void in the heart. This is just waste of time. Instead of wasting your time in such a manner, undertake social service, seeing God in everyone. That is true spiritual practice. Recognise the innate Divinity of all beings.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/ss39-09.pdf>

Spirituality is not living alone in solitude. Spirituality connotes having equal vision for all, living among all, and serving all with a feeling of oneness (*Ekatma bhava*).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.30/Ch.34: 26 April 1997
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/d970426.pdf>

All are one, be alike to everyone.

There is only one caste, the caste of humanity.

There is only one religion, the religion of love.

There is only one language, the language of the heart.

Develop this true feeling. Keep off all differences. Develop love. Develop tolerance (*sahana*). Move together. Lead your life in unity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.26/Ch.42: 9 April 1993
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/d930409.pdf>

Essential to Remove Discord and Suffering

What is the cause for the miserable plight of the world today? It is by developing discord and differences that mankind has fallen low. It is by disregarding the unity of the spirit that man has gone down to the deepest depths. The want of peace in the world can be traced to the selfishness of man.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1993/Ch.10: May '93
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1993/ss1993-10.pdf>

Unity of the entire mankind is the need of the hour. When you develop unity, there will be purity in your heart. Where there is purity, there is divinity. Unity, purity, and divinity are closely interlinked and interdependent. But people today are drifting away from unity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.8: 31 May 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/ss41-08.pdf>

The cause for man's suffering is that he has constricted his love to himself and his family. He should develop the broad feeling that all are his brothers and sisters. Expansion of love is life; contraction of love is death. All are the children of God. All are sparks of the Divine. Lord Krishna declared in the *Bhagavad Geeta: Mamaivamso jeevaloke jeevabhutha sanathana* (the eternal *Atma* in all bodies is a part of My Being). So, man should have the broad feeling to identify himself with everyone. Humanity can never progress without broad feelings.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.32 Pt. 1/Ch.8: 25 March 1999
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume32/ss32p1-08.pdf>

Ignoring the unity of all mankind in the *Atma* (Divine Self), man relishes in quarrels and factions. He classifies some among his contemporaries as his friends and some as his foes. He manufactures duality where basically there is only unity. It is his own likes and dislikes, prejudices and passions that is reflected back, that creates all this reaction of love and hatred, all this resounding echo of factiousness and friction. Friendship and enmity arise from your heart; they are labels fixed by you, not marks which other people are born with. The same person is the thickest friend of one man and the mortal enemy of another — both because of his one act or one word!

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.13: 11 May 1975
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/ss13-13.pdf>

The *Vaiseshika* philosophy asserted in unmistakable terms that you are the author of the pain and the pleasure that you undergo in the world. Do not ask the world how much it contributed to your joy but ask yourself how much you contributed to the welfare of the society. The *Vaiseshika* philosophy asserts the duty which we owe to society. Hence it is imperative on the part of man to know how much his acts and deeds contribute to the welfare and well-being of mankind.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1993/Ch.10: May '93
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1993/ss1993-10.pdf>

The Secret of Social Progress

Instead of realising his innate Divinity, man is caught up in the prison house of his own material achievements. Greater than all his scientific and technological progress is man himself as a being endowed with the divine consciousness. By choosing to regard only the material world as real, it may be possible to bring about the prosperity of a scientific, technological and materialistic society for a time.

But if, in the process, human selfishness, greed and hatred develop, as they usually do, society will destroy itself. If, on the contrary, the essential Divinity of man is realised, mankind can build up a great society based on unity and on adherence to the divine principle of Love. This profound change must begin in the minds of individuals.

It should be realised that material comfort is not the sole aim of social living. A society in which the individuals are concerned only about material welfare will not be able to

achieve harmony and peace. Even if it is achieved, it will only be a patched-up harmony for, in such a society, the strong will oppress the weak. Nor will an equal distribution of the bounties of nature ensure anything but a nominal equality. How will the equal distribution of material goods achieve equality with reference to desires and abilities? Desires have, therefore, to be controlled by developing the spiritual approach and diverting the mind from material objects to the Divine seated in each one's heart.

Once the Truth of the Indwelling Spirit (the one *Atma* in all) is recognised, there dawns the awareness that the world is one family. One is then filled with Divine Love which becomes the driving force for all of one's actions. Man turns away from the pursuit of endless desires to the search for peace and equanimity. By converting the love for material things into Love of God one experiences the Divine. This experience is not something beyond man. It is, in fact, a part of the inherent nature of man. It is the secret of his humanness and his Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.16/Ch.29: 30 Oct 1983
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/ss16-29.pdf>

When individuals change, society will change. And when society changes, the whole world will change. Unity is the secret of social progress, and service to society is the means to promote it. Everyone therefore should devote himself to such service in a spirit of dedication.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.16/Ch.29: 30 Oct 1983
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/ss16-29.pdf>

PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLE

Developing Tolerance and Mutual Respect

“Nations are many, the earth is one. Beings are many, but breath is one.” This truth has to be recognised. All the resources of Nature like air are available to all irrespective of nationality or creed or race. This is the unity in diversity that has to be realised. Out of unity comes purity. All should seek to live as brothers and sisters. No one should criticise any nation, faith or culture. When you cultivate this broad outlook, your culture will be respected by others. It is this spirit of unity that the world needs today.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.28/Ch.19: 11 July 1995
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-19.pdf>

Develop this true feeling. Keep off all differences. Develop love. Develop tolerance (*sahana*). Move together. Lead your life in unity.

When the individual carries out their duties without fail, their family will progress. In the word ‘*samaja*’, ‘*sam*’ means that which you have attained and ‘*aja*’ means pure. *Samaja* (society) means acquiring purity. When society progresses, we also progress. Perform all actions and spiritual practices, keeping the welfare of society in mind.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.26/Ch.42: 9 April 1993
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume26/d930409.pdf>

Say whatever is necessary; do not talk too much. Speak only the truth. Do not indulge in argumentation on what is untruthful. It is sheer ignorance to debate upon something about which you have no knowledge because such futile debate gives rise to hatred. It does not promote unity. Vain argumentation will lead to enmity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.29/Ch.56: 21 June 1996
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/d960621.pdf>

The village is to the villagers what the body is to the individual. Every organ in the body functions in cooperation with every other part. If the footsteps on a thorn, the eye feels the pain and sheds tears. If the eye notices a thorn or stone on the road, it warns the foot to avoid it. Villagers should develop the same sense of unity and share their joys and troubles as one organic body. There is nothing you cannot achieve with unity as your strength.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.19/Ch.09: 22 May 1986
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume19/sss19-09.pdf>

My desire is that whenever any slight misunderstanding arises among you, you must set it right among yourselves, exercising love and tolerance. You should not plunge into a passion over it and let things blaze into a quarrel or a factional split. Recognise that you are engaged in the exercise of widening your hearts, of reaching the Feet of the Lord through the expression of love. Unless you cultivate love, tolerance, humility, faith and reverence, how is it possible for you to realise God?

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.10/Ch.32: 20 Nov 1970
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/sss10-32.pdf>

When people develop anger or hatred against Truth, they keep themselves away from it. Irrespective of their love or hatred, we should always love them. People keep a distance from one another due to differences of opinion. In fact, you are not different from others. Today, they may appear to be different, but tomorrow they may come close to you. All are brothers and sisters! Hence, all should live like brothers and sisters with love and unity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.16: 9 Oct 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-16.pdf>

You are the mirror of society. Think always of the welfare of society. When others are happy, you should feel happy. When others are unhappy, help them to become happy.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.30/Ch.34: 26 April 1997
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/d970426.pdf>

Discovering Oneness

Selfless service alone can achieve unity of humankind. Only through unity can humanity attain Divinity. Hence service is very essential to understand this unity in humanity. People are under the impression that service means merely to help the poor, the weak and forlorn. It is a big mistake to think that you are rendering service to others. In fact, you are serving yourself because the same principle of the *Atma*, the same Principle of Love, is present in all. All human beings are essentially one. The differences lie only in their feelings. So, a person should change his or her feelings and try to recognise the truth that the same Divinity is immanent in all. Only then can there be transformation in the human being.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.19: 20 Nov 2000
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/ss33-19.pdf>

Move in society with equanimity, keeping the focus of your mind and heart on God. Live with the awareness and vision that all are one only. Do not think that you are separate from others. Only then can you experience Divinity. Develop love for God and achieve oneness.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.30/Ch.34: 26 April 1997
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/d970426.pdf>

In the carrying out of sacred tasks in the service of the Divine, the *Vedic* prayer has indicated the spirit in which they should be done. "Let us live in amity. Let us move together. In harmony and understanding let us live together. Let us promote unity and friendliness." If only we have unity,

how much joy can we experience! Unity is strength. To develop unity, you must have the consciousness of spiritual oneness.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.23/Ch.35: 24 Nov 1990
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/ss23-35.pdf>

Serving Incessantly

Man expects much from society without contributing anything to it. How can you expect good from society without your doing any good to it? If you strive for the peace and upliftment of society, then society too will strive for your peace and upliftment.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1993/Ch.10: May '93
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1993/ss1993-10.pdf>

Attain oneness by doing service to society. You will find divine bliss in oneness. When you travel alone, you may be afraid and may have to face several difficulties. But when you travel with ten people, the strength of all of them will be yours. To experience the strength of unity is bliss (*ananda*).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.30/Ch.34: 26 April 1997
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/d970426.pdf>

Everyone must have a *diksha* (firm resolution) that as long as life lasts, he will dedicate himself to the service of his fellowmen. Thereby he will realise his oneness with all mankind. Such a feeling of unity will lead to God-realisation. Service is the only way to get rid of selfishness and self-centredness. A devotee who has resolved upon such service is dear to the Lord.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.23/Ch.31: 20 Nov 1990
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/ss23-31.pdf>

To remove the evil of egoism, service is the most efficient instrument. Service will also impress on the person doing service, the Unity of all mankind. He who dedicates his time, skill and strength to service, can never meet defeat, distress or disappointment, for service is its own reward. His word will be ever sweet and soft, his gestures ever

revered and humble. He will have no foe, no fatigue, no fear.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.13/Ch.22: 28 Aug 1976
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/ss13-22.pdf>

Love is the gift of God to every human being. It should be utilised for the service of society. Unity is very essential for the progress of community. A person should share his or her love with others. Only then will he or she have the right to be a part of society.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.36/Ch.19: 22 Nov 2003
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume36/ss36-19.pdf>

Believe that Love is God, Truth is God. Love is Truth, Truth is Love. For it is only when you love that you have no fear, for fear is the mother of falsehood. If you have no fear, you will adhere to truth. The mirror of *prema* reflects the *Atma* in you and reveals to you that the *Atma* is universal, immanent in every being.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.1/Ch.11: 27 July 1953
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume01/ss01-11.pdf>

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EXAMPLE

The Story of the Five Fingers

Our hand has five fingers and each of them has a specific duty assigned to it. All the fingers work in unison and harmony while performing a task.

Once an argument ensued among the five fingers of the hand as to which finger among them is the great. The thumb claimed, "It is not possible to undertake any work without me. Hence, I am the great."

Then the index finger smiled and said, "Look here, Oh thumb! How can you perform any task without my support? Moreover, I am used as pointer to identify individuals. Hence, I am greater than you."

The middle finger intervened and said, "There is no point in what you say. I am the tallest among all the fingers. Two of you on one side and two on the other are serving me as ADCs (*aide de camps* – assistants). Hence, I am the greatest."

Then the ring-finger said, "I feel like laughing at your ignorance. Don't you know that people adorn me with gold rings studded with precious stones like diamond, emerald, topaz, etc.? Hence, I am your king."

In the end, the little finger said, "I always lead from the front when it comes to teaching a lesson to someone and punishing the guilty. Hence, I am your leader and you have to follow me."

As the fingers were arguing among themselves in this manner, the heart intervened and said, "Oh ignorant ones! Each one of you is as important as the other. One cannot perform any task if there is no unity and harmony among you. In fact, you represent the five human values which are like five life-breaths of a human being."

Hearing these words of wisdom, the five fingers realised their mistake and bent their head in shame. A deep enquiry reveals that the heart is the greatest of all. Body, mind and intellect are mere instruments. Hence, one should follow the advice of the heart in all his endeavours. Understand that all are one and each one is equally important. Do not become egoistic thinking that you alone are very important. Do not waste your precious time in vain argumentation. Be friendly with all and face the challenges of life with unity and harmony.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.38/Ch.15: 17 Aug 2005
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume38/ss38-15.pdf>

UNITY AT THE CREATION LEVEL (SRUSHTI)

Unity in Nature

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

Nature – God’s Vesture

Nature is God’s vesture. The Universe is the “university” for man. Man should treat nature with reverence. He has no right to talk of conquering nature or exploiting the forces of nature. He must proceed to visualise in nature its God.

Sathyam Sivam Sundaram, Vol. 4, p.55
<http://vahini.org/downloads/sathyamsivamsundaram-IV.html>

To God all objects in the universe are alike because they are manifestations of the Divine. The scriptures declared about this Divine manifestation — *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma* (All this verily is *Brahman*). Hence, whosoever worships the Supreme Lord should also worship Nature (*Prakriti*). He should love and adore Nature because Nature is not different from the Supreme Self. Nature is the effect and God is the Cause.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.28/Ch.8, 9 April 1995
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-08.pdf>

The entire creation is the expression of the will power of God. Nature is a manifestation of the supreme divine. Man is born to manifest and reflect Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.30/Ch.17: 19 July 1997
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/sss30-17.pdf>

Realisation that the entire universe is nothing but *Brahman* (God), which is the only Reality. When there is this realisation of *Brahman*, the one without a second—even the mind ceases to exist. It is only the operations of the mind that result in the perception of diversity in the universe. When oneness is experienced, there is no mind at all. All is *Brahman* in that state of consciousness. There is room only for *prema* (love) in this state. That love is truth.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.29/Ch.31: 31 July 1996
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/sss29-31.pdf>

You have to realise that Nature is a manifestation of God. Hence, Nature should not be ignored. Nature is the effect and God is the cause. You should recognise the immanence of the Divine in the entire cosmos.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.29:22, 20 June 1996
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/sss29-22.pdf>

Seeking Within

Man today imagines that he knows everything about Nature and the Universe. But of what use is all this knowledge if man does not know himself? It is only when he understands himself that he will be able to know the Truth about the external world. Man's Inner Reality cannot be known by exploring the world outside. When he turns his vision inward and realises his essential Divinity, he will acquire an equal mindedness towards all beings. Out of that feeling of oneness he will experience the Bliss that passeth understanding.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.16/Ch.29: 30 Oct 1983
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/sss16-29.pdf>

Whatever you see in this world is the manifestation of truth. When Divinity is all-pervasive, how can there be untruth? But you are unable to realise the all-pervasiveness of Divinity. Turn your vision inward and

observe absolute silence. Only then can you realise the all-pervasive Divinity. Mere intellectual exercise will not help you in this regard. Whatever you see, hear and experience is the manifestation of Divinity. Only God exists everywhere.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.20: 22 Nov 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/sss37-20.pdf>

All that you see in the external world, from microcosm to macrocosm, is present in you. The mountains, oceans, cities, villages, etc., are present in your heart. All beings are in you. You are the basis of everything. Such being the case, what is it that you want to see in the external world? How foolish it is on your part to get carried away by the reflection outside, ignoring the reality within!

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.35/Ch.10: 21 July 2002
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume35/sss35-10.pdf>

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PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLE

Worshipping God through Revering Nature

I shall tell you of one form of worship which will endow you with divine strength. Godhead expresses itself initially as the five elements — the sky, the wind, the fire, the water, and the earth. All creation is but a combination of two or more of these in varying proportions... Now, since these are saturated with the divine, one has to use them reverentially and with humility and gratefulness.

So, efficient use of these is itself a form of worship. The body is equipped with mechanisms which ensure a steady degree of warmth, beyond which or beneath which man cannot be healthy and active. Nature is in essence Divinity itself, *lshavasyam*

idam sarvam: All this is divine. *Vasudevasarvamidam*: All this is Vasudeva, God. So, tread softly, move reverentially, utilise gratefully.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.6/Ch.28: 15 Oct 1966
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume06/sss06-28.pdf>

Learning from Nature

Nature is your school, your laboratory, the gateway to liberation, and the panorama of God's manifold majesty. Seek to know the lessons it is ready to teach; all things in Nature are as Brahman (Divine) as you are. So, any act is Divine, and any work is Divine worship; build the mansion of your life on the strong foundation of the faith that all this is *Brahman* (Divine).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.10/Ch.23: 4 Oct 1970
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/sss10-23.pdf>

Understand the principle of oneness and install God in your heart. Without the principle of unity, there can be no multiplicity. If you do not understand unity, you cannot understand the multiplicity of Nature. Nature is the best preacher. Follow the ideals demonstrated by this preacher with *preeti* (love).

The more you develop love, the sooner you can see God. Body attachment is the cause of all differences. You will understand and experience unity in diversity only when you give up body attachment. Once you are free from body attachment, you can experience God in a moment. Whatever you see is the manifestation of God. The principle of unity in diversity is Divinity. But you are unable to understand and appreciate this truth. In order to understand this truth, there should be total transformation in your feelings. As is the colour of the glass, so is the colour of the scene outside. Remove the colour glasses of body attachment and see the reality.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.20: 22 Nov 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/sss37-20.pdf>

All the resources of Nature like air are available to all irrespective of nationality or creed or race. This is the unity in diversity that has to be realised. Out of unity comes purity. All should seek to live as brothers and sisters. No one should criticise any nation, faith or culture. When you cultivate this broad outlook, your culture will be respected by others. It is this spirit of unity that the world needs today.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.28/Ch.19: 11 July 1995
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume28/sss28-19.pdf>

UNITY AT THE ALMIGHTY LEVEL (PARAMESHTI)

Unity is Divinity

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UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

Man is God

The Supreme Self is the same as the Individual Self, The Individual Self is also divine. He who realises this unity is truly enlightened.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000/Ch.7
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss2000/ss2000-07.pdf>

All of you are embodiments of Divinity. Your forms are divine. You and God are one. You are not different from God. Experience this unity. *Ekam sath* (Truth is one). Unity is truth. Unity is Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.19: 25 Oct 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/ss37-19.pdf>

You have to ponder over the meaning of *Soham* (I am That). What are you? You are That; you are a spark of the Divine. You are not the body, senses, mind, intelligence, etc., with which you now identify yourselves. You are God, only caught in deluding yourselves that you are bound by this body. *Sadhana* (spiritual practice) of this sort is a must for all Sai workers, for that alone can give them *shanti* (peace) and the other most valuable gift, *prema* (love). It will change their vision and enable them to witness unity where formerly they were confounded by diversity—diversity of language, religion, nationality, creed, colour and caste.

Sri Sathya Sai Educare – Human Values,
6 June 1978, pp.12, 20-21
<http://sathyasai.org/files2008/wec/WEC2008Small.pdf>

Brahman and *Aham* (I) are one and the same. Undertake *sadhana* (spiritual practice) to realise the oneness of these two. That is the 'Pathway to God'. If you wish to meditate on God, never allow your thoughts to be disturbed by worldly objects. You meditate on your own real nature, which is Divinity. In that Divinity, everything else is contained. If you thus meditate on your own innate Divinity, you will realise your unity with Divinity. In fact, that unity is Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.19: 25 Oct 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/ss37-19.pdf>

God has no specific name. He is present in man in the form of *Atma*. What does *Atma* mean? It means love only. It is love that unites all. If you imbibe this principle of unity, then all will become one. When you attain this unity, you will have purity. When you have purity, then *Atma Tatwa* (principle of the Self) will manifest in you. Therefore, you must have unity to attain Divinity. I and you are one. God and you are one. God is not anywhere separate from you. You should develop the feeling that you yourself are God. When you say, 'I', it represents unity. You cannot estimate the bliss that is derived from unity. All are one.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.40/Ch.21: 15 Dec 2007
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume40/ss40-21.pdf>

It is only when the names and forms are set aside, and the underlying source is identified that it is possible to recognise the truth. When you are able to realise this truth, you will find that the principle 'I' underlies everything in the universe as the principle of unity. We have to recognise that 'I' principle which is universal. The only aspect you have to realise is 'I am *Brahman*.'

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.37/Ch.25: 20 Oct 2004
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume37/d041020.pdf>

The *Bhagavad Geeta* begins with Dhritarashtra's reference to *Dharma kshetre Kurukshetre*. "*Dharmakshetra*" is the seat of *Atma*. "*Kurukshetra*" is the body, which is the source of all actions. It is the combination of the *Atma* and the body the *Kshetra-Kshetrajna* relationship — which explains the human predicament. By forgetting the *Atma* and involving himself in "*Deha Dharma*" (the claims of the body), man is subjecting himself to endless suffering. He grieves about things which are not worth lamenting and does not grieve for the things that ought to make him sad. This state of delusion is the result of his identifying himself with the body and forgetting his inherent Divinity. If he realises that he is one with the Omni-self, he will have no cause for sorrow. He will be aware that Truth and Bliss are inherent in his spiritual reality.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.21/Ch.3: 9 January 1988
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-03.pdf>

The divine nature of that Lord of the Lords is thus packed in this physical body. Hence, do not feel contented with this external package. Divinity is immanent in you. You are God, verily! God is all-pervading. Hence, you are also all-pervading. Divinity is present in you as well as in all living beings.

If you wish to have the vision of God, you must lead a pure, unwavering, and selfless

life. All the diversity that you see in this objective world is a waste! Hence, remove this diversity and develop unity. Where there is unity, there will be purity. Where there is purity, there Divinity will manifest.

In fact, you are not one individual. There are three individuals in you (i) the one you think you are, (ii) the one others think you are, and (iii) the one you really are. You are an embodiment of the Divine *Atma*, verily. Not realising this truth, you are leading your life-giving importance to the body, mind, and intellect. All these are bound to perish one day or the other.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.27: 16 Aug 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/d0608016.pdf>

The Non-Dualistic Experience

Jnana in Vedantic parlance has been defined as "*Advaita Darshanam*" (recognising the One without a second). That is to see the One in the many Unity in diversity. Here in this assembly are present many thousands of persons. Their names and forms are multifarious. But you have to recognise that the *Atma* Principle in all of them is one and the same. It is not enough to say this in words. You must make it a living experience. Only then can one experience enduring *Ananda* (bliss). Such a person alone can be called a *Jnani* (a Knower of the Supreme).

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.22/Ch.30: 4 Oct 1989
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume22/sss22-30.pdf>

The state of non-dualism is contained in the Principle of Love alone. But the human being, carried away by body attachment and physical relationship, fragments his or her love in various ways. This cannot be called love in the true sense of the term. As Swami repeatedly stresses the need to cultivate love, some people may wonder as to what is the form of love. The answer is: *Prem Īshwar hai; Īshwar prem hai* (Love is God; God is Love). Love is the fundamental

basis of everything. *Atma*, *Brahma*, *hridaya* (the Heart), *uniki* (existence) are synonyms of love. Love is *Atma*. Love is *Brahma*. Everything is suffused with love. Then how can we describe the form of love? The same Principle of Love exists in one and all. Once you understand this principle of unity, there will be no scope for hatred.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.10: 16 July 2000
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/ss33-10.pdf>

The *Vedas* are the earliest testaments to the victory of man over himself, his discovery of the underlying Unity in all creation, and his pulsating contact with the truth that unifies. They declare, God is *Sarvabhuta antharatma* (God is the inner Reality of all beings), *Ishavasyamidam sarvam* (All this is enveloped by God), *Vasudeva sarvam idam* (All this is God, Vasudeva).

The Divine principle that is in everyone is like the electric current that illuminates the bulbs before Me here, of different colours and different candle powers. The same God shines in and through everyone, whatever be the creed, colour, tribe or territory. The current animates and activates all bulbs; the Divine animates and activates all. Those who see difference are deluded; they are befogged by prejudice, egoism, hatred or malice. Love sees all as one Divine family.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.8/Ch.22: 4 July 1968
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/ss08-22.pdf>

Surrender does not mean that you are vanquished and that the other one has emerged victorious. In spirituality, it means that the two merge into one – there is nothing like giving or receiving. Recognise the Cosmic Unity that pervades everywhere. Recognise that this substratum of unity is nothing but God. You will then automatically experience God.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000 Ch.11: 24 May '00
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss2000/ss2000-11.pdf>

There is only one principle of love in you. But you are dispersing it in diverse ways. You think that there are various forms of love. It is only your imagination. Make efforts to understand the principle of spirituality. Have firm conviction that you are the embodiment of *Atma* and there is no second entity in this world. All worldly relationships such as mother, wife, and children are of your own making. It is only a temporary relationship but not the reality. Do not get deluded by such worldly relationships. Develop firm faith in your 'real nation' (i.e., the *Atma*). Do not believe in the world. Believe in your Self. Have firm conviction that God is everywhere. With hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth, and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe...

The devotee is ever conscious that the universe is a manifestation of the Divine and is permeated by the Divine. His life is based on the recognition of the immanence of God in everything. This state of mind is called *Prema Advaitam* (unity in Love). Through this love the devotee experiences his oneness with the Divine... Unremitting love of the Lord is everything for him. Such devotion is known as '*Ananya Bhakti*' (total devotion to One and One only.)

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.19/Ch.1: 19 January 1986
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume19/ss19-01.pdf>

PRACTISING THE PRINCIPLE

Removing Thoughts of Separateness

You should not think that you are separate from God. One who realises this principle of unity is a true human being. Do not limit worship of God to festival days alone. Each and every moment should be spent in the contemplation of God.

You may think, 'If every moment is spent in the contemplation of God, then how is it possible to do our work?' Do not distinguish between your work and God's work. Your work is God's work as God and you are one. It is a mistake to think that all that you do in the prayer hall is God's work and outside it is your work. You should not entertain such feelings of separateness. Consider your heart as the altar of God and turn your vision inward. One who understands this truth and acts accordingly is a true human being.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.13: 1 Sept 2000
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/sss33-13.pdf>

When one is strongly established in love, he or she qualifies for mergence with the Divine, to become one with the Divine.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.24/Ch.25: 18 Oct 1991
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume24/sss24-25.pdf>

Love is God. God is love. Live in love. Only then can you realise the principle of oneness and attain fulfilment in life... Develop the feeling of oneness that I and you are one. Never think that I and you are different. That is the sign of true devotion.

The letter 'I' stands for oneness. 'You' (individual identity) will not exist when you develop purity and experience oneness with Divinity. Hence, give up dualistic feeling. The principle of oneness has to be experienced through love. It cannot be explained in words. But you have not understood the true meaning of love. You

are interpreting it in the physical and worldly sense. Consequently, your love is never steady. It keeps changing every now and then. Love should not be tainted with body attachment... Develop *Ekatma bhava* (the feeling that the one Self is in all). All are one, be alike to everyone.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.38/Ch.9: 13 April 2005
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume38/sss38-09.pdf>

Eschewing Ego

The *Atmic* Principle (*Atma Tatwa*) can be realised if only one could shed the feelings of 'I' and 'mine'. Today, many people make efforts to realise the *Atmic* Principle, but their efforts do not succeed because they are unable to get rid of the feelings of 'I' and 'mine'. In fact, they are the obstacles to Self-realisation.

First and foremost, one has to remove the feeling of 'I' (ego). Then realisation will dawn on you. The religious symbol of Christianity (†) also denotes this cutting off of ego. The egocentric assertion of 'I' is the root cause for all sorrows, unrest, and difficulties. One has to realise this truth. The feeling of 'mine' has also to be shed. When a teacher develops a feeling "these are all my disciples," ego will raise its head there also. Hence, the feelings of 'I' and 'mine' has to be removed. Then only can the *Atmic* Principle be realised.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.10: 18 July 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/sss41-10.pdf>

Developing Equal Vision

We have friends and foes, likes and dislikes; whereas *Vedanta* teaches us to develop equal mindedness. Just as we do not punish our teeth for accidentally biting our tongue, because we consider both the organs as parts of our body, so also, we have to bear in mind that the eternal and universal *Atma* resides in everyone and everywhere. We

should not accentuate differences but concentrate upon unity.

If we attach importance to the bodily relationship then the individual variation will come to the fore. On the other hand we should remember that a teacher, a friend, an actor, a guru and a disciple are different from each other only in name and form. The *Atma* which is the witnessing consciousness in all of them is the same. The presence of the *Atma* in all these names and forms establishes the oneness of all of them.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1973/Ch.16: 5 June '73
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1973/ss1973-16.pdf>

Living with Compassion

All should remain united. Where there is unity, there shall be purity. Where there is purity, there is Divinity. You all have to lead your lives keeping in view these three aspects of unity, purity and Divinity.

You should not remain unconcerned with others' difficulties and suffering. Treat their suffering as your own. The one God dwells in the hearts of all people — *Iswarah sarvabhutanam*. God is immanent even in ants and mosquitoes. There should be compassion in your heart.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.41/Ch.11: 20 July 2008
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume41/ss41-11.pdf>

If you love your *Atma* (True Self) and not your body, you will realise that the same *Atma* is the core of every being and you will start loving every being as much as you do yourselves. This is real Self-realisation.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.11/Ch.30: 1 Aug 1971
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/ss11-30.pdf>

People do not understand the true meaning of love. Their love is tainted with physical and worldly feelings. When you understand the principle of love and develop love to love relationship, all will become one. The *Veda* says, "*Sahasra Seersha Purushah...*" It means that all heads, all eyes, all feet are His. Once you understand the principle of oneness that is present in all, you can live in tune with the true spirit of brotherhood.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.38/Ch.15: 17 Aug 2005
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume38/ss38-15.pdf>

Cultivate pure love; for, purity is unity and that unity is Divinity. Let your individual love be transformed into pure love for God.

Sometimes, people have a doubt whether God's love toward them had undergone a change. Never. God's love will never undergo a change. For example, you have a log of wood. You can make any kind of furniture with it, like a chair or a bench. But the basic material, that is, wood, remains the same. Similarly, God's love always remains unchanged.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.38/Ch.26: 11 Oct 2005
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume38/d051011.pdf>

God is the embodiment of love. He is completely selfless. Those who follow Him should be selfless too. When your hearts are filled with Divine love, you would be able to pursue oneness in the whole creation. When this unity pervades our hearts, there would be no scope for hatred towards others. The eternal love will get established in our hearts with the experience of unity of all existence. Therefore, those who follow the Divine and inculcate the Divine love are truly fortunate.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.34/Ch.19: 19 Nov 2001
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume34/ss34-19.pdf>

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EXAMPLES

The Buddha

Buddha taught that the principle of unity of the *Atma* was the only true principle in the world. One who realised it by using his spiritual intelligence was true Buddha, he said. Other than the *Atma* nothing existed in this world.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/sss39-09.pdf>

Buddha taught that we should not have anger, we should not find others' faults, we should not harm others, because all are the embodiments of the pure, eternal principle of the *Atma*. Have compassion towards the poor and help them to the extent possible. You think those who do not have food to eat are poor people. You cannot call someone poor just because he does not have money or food to eat. Truly speaking, nobody is poor. All are rich, not poor. Those whom you consider as poor may not have money, but all are endowed with the wealth of *hridaya* (the heart).

Understand and respect this underlying principle of unity and Divinity in all and experience bliss. Do not have such narrow considerations as so and so is your friend, so and so is your enemy, so and so is your relation, etc. All are one, be alike to everyone. That is your primary duty. This is the most important teaching of Buddha. But people do not enquire into the teachings of Buddha and do not understand the sacredness of his heart. They only talk about his story.

Truly speaking, Buddha is not just one individual. All of you are Buddhas. You will see unity everywhere once you understand this truth. There is unity in the apparent multiplicity. When you are surrounded by many mirrors, you see a number of reflections. Reflections are many but the person is one.

Reactions, reflections, and resounds are many but the reality is one.

When I am speaking here, My voice is heard through each and every loudspeaker in this hall. In the same manner, there exists the principle of unity in our hearts which we have to recognise. Man's life finds fulfilment only when his mind experiences the principle of unity. There is no point in bringing about unity among people without uniting their minds.

Manah eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayo (mind is the cause for bondage and liberation of man). You see someone and say he is a bad person; you see another person and call him good. But, in reality, good and bad are present in your mind and not in the people around you. You call this handkerchief white and this microphone black. The difference in colour is perceived by your eyes, but essentially black and white are one and the same. Everyone should make efforts to visualise unity in diversity. Only then can one experience Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/sss39-09.pdf>

In this transient and ephemeral world, there is one thing that is true and eternal. That is Divinity. That is what everyone should aspire to attain.

Sathyam saranam gachchhami (I take refuge in truth). *Ekam saranam gachchhami* (I take refuge in the principle of oneness). Everything is the manifestation of Divinity in this world; there is no second entity other than Divinity. It is the divine principle that governs the entire world.

Having realised this truth, Buddha, along with his disciples, went from village to village to propagate it. He never felt the need to take rest. He thought that it was his duty

to share this supreme knowledge with his fellowmen. Even his father Suddhodhana came to him. He also recognised this truth and was transformed.

What did Buddha teach? Buddha taught that everyone was endowed with the same principle of Divinity. *Ekam Sat viprah bahudha vadanti* (Truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names).

The same message was conveyed by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad Geeta* when He said that all beings were His own reflection, and no one was different from Him.

Buddha had to undergo great hardships to realise this truth. Many noble souls who were the contemporaries of Buddha acknowledged the greatness of Buddha. They said that Buddha had experienced the truth which they were unable to realise. As he gave up all desires, Buddha became an epitome of total renunciation. There was nothing in him except love. He considered love as his very life-breath. Bereft of love, the world would turn into a void.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/ss39-09.pdf>

The principles taught by Buddha have profound significance, but people are not trying to understand them. You might have observed that Buddha had curly hair on his head. One lock of hair was entwined with the other. There is an underlying message of unity in this.

He had only one feeling in his heart, the feeling of love. He taught, *Dharmam saranam gachchhami* (I take refuge in righteousness), *Premam saranam gachchhami* (I take refuge in love). Bereft of love, humanness has no existence.

We should love all, irrespective of the fact whether one is a pauper or a rich man. Money should not be the criterion to share your love with your fellowmen. Money is not important. Money comes and goes; morality comes and grows. Do not hurt others. Help Ever, Hurt Never. Only then can you attain the state of Buddha.

There is little use in giving lengthy lectures if you do not realise the principle of unity in Divinity. You may call God by any name such as Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Sai, etc., but all of them embody the same divine principle. Keep the flower of oneness in the altar of your heart and let its fragrance spread everywhere.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/ss39-09.pdf>

The same divine principle of love is present in all of you. When you take to the path of love, you will become Buddha yourself. Today is *Buddha Poornima*. *Poornima* means full moon. The underlying message of *Buddha Poornima* is that the mind should shine with total purity like full moon.

It should unite with its source, i.e., the *Atma* which is pure and effulgent. There is no darkness on the full moon night. On this auspicious day of *Buddha Poornima*, we should attain full purity of the mind.

Purnamadaya purnamidam

Purnat purnamudachyate

Purnasya purnamadaya

Purnamevavashishyate

(That is full, this is full. When the full is taken out of the full, what remains is again the full.)

We have to recognise this truth.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/ss39-09.pdf>

Shirdi Sai Baba

In 1917, Baba once called Abdul Baba, Nana Chandorkar, Mhalsapathi, Das Ganu and others and started asking each of them: “Do you know who you are?” Each of them replied: “I am your *sishya* (disciple).” Baba said: “Nonsense! Don’t use that term any longer. I have no disciples in this world. I have countless devotees. You do not recognise the distinction between a disciple and a devotee. Anyone can be a devotee. But that is not the case with the disciple. A disciple is one who carries out implicitly the commands of the *guru* (the preceptor). The mark of the *sishya* is total devotion to the preceptor... The disciple should have no sense of separateness from the preceptor. He should feel, ‘You and I are one.’”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.23/Ch.28: 28 Sept 1990
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-28.pdf>

In My *Avatar* as Shirdi Sai Baba, some people could not understand the subtle meanings of My words and actions. They would come to Baba and complain, “Baba! We were waiting for you because you promised to come. Why did you disappoint us? Why did you put us to so much trouble? What sin have we committed?”

Baba would reply, “You people are really very foolish. I did come to your house, but you drove me away with a stick.”

These devotees would wonder and say, “What Baba! Can we ever commit this sacrilege of chasing you away with a stick?”

Then Baba would tell them that he came to their house in the form of a black dog. In this manner, Baba demonstrated the truth that God is present in all beings.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.29/Ch.65: 14 July 1996
<http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/d960714.pdf>

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to perform several methods/modes of worship to Mother Kali throughout the day. One day, the Divine Mother appeared before him and asked, “Ramakrishna! You are getting madder day by day. You worshipped Me in a particular form. Why do you confine Me to this form and that form. In fact, all forms are Mine. Whomsoever you come across, consider them as the embodiments of Divinity.”

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.38/Ch.24: 9 Oct 2005
<http://www.sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume38/d051009.pdf>

Some persons gathered round Ramakrishna Paramahansa and asked him: “Sir! Have you seen God?” Ramakrishna had a hearty laugh. He said: “Yes! I have seen God as I am seeing you. All are forms of God. However, your vision is different. You look at all persons as human beings. But all that you see is Divine. Why are you failing to see the Divine? You cry about your wife, your children, your wealth and your position. Have you ever cried for God in the same way? No. When you cry for God intensely, God will appear before you.” Once you renounce you bad qualities you will experience God.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.29/Ch.39: 27 August 1996
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/sss29-39.pdf>

Towards the end of his life Ramakrishna Paramahansa was suffering from cancer of the throat. All his disciples appealed to him to pray to the Mother, Durga Devi, whom Ramakrishna worshipped, to relieve him of his malady. Ramakrishna said: “I have prayed to the Mother.” They asked him what the Mother’s response was. Ramakrishna said “The Mother told me: ‘When I am eating so many things with so many mouths, does it matter very much if you are unable to eat with your one mouth?’ Her words opened my eyes.”

All mouths are the mouths of God. The *Vedas* proclaim that the Divine has a myriad heads and myriad eyes and myriad feet. This means that all heads are His, all eyes are His and all feet are His.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.30/Ch.33: 25 Dec 1997
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/ss30-33.pdf>

Lord Jesus Christ

Sadhana is the name for the mental discipline and intellectual effort to realise this Unity. Jesus sacrificed his life and poured out his blood to instil love and compassion in the heart of man, so that he may be happy when others are happy and sad when others are sad.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol13/Ch.27: 25 Dec 1976
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/ss13-27.pdf>

There were controversies regarding Jesus. These differences were the cause of the ordeals He had to go through. But Jesus was prepared to face any trouble or any

penalty. He considered compassion as the supreme quality, At first, he declared he was a “Messenger of God.” Then, he announced: “I am the Son of God.” Ultimately, he declared: “I and my Father are One.” You must take note of this oneness. You must proclaim your oneness and not your diversity.

Today people talk about unity but do not practise it. In every discourse Swami speaks about love. How many practise it? How many have tried to understand the Love Principle? Who has this Love? Love is not to be seen anywhere.

Where there is love, there is no room for hatred. Do not be envious of anyone. When this evil quality appears. Love takes to flight. A pure heart is abode of Love. Where there is Purity, there is Unity. Unity leads to Divinity.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.30/Ch.33: 25 Dec 1997
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume30/ss30-33.pdf>

UNITY IS THE PURPOSE OF SATHYA SAI AVATAR

The Mission of the Triune Incarnation

Question: So what is the holy mission and divine purpose of this triple incarnation?

Baba: To unite all mankind into one caste or family in the establishment of the unity — that is, *Atmic* realisation — in every man or woman, which is the basis on which cosmic design rests. Once this is realized, the common divine heritage that binds man to man to God will become apparent and love shall prevail as the guiding light of the universe.

We have to make him realise God within him to develop a synthesis correlating thought, word and deed. Once this primary lesson is taught in the family, the school, the college, the society, the cities, the states, the nations of the world, then man will become conscious of the fact that all mankind belongs to one family. As Christ preached, all are one, be alike to everyone.

The vital issue is the oneness: one caste, one class, one creed of humanity. And this can be achieved only by the surrender of one's self or ego to pure, selfless, universal love and devotion. Love is the basis, the common denominator, and devotion is the divine spark, the cementing, unifying, integrating factor between man and man, and man and God.

Let Me give you an illustration (Baba spreads his handkerchief on the ground). Here is a piece of cloth. As you see, it is all made of threads. Pull out the threads separately and the cloth becomes weak. Put them together and it is firm and strong. It is the same with mankind. Love binds it like the million, billion threads in cloth and devotion reunites it with God. I, therefore, embody love and use it as My instrument to regenerate man and create the brotherhood of mankind with the help of the latter's devotion.

God lives in India, pp.7-8

The mission of the present Avatar is to make everybody realise that since the same God or Divinity resides in everyone, people should respect, love and help each other irrespective of caste, colour or creed. Thus all work can become an act of worship.

God Lives in India, p.7

My objective is to establish unity in mankind and to reveal to them the aspect of Divinity, which is *Brahman*, the only goal which one should look for. It is also My duty to make you realise the kind of relationship that should exist between man and man and that Divinity is present and latent in all human beings.

Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974 part 2/Ch.32
<http://sssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1974/ss1974part2-32.pdf>

“I Have Come to Light the Lamp of Love...”

I have come to light the lamp of love in your hearts, to see that it shines day by day with added lustre. I have not come to speak on behalf of any particular *dharma* (faith or religion), like the Hindu *dharma*. I have not come on any mission of publicity for any sect, or creed or cause; nor have I come to collect followers for any doctrine. I have no plan to attract disciples or devotees into My fold or any fold. I have come to tell you of this universal unitary faith, this *Atmic Principle*, this path of love, this *dharma* of love, this duty of love, this obligation to love.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.8/Ch.22: 4 July 1968
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/sss08-22.pdf>

The Message I Bring

Cultivate that attitude of Oneness, between men of all creeds, all countries and all continents. That is the message of love, I bring. That is the message I wish you to take to heart.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.8/Ch.22: 4 July 1968
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/sss08-22.pdf>

“Everything is My Own Form...”

This body is approaching its 75th birthday. All these years, I have remained blissful because I am aware of the principle of unity. You too can experience bliss if you understand this truth. I do not hate anybody; nor do I have any enemies. I have absolutely no fear because everything is My own form; the same *Atma* exists in all.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.33/Ch.10: 16 July 2000
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/sss33-10.pdf>

It gives Me great joy to see that all of you have gathered here today. You are united with each other with the bond of love. Love is only one; it is not different in you, Me and others. You have unified your love with that of Swami. Love is one. Live in love.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.39/Ch.9: 13 May 2006
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume39/sss39-09.pdf>

HIS FIRST AND FINAL MESSAGE TO US

Sathya Sai Baba has said on many occasions that establishing unity through love was His real task and that this should be our ideal:

In this gathering, people from many countries, speaking many languages, belonging to many races, are present. They are all single-mindedly united in love for Sai and in love from Sai, in spite of differences in nationality, race, creed, colour and dress. This is my real task. This is the consummation of the yearnings of the ancient seers and sages of this land. Develop this Oneness, this Unity in love, hold it ever before you as the ideal.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.14/Ch.55: 19 Nov 1980
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume14/sss14-55.pdf>

First Public Discourse

In fact, in His first recorded public discourse in 1953, Bhagawan Baba began with what He called “My very first message to humanity” and in this discourse He referred to the cosmic unity that exists between every individual and God.

Manasa bhajare guru charanam, Dustara bhava sagara taranam – Worship the feet of the Guru in your mind. This will take you across the ocean of worldly existence... God draws the individual toward Himself; it is the nature of both to have this affinity, for they are the same... This I will tell you, there is no escaping it; all creatures have to reach God some day or other.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.1/Ch.1: 18 Oct 1953
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume01/sss01-01.pdf>

Thus, “Unity through Divinity” was Baba’s first message to humanity. This indeed also was His last message.

Last Public Discourse

On November 22, 2010, Sathya Sai Baba gave His last discourse with a plea that we maintain unity.

All are human beings. All are the children of God. Therefore, live with unity without giving room to any differences. This is My message for you today.

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.43/Ch.3: 22 Nov 2010
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume43/d101122.pdf>

His first message to us was an exhortation to attain unity. His last message to us also was a plea to maintain unity. Unity, therefore, is Baba’s Mission. Unity is Baba’s legacy and each one of us is an heir to that legacy.



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UNITY IS DIVINITY

Embodiments of the Divine Spirit! The ancient saying, “All roads lead to Rome,” has been vindicated today. It is not without great significance that people from many countries have gathered in this historic city. You have to realise that you have come here to learn things, which you have never heard before, and to derive inspiration from new ideals about the human adventure.

This conference is not concerned with any one religion, nation, race, caste or individual. It is intended to reveal the essential truth that underlies all scriptures and to strive for the peace and welfare of all people through the establishment of truth and righteousness.

The whole of mankind belongs to one religion—the religion of man. For all men, God is the Father. As the children of one God, all men are brothers. This conference is therefore a family gathering. It is not a meeting of nationalities and religions. It is a meeting of minds. It does not relate to any one culture or philosophy. It is concerned with the divine way of life that is implicit in the teachings of all religions. Its purpose is to see unity in divinity.

All Religions Proclaim the Unity of Divinity

The basic truth in all religions, irrespective of country or race, is one and the same. The philosophic ideas or the practices and methods of approach may vary. But the final objective and goal is only one. All religions proclaim the unity of divinity and preach the cultivation of universal love without regard to caste, creed, country or colour. Those who are ignorant of this basic truth develop pride and ego because of their own religion. Such people are creating great confusion and chaos by fragmenting divinity. To confine and divide the infinite divine into such narrow compartments is treason to the divine. The basis for a spiritual, God-based life is the Indwelling *Atman* (Self).

Life in society should also conform to this spiritual basis. Man, however, bases his life on the belief that the body alone is real. It is to rid him of this error that he has to be taught about the Self. Mankind has to realise that both the individual and society are manifestations of the Divine Will and that the Divine permeates the universe. Only by recognising this truth can man give up his ego and lead a life of devotion to duty. Society should not become a cockpit of selfish individuals, but a community of divinely guided individuals.

With the progress of science, man imagines that he is the lord of the universe and he tends to forget the Divine. Although, man today has gone to the moon and is exploring outer space, if he were to consider the innumerable mysteries and wonders in creation yet to be known, he will realise that these are far beyond the limited capacity of mind and intelligence. The more man discovers the secrets and mysteries of the cosmos, the more he will realise that God is the creator and motivator of all creation. All religions are agreed upon this truth. All that man can do is to strive through his limited intelligence and knowledge to understand the invisible and infinite Divine and learn to worship and adore Him.

Service to Society is the Means to Promote Unity

Instead of realising his innate divinity, man is caught up in the prison house of his own material achievements. Greater than all his scientific and technological progress is man himself as a being endowed with the divine consciousness. By choosing to regard only the material world as real, it may be possible

to bring about the prosperity of a scientific, technological and materialistic society for a time. But if, in the process, human selfishness, greed and hatred develop, as they usually do, society will destroy itself. If, on the contrary, the essential divinity of man is realised, mankind can build up a great society based on unity and on adherence to the divine principle of love. This profound change must begin in the minds of individuals. When individuals change, society will change. And when society changes, the whole world will change. Unity is the secret of social progress, and service to society is the means to promote it. Everyone, therefore, should devote himself to such service in a spirit of dedication.

It should be realised that material comfort is not the sole aim of social living. A society in which the individuals are concerned only about material welfare will not be able to achieve harmony and peace. Even if it is achieved, it will only be a patched-up harmony for, in such a society, the strong will oppress the weak. Nor will an equal distribution of the bounties of nature ensure anything but a nominal equality. How will the equal distribution of material goods achieve equality with reference to desires and abilities? Desires have, therefore, to be controlled by developing the spiritual approach and diverting the mind from material objects to the Divine seated in each one's heart.

Divine Experience is Inherent Nature of Man

Once the truth of the Indwelling Spirit is recognised, there dawns the awareness that

the world is one family. One is then filled with Divine Love, which becomes the driving force for all of one's actions. Man turns away from the pursuit of endless desires to the search for peace and equanimity. By converting the love for material things into love of God, one experiences the Divine. This experience is not something beyond man. It is, in fact, a part of the inherent nature of man. It is the secret of his humanness and his Divinity.

Whatever one's religion may be, everyone should cultivate respect for other faiths. One who does not have such an attitude of tolerance and respect for other religions is not a true follower of his own religion. It is not enough merely to adhere strictly to the practices of one's own religion. One should also try to see the essential unity of all religions. Only then will man be able to experience the oneness of divinity. There should be no kind of coercion or compulsion in the sphere of religion. Religious matters

should be discussed calmly and dispassionately. Do not entertain the feeling that one's religion is superior and another's inferior. Conflicts on the basis of religion should be totally eliminated. To divide men on grounds of religion is a crime against humanity.

Man today imagines that he knows everything about nature and the universe. But of what use is all this knowledge if man does not know himself? It is only when he understands himself that he will be able to know the truth about the external world. Man's Inner Reality cannot be known by exploring the world outside. When he turns his vision inward and realises his essential divinity, he will acquire an equal-mindedness towards all beings. Out of that feeling of oneness, he will experience the bliss that passeth understanding.

Message to International Symposium
on "Unity is Divinity", Rome
30 and 31 October 1983

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SERVICE ACTIVITIES FOR UNITY IN SOCIETY

*If you lack pure mind and good character,
how do you expect Sai, the bestower of peace, love, happiness and
prosperity, to appreciate you?
How do you expect Prema Sai to treat you as His own?*

(Telugu Poem)

Human life is one of compassion, time is sacred; the heart is pure; and the mind is like nectar. Having been blessed with such a sacred human birth, what is man supposed to do? What is the foundation on which the mansion of life is to be built? Every man aspires for peace and happiness. How can one lead a peaceful life? It is possible only when he puts human values into practice. Human values need not be acquired from outside; they are latent in every man. If such values are forgotten, how can man progress in life? In the first instance, man should enquire into the purpose of their birth.

You Are Not Serving Others

Human life is based on *samata* (equality), *samaikyata* (unity), *saubhratrutvam* (fraternity), and *saujanyam* (nobility). They constitute the very foundation of the mansion of life. Life will be meaningless if even one of them is absent. Everyone must cultivate and safeguard these four virtues.

First of all, one should recognise the meaning of humanness. Truth fosters *neeti* (morality); Righteousness confers *khyati* (reputation); *tyaga* (sacrifice) is the *jyoti* (light) of life. *Manava jati* (human race) is the combination of these three — *neeti*, *khyati*, and *jyoti*.

But man today is neglecting the principles of truth, righteousness, and sacrifice. He has to adhere to these principles, not for

the sake of society, but for his own redemption. If you expect to be respected by all, you have to develop self-respect, which is the basis of human life. One who lacks self-respect cannot command respect from others. First and foremost, man should respect others and share his love with others wholeheartedly. This is the primary duty of man.

Man is not merely a *vyashti jeevi* (individual), he is a *sameshti jeevi* (part and parcel of society). Vyashti relates to *jeevudu* (individual), and *sameshti* relates to *Devudu* (God). Man has to travel from the level of individual to the level of society. What is the path prescribed for this? Firstly, man has to recognise the common principle of *jeevana jyoti* (light of life), which is present in all. The principle of *samatvam* (equality) can be experienced and practised only when man understands the principle of *ekatvam* (unity).

The service activities that we undertake are meant to experience unity in society. It is a great mistake if you think that you are serving others. In fact, you should not consider anybody as 'other,' for all are the embodiments of divinity. But man is not making efforts to realise this truth. Hence, he is subjected to difficulties. Once man realises that God is all-pervasive, he will be free from suffering. In order to get rid of suffering, man has to practise the principle of unity in society. Once he understands the principle of unity, he can attain the cosmic principle.

Give Up Body Attachment

Every individual is endowed with a physical body. Nature is like a mirror. What you see

in this mirror is only your reflection and nothing else. Today, man is leading a life of selfishness and self-interest. Selfishness is rampant in society. *Dehabhimanam* (body attachment) is on the rise, and *deshabhimanam* (love for one's motherland) is on the decline. Even spiritual aspirants and noble souls with pure hearts are unable to give up body attachment. As long as there is *dehabhimanam*, man cannot develop *Daivabhimanam* (love for God).

The body, which is made up of five elements, is weak and is bound to disintegrate.

Though hundred years of life-span is prescribed, one cannot take it for granted.

One may leave the mortal coil at any time, be it in childhood, youth or old age.

Death is certain. Hence, before the body perishes,

man should make efforts to know his true nature.

(Telugu Poem)

Body is given to you to know your true Self. It is foolish to waste your time and energy in worldly pursuits. If you know your true Self, you would have known everything else.

Embodiments of Love! All that you see in the external world, from microcosm to macrocosm, is present in you. The mountains, oceans, cities, villages, etc. are present in your heart. All beings are in you. You are the basis of everything. Such being the case, what is it that you want to see in the external world? How foolish it is on your part to get carried away by the reflection outside, ignoring the reality within!

The world outside is just a reflection of your heart. If you fill your heart with love, you will experience love everywhere.

Practice Human Values

Know the human values in the first instance. The first among them is truth. It is changeless and beyond time and space. There is nothing like American truth, Russian truth, Indian truth or Pakistani truth. Truth is one and the same for all countries at all times. You are the embodiment of truth. Truth is God. So, make efforts to understand this truth. *Sathyam bruyath, priyam bruyath, na bruyath sathyam apriyam* (speak the truth, speak pleasantly, but do not speak unpleasant truth). Having forgotten such eternal principle of truth, man is in search of ephemeral things. Adherence to truth is *neeti*, which is nothing but proper conduct. *Sathyannasti paro dharmah* (there is no *Dharma* greater than adherence to truth). *Sathya* and *Dharma* together will confer peace. One who adheres to truth and righteousness will always remain peaceful. One need not search for peace outside. Where there is truth, there is peace. Where there is peace, there is nonviolence. We call the human values as *Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema, and Ahimsa* (Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence). In fact, love is the fundamental basis for truth and righteousness. Love is God, truth is God, righteousness is God. One bereft of these principles is verily a liv-

ing corpse. The five human values can be compared to five life principles (*prana*) present in us. If you do not speak the truth, you would have lost one life principle. Unrighteous conduct amounts to losing the second life principle. Similarly, other life principles will be lost. Therefore, all your efforts should be directed to safeguarding these life principles, which are divine in nature.

There is divinity in humanity. Understand this. Today every field of human activity is polluted. Once man purifies his heart, he will find purity everywhere. The world outside is just a reflection of your heart. If you fill your heart with love, you will experience love everywhere. If there is hatred in your heart, the same is reflected outside. Whatever you see, hear, and experience outside is only the reflection, reaction, and resound of your inner being. All the good and bad that you come across in the external world are just your own reflections. So, do not point an accusing finger at others. The whole world depends on man's behaviour. If man is good, so too will the world be. You think that there is profanity all around you. It is a mistaken notion. In fact, the profanity in you is reflected outside. If your feelings are demonic, you will find the same all around you. If your feelings are divine, you will find divinity everywhere.

Embodiments of Love! Your heart is full of love. The yearning for God that emanates from your heart is love. Let truth and righteousness be reflected in your word and deed, respectively. The harmony of truth, righteousness, and love will lead to peace.

Your breathing process, *Soham*, is reminding you of your reality 21,600 times a day. Of what use is your education if you are unable to remember the truth that is taught to you so many times day in and day out? You may listen to any number of sermons, you may study any number of sacred texts, you may visit any number of noble souls, but all these will prove futile if you forget the principle of truth that your inner voice teaches.

Buddha renounced all the palatial comforts and took to *sanyasa* (renunciation). He wandered in the forests, listened to the teachings of noble souls, and studied holy texts. But none of these could give him satisfaction. Ultimately, he realised that his heart is the true holy text given by God and that God is his true friend. He discarded all books and stopped visiting noble souls. He turned inward and enquired into the truth. Ignoring the holy text (heart) and forgetting the true friend (God), man is going hither and thither in search of peace.

Firstly, make sacred use of the eyes given by God. Only then will your life be sanctified. He alone is a true human being who has a good mind and whose behaviour is exemplary. All your spiritual pursuits will be of little consequence if your vision is sullied. Your *nethra* (eye) is the *shastra* (scripture) given by God. Understand this *shastra* and conduct yourself accordingly. Once you have control over your vision, you will have control over your speech. Speak only truth; there is nothing greater than truth. *Samyak drishti* (pure vision) and *samyak vak* (pure speech) will lead to *samyak sravanam* (pure hearing) and *samyak bhavam* (pure feeling).

Once you have Self-confidence, you can raise the walls of Self-satisfaction over which you can lay the roof of self-sacrifice and lead a life of Self-realisation.

The youth in particular should exercise control over their vision. *Manava* (human being) becomes *Madhava* (God) once he understands the importance of human values and puts them into practice. The youth of today are the future emancipators of the country. So, they should develop steadiness of mind and self-confidence.

*Where there is confidence, there is love;
Where there is love, there is truth;
Where there is truth, there is peace;
Where there is peace, there is bliss;
Where there is bliss, there is God.*

Without confidence, you can never attain divinity. Your confidence is your God. So, develop unwavering confidence in the Self. Self-confidence and Self-respect will lead to *Atmic* bliss and the vision of the Self. You are all seated in this magnificent hall with so many pillars supporting it. You are enjoying its beauty. Without a strong foundation this hall would not have come into existence. Likewise, Self-confidence is the foundation for the mansion of life. Once you have Self-confidence, you can raise the walls of Self-satisfaction over which you can lay the roof of self-sacrifice and lead a life of Self-realisation. Hence, lay the foundation of Self-confidence strong and sturdy.

The whole world is like a mansion, and various countries are like different rooms in it. So, do not divide humanity based on nationality.

Truth Is The Basis Of Every Culture

The culture of *Bharat* (India) proclaims *sathyam vada dharmam chara* (speak the truth, follow Dharma-righteousness). Not only Indian culture, the culture of all countries proclaims the same truth. Truth is the basis of every culture. Do not give scope for any differences based on culture. The whole world is like a mansion, and various countries are like different rooms in it. So, do not divide humanity based on nationality. It is because of such division that humanness is on the decline. Sai devotees should not entertain any such differences. All should stand united. Names, forms, and complexions may be different, but humanity is one race. God is one. All human beings belong to one family.

Cows are many, but milk is one.

Beings are many, but Indweller is one.

Castes are many, but humanity is one.

Flowers are many, but worship is one.

Paths are many, but God is one.

Hence, you should give up all the differences based on caste, religion, and nationality and develop the spirit of love. Young men and women should work for the progress of the country. The country will prosper only when the youth develop sound character. Human life is based on character. Today

there are many who are heroes in precept and zeroes in practice. Your actions should be in harmony with your words. Develop sacred feelings. Only then can you perform sacred activities. Devotion does not mean merely performing rituals like worship. Any work done with pure and selfless love is devotion.

Embodiments of Love! Right from this day, let your lives be suffused with love. Let your hands undertake deeds that are beneficial to society at large. Let your thoughts be centred on the principle of love. You should rise from the level of *vyashti* (individual) to *sameshti* (society) and ultimately merge in *Parameshti* (God). In this physical and ephemeral world, wherever you see there is only restlessness. At times, your physical body may be subjected to diseases. You should not be unduly perturbed. Body comes and goes.

*This body is a storehouse of dirt,
and prone to diseases;*

*It cannot cross the ocean of samsara.
Oh mind!*

*Do not be under the delusion
that body is permanent.*

*Instead take refuge at the Divine Lotus
Feet.*

(Telugu Poem)

Greatness Lies In Practice, Not Preaching

One should not be unduly attached to the physical body, but it has to be taken care of properly. Sometimes, you are afflicted with diseases because of negligence on your part. I take on the sufferings of devotees because of My love for them. It disappears in the same way as it appears. Here is a

small example. A young boy was suffering a great deal because of mumps (a disease, causing painful swelling in the cheeks). The doctor said that it would take a minimum of 20 to 25 days to get cured. He was crying bitterly, unable to bear the severe pain. I called him inside and consoled him saying, "When Swami is with you, why do you cry?" I materialised a sweet for him and made him eat. I took his pain upon Myself. For any other person, the pain would have been unbearable.

Srinivasan was very much worried as to how to conduct this conference, when Swami was undergoing so much pain. Since the swelling was between the two jaws, it was not possible to eat or speak. What does it matter if the body is not given food for a few days? Hence, I did not care for it. I told the organisers to go ahead with the conference. He asked, "Swami, how are you going to deliver the inaugural address?" I said, "I feel the pain if I think that this is My body. But this is not My body, it is yours." All your bodies are Mine. Hence, I take your suffering upon Myself. That is My duty. This is not My body, so I do not care for it.

Not only now, at any point of time, I do not care for any suffering. I practise whatever I preach. That is why I say, 'My life is My message.' It is not possible for all to understand and realise My Divinity. I do not want

to say it in public. I do not indulge in advertisement.

All that is Mine is yours, and vice-versa. I have no desires at all. All My desires are meant to give you happiness. Greatness does not lie in preaching; it lies in practice. A true *acharya* (preceptor) is one who practises and then preaches. That is what I am doing.

Youngsters – Men and Women! Understand your true nature. Follow the path of truth. *Sathyam* (Truth) is the name of this body. Develop this truth in you. Truth is God, Love is God; Live in Love. When you follow the path of truth and love, you will certainly attain bliss. Some people put the blame on Me, ignoring their own defects. It is a great mistake. There are no defects in Me whatsoever. I am like a pure mirror. There is no scope for even a trace of impurity in Me. You see the reflection of your own feelings in Me. Purify your hearts. Only then can you understand the Truth.

Embodiments of Love! Today we have inaugurated this conference. Many more programmes are to follow. Hence, I bring My discourse to a close in order to give sufficient time for other programmes. I am prepared to spend any length of time to give you necessary guidelines.

Inaugural Address at International Seva Conference
Prasanthi Nilayam, 21 July 2002

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FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE DIVINE

Divine Embodiments of Love! All over the world, mankind is racked today by various difficult problems. When one problem is solved, another series crop up. The reason for this situation is the absence of right relationship between the individual and the society.

At the very outset, we have to take note of four entities: The first is the power that can solve any problem in a moment. This is *Parameshti* (the Supreme Self). The second entity is *Srishti* (the created universe). The third is *Sameshti* (the collective entity—society or community). The fourth is *Vyakti* (the individual). These four are not separate entities. A body consists of different organs performing different functions, but they are integral parts of one body. For instance, the hand has a palm, which has fingers. All are integrally related. Similarly, the primary role of *Parameshti* has to be recognised. It is only when *Parameshti* is understood that the secret of creation can be grasped. When this secret is understood, the significance of society will be evident. Then the individual's role can be understood.

How to recognise *Parameshti*? By developing sacred qualities and adoring the *Parameshti* (Supreme Self), the individual understands the secret of *Srishti* (creation) and the importance of society. Today if you want to understand *Prakriti* (nature or the phenomenal universe), you have to understand *Sameshti* (society).

The term *Sameshti* encompasses all social organisations. A *Sameshti* (community) is made up of individuals coming together. This union of individuals is essential for realisation of the Divine.

Three Rules for Promoting Collective Action

Take for instance, the present conference. Here people from different countries, professing different faiths and belonging to different cultures, have come together. But what is their common unifying factor? It is the belief in the Sai Principle that has brought you together. All of them are trying to find unity in diversity. To promote unity, the concept of *Sameshti* (collective action) has to be understood. There are three rules to be observed in promoting collective action, *Sathyam bruyath* (Speak the truth). *Priyam bruyath* (Speak what is pleasant). *Na bruyath Sathyam apriyam* (Never speak what is true but not pleasing). Truth is of the highest importance whether we consider morality, worldly life or spiritual progress. From the ethical point of view, you have to speak the truth. In the context of worldly life, you have to speak what is pleasing. From the spiritual point of view, you have to avoid what is not pleasing even if it is true. The *Bhagavad Geetha* also teaches that one should not utter words that cause excitement but speak the truth which is both pleasing and wholesome.

Three Faces of Reality

There are similarly three concepts in *Vedanta* relating to what constitutes truth: *Paramarthika*, *Vyavaharika* and *Prathibhasika*. *Paramarthika* relates to the Supreme, *Vyavaharika* to worldly existence and *Prathibhasika* to the superimposition of the physical on the spiritual. These three are not at variance from each other. They are the same thing in three different forms like the ocean, the waves and the foam. The

same coolness and taste that exist in the ocean are to be found in the wave and the foam.

When you are considering matters relating to the world, you use the term *vyavaharika*. When you are considering experiences relating to the mind, you call them *Paramarthika* (concerning the Divine). When you consider matters relating to thoughts, you describe them as *Pratibhasika*. While the epithets are different, the underlying truth is one and the same.

To know the nature of the Divine, the first step is to understand the social process. Starting with *Parameshti* (the Divine), you understand *Srishti* (creation) and become aware of *Sameshti* (the society or community) and realise the role of *Vyakthi* (the individual). The process of understanding is an integral one related to each other. Without the individual there can be no society. Without society, creation has no meaning. Although different terms have been used in *Vedantic* parlance to describe the different levels of awareness, the entire understanding of this unifying process is that the individual proceeds from the social to the cosmic and then to the Divine.

The relationship between the individual and God should be properly understood. God is the all-embracing whole. The individual has to experience his oneness with the universal. This universal has been called the *Vishva-Virat-Swarupam* (cosmic form of the Divine). All the beings you see here are manifestations of the cosmic form. This means that all are inherently divine. By obsession with the separateness of the individual, one fails to see His cosmic

Self-enquiry is the means to Self-realisation. Self-enquiry reveals that you are not the body, the senses or the mind. You are their master.

essence. Forget the ego in you and recognise your spiritual essence. It is attachment to the body that is the cause of man's loss of peace.

Man has explored everything in the external world but has failed to know his own true nature. As a result, he has created *Bhinnathvam* (divisiveness). Once he knows his true self, he will have no feeling of divisiveness. He will recognise the oneness of all life.

Role of Sai Volunteers

Why is this conference being held? In this context three things are highly significant. First, what should be the characteristics of persons in the Sai Organisation? Their hearts should be cool like the moon. Their minds should be pure like butter. Their speech should be sweet like honey. It is only when you have a heart cool as the moon, a mind pure as butter and speech sweet as honey, will you be a worthy member of the Organisation. When these three qualities are present, there will be divinity.

In the *Bhagavad Geetha*, Krishna advises Arjuna to give up all *Dharmas* (duties, codes of conduct) and take refuge in Him. The *Dharmas* that are to be given up are related to the body and are the cause of innumerable worries. Sai Love is the sure solvent for

all these worries. (*Bhagawan* sang a Telugu poem describing all the different worries from birth to death to which men are subject). As long as you do not understand the workings of nature, everything will be worry. But once you understand them, you will be always happy. That understanding will lead you to the awareness of *Parameshti* (Divine). Once the nature of the Divine is understood, all experiences will be blissful like the sweetness, of sugar which is present in different kinds of sweets.

Vedanta and Science Proclaim the Same Truth

Recognise that the Divinity that is present in everyone is the same. This was the truth proclaimed by *Vedanta*. Scientists are now coming to the same view through a different approach. The ancient sages proclaimed the omnipresence of God, many millennia ago. Ramadas and Pothana also gave expression to this truth in their poems. Scientists are now declaring that the entire cosmos is composed of energy. Some years ago, at a meeting in the Institute of Science, Bangalore, one scientist referred to the age of the sun, giving a figure running into billions of years. The ancients referred to the sun as *anadi*, meaning that its origin is indeterminate. By merely assigning a definite number running into billions, has science-made the fact more meaningful than what the sages said? *Anadi* (beginningless) is a truer description of the age of the sun, than the scientists reckoning in billions of years.

The ancients understood the secrets of creation by seeking to understand the *Parameshti* (supreme creator). Through

understanding creation, they realised the truth about society and the individual.

Self-enquiry is the means to Self-realisation. Self-enquiry reveals that you are not the body, the senses or the mind. You are their master. You are the *Atma* (Self). The knowledge based on the body is *Bhoutika Jnanam* (worldly knowledge). The knowledge based on the mind is *sujnanam* (rational knowledge). The knowledge based on the heart is *Atma Jnanam* (knowledge of the Self).

We are One Family

The most important concern of this conference should be how to enable members to realise the *Parameshti* (Divine). The first requisite for this purpose is good company. Good company is conducive to good thoughts. Anil Kumar referred to the 'Latest God' in his speech preceding *Bhagawan's* discourse. This is a misconception. There is only one God and He is eternal. Dr. Safaya expressed thanks for the gift of blankets by devotees from Korea. In spite of proximity to Swami over many years many have not understood Swami's teachings even on minor matters. When do you express thanks? You thank a third person. But you

don't thank your own people. When you go out for a dinner you express thanks to the host, but does anyone thank the mother for serving food? There are no 'others' in the Sai Organisation. We are one family. The word 'thanks' should not be used in the Sai Organisation. It is purely a conventional expression, in the ordinary world. The member of a family who works for the family is different from a worker who labours for wages. Members of the Sai Organisation should render service without expectation of any reward or recognition.

Members of the Sai Organisation should endeavour to improve themselves to some extent at least as a result of their participation in this conference. Don't bother about the past. Concentrate on the present. From now on, all of you should tread a sublime path. Don't give room for mutual jealousy, hatred or ill-feeling.

Follow the role "Help ever, Hurt never."

Discourse at the Sixth World Conference of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, Sai Kulwant Mandap, 20 November 1995

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STRIVE FOR UNITY, PURITY AND DIVINITY

*Intellect, education, prolific scholarship,
Victory in verbal battle,
Vanquishing the adversary in physical strife,
Sovereignty over kingdoms vast,
Charity profuse of cattle and gold,
Piercing vision counting the countless stars,
Numbering each of creatures unnumbered,
Achieving the mystic eightfold powers,
Or even stepping on lunar dust—
All these are easy to the man of strength.
But to restrain the urges of body and its parts,
To turn the senses inward,
Difficult far is it to attain the vision
And still the mind in supreme peace.*

(Telugu Poem)

*A skilled tongue entices even the goddess of wealth,
A sweet tongue wins family and friends,
Tongue it is that ties your life in knots,
A vicious tongue begets instant death.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love! Having been endowed with such a sacred power of speech, man is unable to make proper use of it. No other form of life has the mighty intellect and capacity for inner peace but the human kind. In this world every object has five aspects, namely, *sath, chith, ananda, rupa,* and *nama* (being, awareness, bliss, form, and name). Being, Awareness, and Bliss are the three core attributes of a man. They are true and eternal. Name and form are transitory. The delusion of permanence of name and form leads mankind to waste away its precious life.

In this world, there are two types of intellectuals. The first type is the scientists who are totally materialistic in their outlook. They have in their mind only the physical and worldly goals and gains.

They are fascinated by the external appearance of a gigantic tree with its numerous branches and twigs, but they are not interested in finding its 'roots.' *Vedantins* (Those who know *Vedanta*) are the second type of intellectuals, who are not fascinated by the external appearance of the tree but evince great delight in finding the 'roots.' People who are worldly in outlook waste their time in watering the "branches," whereas, the *Vedantins* water the "roots" and thereby enjoy the "fruits."

Once, the *asuras* (demons) and *devas* (demigods) churned the ocean of milk with the hope of acquiring divine ambrosia (*amrita*). They used the Mandara mountain as the churning rod. But, initially, they had to put up with the emergence of deadly poison. The demons were frustrated and disheartened to see poison emanating instead of *amrita*. They wanted to give up the churning process. But the demigods relentlessly continued the churning with courage and determination. Their sustained efforts yielded rich rewards in the form of the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi Devi, Iravatha (divine white elephant), *Kamadhenu* (wish-fulfilling cow), *Kalpataru* (wish-fulfilling tree), and ultimately the divine ambrosia itself. In the same manner, man should churn his mind and try to know his true identity; He should not be deterred or depressed by the initial impediments and obstacles that beset his path.

Sath-Chith-Ananda (being-awareness-bliss) are the very nature of man. But man has forgotten his very nature and is wasting his time in the vain pursuit of fleeting pleasures. He is not able to realise the value of

his innate nature, *Sath-Chith-Ananda*. Once he realises its value and experiences it, he can reach any exalted state. In fact, he becomes verily God. Man can accomplish any mighty task when he realises his innate divine nature. The power latent in man is not found anywhere else. Every man is endowed with the three chief attributes of *Sath-Chith-Ananda*. But having been enmeshed in the web of delusion, man considers that the "name and form" are real, ignoring his innate qualities of *Sath-Chith-Ananda*. First of all, what man has to recognise is his own innate divine nature. But man is not making any effort in this direction. He has become a slave to his senses, and is wasting his time on trivial matters. The primary duty of man therefore is to understand properly his innate human nature and then putting it into practice.

The value and significance of human nature is beyond all estimation. Only when you practise human values will your life be redeemed. Man is but a spark of divinity. That is why Lord Krishna said in the *Bhagavad Geeta*, *Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhutah Sanatana* (the eternal *Atma* in all beings is a part of My Being). In fact, the *antarvani* (inner voice) keeps reminding man of his divine nature day in and day out. But man is not making any effort to listen to his inner voice. He is craving for physical and ephemeral objects, forgetting his own divine nature and thereby distancing himself from the ultimate goal of life. Names and forms are momentary like water bubbles. He is being deluded by names and forms and is losing the very precious gem of divinity. Man is endowed with infinite divine power. A piece of red-hot iron can be

All bodies are like bulbs and love is the main switch. Only when the main switch is pressed will the bodies radiate light and happiness to one and all.

put to better use than the fire itself. The body can be compared to an iron piece and the divinity within to fire. Man should therefore understand this truth and make proper use of his body.

Embodiments of Love! People are full of hopes and aspirations on the dawn of a New Year. In fact, you should consider every moment as the beginning of a New Year. Names and forms have no value without the eternal virtues. Man suffers from various ailments, some internal and others external. A doctor can cure the external ailments. The *Atmic* feeling (*Atma bhava*– the feeling that all are embodiments of the same *Atma*) is the only remedy for all the internal ailments. You should make efforts to know the principle of *Atma*. The *Atma* is a synonym for *Brahman*, which is nothing but the *Chaitanya* (consciousness) permeating every human being. Man has a name and form, but *Chaitanya* has no form. The *Chaitanya* that is present in the human body is called “conscience.” The all-pervasive *Chaitanya* is called ‘consciousness.’ When the individual understands the principle of unity in diversity, the “conscience” gets transformed into ‘consciousness.’ In spite of being endowed with such a sacred

power, man gets deluded by the vagaries of the world. He is giving importance to the New Year, which is fleeting. In fact, he should give importance to the changeless ‘Time’ and sanctify it by proper use.

In this world, only truth and goodness will remain with us for ever. Their value cannot be quantified. So, we should strive to develop truth and goodness in us. We should not hanker after name and fame. For example, we should not be under the delusion that we are providing *Telugu Ganga* water to Chennai. Water is not something that one gives to another. It is nature’s gift to all. Each one gets one’s share based on one’s *prapti* (deservedness). Man’s activities yield the desired result only when the *kala*, *karma*, *karana*, and *kartavya* (time, action, cause, and duty) are in harmony with each other. Hence, one should make sincere efforts and wait for the right time. When the action fructifies, he should utilise it in accordance with the time and circumstances.

Boys (former students of Swami) are doing a lot of good work. They are going to various villages and giving happiness to the people there by performing service activities and *bhajans*. They should undertake all these activities with the spirit of love. There is nothing greater than love. You should lead your life filled with selfless love.

Embodiments of Love! The service activities and the *bhajans* that you perform alone are not enough. You should give up the feeling that you are serving others. That is very important. You are serving your own self when you serve others. You should consider all as yours. In fact, others are not others but are the very forms of God. Hence,

service rendered to humanity is service rendered to God. All service activities are meant to foster this feeling in you. You should plunge into the field of service with selfless love. That alone is true service. All other service activities are worldly and momentary.

Students! You are under the mistaken notion that you are rendering service to others. You should give up such a feeling. Only then does the service you perform become real service in the strict sense of the term. Service does not merely mean helping others. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Your acts of service should be suffused with the spirit of love. Without the positive aspect of love, all service you render becomes negative in nature. All bodies are like bulbs, and love is the main switch. Only when the main switch is pressed will the bodies radiate light and happiness to one and all. You are switching off the main switch and trying to enjoy happiness. It is impossible. *Hrid + daya* (compassion) = *Hridaya* (heart). Your heart should be filled with compassion. All your activities should be suffused with love. There is no strength superior to love.

Our ancient sages and seers used to live in dense forests amidst wild animals. They did not carry any weapons with them, yet they could move about without any sense of fear. What was the source of their courage? They possessed the single weapon of love, which protected them from the wild animals. The ancient culture of *Bharat* (India) is divine, most precious, wonderful, and blissful. But you are not making any effort

The entire humanity is one family. All are brothers and sisters. The whole world is but one mansion. It is impossible to describe in words the happiness you would experience when you develop such broad-mindedness.

to understand its greatness. In fact, you are belittling such a sacred culture. You are deluded by the differences based on caste and culture. In fact, there is only one caste, the caste of humanity. The love that originates in the heart is true religion. The entire humanity is one family. All are brothers and sisters. The whole world is but one mansion. It is impossible to describe in words the happiness you would experience when you develop such broad-mindedness. Hence, make every effort to visualise divinity in humanity.

God's creation is most wonderful and mysterious. There are innumerable stars in the sky. The light emitted by some of them is yet to reach the earth, in spite of the fact that light travels at a speed of thousands of miles per second. Such being the case, you can very well imagine the distance between earth and stars. When the creation itself is such an infinite and indescribable phenomenon, how mighty and powerful must the creator be!

The stories of the Lord are most wonderful and sacred in all the three worlds.

We must transform the divine power latent in us into skill, for undertaking service to society. When knowledge is converted into skill, you acquire balance in life.

They are like sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage.

(Telugu Poem)

The stories of God cannot be described in mere words. Man imagines and describes Him based on his own estimates. Truly speaking, God is beyond all definition.

There are various types of *pramanas* (experiences) in this world. They are *pratyaksha pramana* (direct experience), *anumana pramana* (experience based on inference), *dvaita pramana* (experience based on duality), and *advaita pramana* (experience based on non-duality). As God is beyond all these *pramanas*, He is known as *Aprameya* (immeasurable and indefinable). God is present in the heart of every man with all His Divine powers.

The beauty and grandeur of God cannot be described in words. He is extolled as '*Hiranyagarbhaya Namah*' (salutations to the one with the golden womb). *Hiranya* means gold. It is present in His heart. Just as the essence of the food partaken is supplied to all parts of the body, likewise, gold permeates His entire body. Hence, He is the most handsome One. He is the primordial basis of all beings.

Everything happens according to His Will. Since He is the creator of all beings, He is called *Prajapati*. Since He is the most intelligent One, He is called *Dakshinamurthii*. In this manner, God has infinite names. Man attributes names and forms to God based on his limited understanding and worships Him: *Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta, and Nirmala Swarupinam* (God is attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, liberated, and embodiment of sacredness). When such a divine principle is present within his own self, why does man consider himself to be small and feeble? You should give up such a feeling of inferiority. There is no greater being than the human being. In fact, divinity is immanent in the entire humanity. But, unfortunately, you are considering such a sacred human birth as trivial. As you think, so shall you become. These petty thoughts are the result of your petty mind.

When you see smoke emerging from the hills, it is an indication that there is fire. When you see the fire directly, it is called *pratyaksha pramana* (direct experience). If you see only the smoke and not the fire, you presume that there is fire behind the smoke. It is only a possibility. It is *anumana pramana* (inferential experience). It is possible that sometimes fog appears as smoke and, actually, there may not be fire in the hills. Therefore, *anumana pramana* gives rise to doubt.

Love is the only *pratyaksha pramana* (direct experience) of divinity in a human being. When a question arises as to where God is,

the immediate answer is God is love and love is God. Similarly, truth is God. There is nothing greater than truth. There is no divinity higher than truth. Truth is all-pervading. Countries may be different; but truth is one and only one. There is nothing like American truth, Japanese truth, German truth, etc. To make such distinction is the nature of petty-minded people.

We are not petty-minded and mean. We are the embodiments of infinity. Man should always remind himself that he is the embodiment of truth, embodiment of love, embodiment of bliss, etc. Man has got infinite capacity for spiritual thoughts and spiritual quest. But, does he realise his true nature?

Take, for instance, a handful of sea-sand in a plate. The scientists determine the sand as belonging to such and such country on the basis of the colour and weight of the sand. But the philosophers do not at all think that way. They say that it is God's creation and God's *maya* (illusion). Thus, there is a gulf of difference between the perceptions of the scientists and the sages. Science is like semi-circle. It starts at some place and ends at some other place. But spirituality originates and ends at the same point of origin. It is a full-circle. It is verily divinity. That is why it is said:

*Poornamadah poornamidam poornat
poornamudachyate*

*Poornasya poornamadaya poornameva
avashishyate.*

*(That is full, this is full. When the full is
taken out of the full, what remains is
again the full).*

**Pleasure is an interval
between two pains.
Therefore, we need not
go in search of pleasure.
It is very much within us.
In fact, you, yourself are
the embodiment of bliss.**

Such a divinity, which is the embodiment of fullness, is immanent in every human being. But, unfortunately, man is not making any effort to realise the divinity within. Who is protecting his body while he is fast asleep? How does the body function perfectly, even without his knowledge? Nobody knows. For creation, protection and sustenance — for everything — God is responsible. Such a divine power is immanent in every human being. In spite of this, man is depressed in times of difficulties and is elated in times of joy. But this is not the goal of his life. His true goal is to maintain a perfect state of equanimity at all times and not to get caught in 'sorrows and joys.' Pleasure is an interval between two pains. Therefore, we need not go in search of pleasure. It is very much within us. In fact, you, yourself are the embodiment of bliss.

Embodiments of Love! Always be happy and cheerful, for your innate nature is bliss. You need not go in search of happiness. Bliss emerges out of *Atma*. Whenever you wish for it, you will get it. Happiness is union with God. Therefore, always be in the company of God. Once you are in the company of God, happiness will follow you like a shadow.

Unity brings purity, and purity in turn leads to divinity. Therefore, always remember the inseparable relationship between unity, purity, and divinity and strive to achieve that.

Today, man is in search of happiness, and, in the process, is becoming a slave to happiness. This is not correct. In fact, happiness should become a slave to you, for you are verily the embodiment of the Divine *Atma*. Believe it or not, I am always blissful. You can also experience such a state of bliss. You should not go in search of happiness. Instead, happiness should follow you wherever you go.

Hanuman was a great hero in the episode of *Ramayana*. He was courageous, mighty and invincible. He possessed good qualities of character and peace. He was always happy and cheerful, chanting the divine name of Rama. You should also develop such noble qualities. First and foremost, you should become a human being in the true sense. You should develop kindness toward all. Only then do you deserve to be identified as belonging to mankind.

Embodiments of Love! You are acquiring a high level of worldly education. You are reading several great books. You are acquiring great powers. But, all these are ephemeral and evanescent. Therefore, always keep your thoughts steadily fixed on the divine power that fills your heart with bliss. The

divine power is infinite. The more you contemplate on the divine, the more and more the bliss gets multiplied. When such an infinite divine power is within your own self, why should you be exposed to difficulties?

Today, our old students have assembled here. They are undertaking several types of service activities in various parts of the country and even abroad. They are deriving great pleasure out of this service activity.

In My opinion, they should confine themselves to their own areas and render service to society, within their means. It is neither good nor necessary to associate others in their service activity, which will turn it into business. As far as possible, they should undertake such activities in their respective villages and give them happiness.

In rural areas, there is a vast scope for different service activities. A few decades ago, some people invited Me to shift to bigger cities like Mysore, saying that they would provide a big palace for Me. But, as for Me, I don't need palaces. I must stay in this small village. I have not given up My place of birth. In such place alone, mighty tasks need to be accomplished. So, I refused to move from Puttaparthi, which was then a remote village with no modern facilities.

In those days, if one were to visit Puttaparthi, one had to alight from the train at Penukonda, which was the nearest railhead, and then travel to this place in a bullock-cart. Such were the conveyances in those days. But now, one can straightaway reach Puttaparthi comfortably by air. One had to go to Anantapur by bus in those days for availing oneself of medical services.

Now, we have a Super Speciality Hospital right at our doorstep. Thus, all modern conveniences and facilities are now available in this village of Puttaparthi.

Therefore, there is no better place than a village to live in. The villages are the most valuable assets of a nation. If you serve the villagers properly, nothing could be a greater service than that. *Grama seva* is Rama seva (Selfless service to the villages is selfless service to Rama (God)).

There is no satisfaction in service undertaken in towns and cities. The urban people are indifferent and self-centred. Even if thieves break into a neighbouring house, they will not bother. On the other hand, in the villages, even for a small commotion, all the villagers will gather. Such a type of unity and camaraderie still exists in the villages. Where there is unity, there will be divinity. Where there is divinity, there will be bliss. Hence, work sincerely for the development of the village in which you are placed. Thus, all of you should work for the development of your respective villages.

Your activities should not be on the lines of political activities. By associating with various types of people, this turns into a political activity. I am not happy with that. Do come together for *bhajans* wherever you are. But do not allow separatism. All should be united.

Wherever you are, undertake service activities with a spirit of cooperation and unity. Do not strike discordant notes. For ages, India has been a peaceful country and all Indians were united like a big family. But what is the position now? In the olden days, whenever somebody visited a village, all the

The villages are the most valuable assets of a nation.

If you serve the villagers properly, nothing could be a greater service than that.

villagers used to gather round him and enquire about his welfare lovingly. Now, that spirit of love and oneness is lost, totally. Wherever you go, you will find differences and tensions even on trivial matters. Especially, after Independence, riots and disturbances are taking place in almost every part of the country. The sanctity of human life seems to be totally lost. Human life has no value. People are killed like ants and mosquitoes. These are inhuman and demonic acts. This is not what is expected of a human being.

We must transform the divine power latent in us into skill, for undertaking service to society. When knowledge is converted into skill, you acquire balance in life. In such a state of equanimity, you will develop insight. With such an insight and divine power when you undertake service activity, it will be most fruitful and beneficial to the society.

Every village in the country has to be developed in all respects. You have come from Hyderabad, Madras, America, etc., to participate in service activity. Where is the need for all this? This is not a fair where different people from different parts gather to sell their commodities.

Wherever you are, develop your area with your service. People of one place may even go to another place for developing that place. But this kind of mixing up of people from different areas adulterates the very purpose. It ends up in confusion, turns into pollution. Do not give scope for confusion and pollution of your mind with unnecessary differences.

You should always undertake service activities with a pure mind. Unity brings purity, and purity in turn leads to divinity. Therefore, always remember the inseparable relationship between unity, purity, and divinity and strive to achieve that. You may come together and work together in the spirit of sacrifice. But if people from various places come together this way for *Grama Seva* (Selfless service to the poor who are living in villages), no good accrues to the villages. Each has his own feelings and by mixing they get polluted. Then the place becomes a business centre.

Spirituality is not a business activity. Spirituality is a divine mansion. It is associated

with unity. This unity in diversity alone will bring you happiness. I wish that you cultivate that principle of unity. It is only then that the service undertaken by you will acquire value and sanctity. There is no use polluting the sacred service activity with all sorts of differences. A small example. Gold is in the form of deposits in the gold mines. When you take it out and purify it, it becomes pure 24 carat gold. It acquires great value. However, when you add other metals like copper, its value comes down. Not only that. Its brightness also comes down. If you add some more metals, it loses its value altogether. Our heart is like a temple of gold. It is *Hiranyagarbha*. We should never defile that *Hiranyagarbha*. It should always be bright and shining.

Embodiments of Love! Share love with everybody. Always maintain unity and purity. As you have planned earlier, you can commence your musical programme now.

Discourse on New Year Day 2003,
Prasanthi Nilayam, 1 January 2003

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SEEING UNITY IN DIVERSITY IS TRUE SPIRITUALITY

*All names and forms are manifestations of the Supreme Being,
Who is the embodiment of peace and auspiciousness.
He is existence, knowledge, bliss Absolute, and non-dual.
He is Truth, Goodness, Beauty (Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram).*

(Sanskrit verse)

Embodiments of Divine Atma! People today acquire many types of education in this world, but they lack the knowledge of humanness. They see diversity in unity but cannot see unity in diversity. Embodiments of love! It is very easy to see diversity in unity; anyone can do that. But it requires a lot of effort to recognise unity underlying the entire diversity that exists in this world.

Recognise the Divine Principle Present in All

People today should try to acquire the knowledge of the *Atmic* principle that is uniformly present in all. One who knows the principle of the *Atma* knows everything. Consider all human beings in this world as one and recognise the oneness of the entire mankind.

*Religions are many but goal is one.
Clothes are many but yarn is one.
Jewels are many but gold is one.
Cows are many but milk is one.*

There is unity in the entire creation of God, but mankind causes many divisions in it. Unity of the entire mankind is the need of the hour. When you develop unity, there will be purity in your heart. Where there is purity, there is divinity. Unity, purity, and divinity are closely interlinked and interdependent. But people today are drifting away from unity. I have been saying, "Religions are many, but goal is one."

**Always love all.
When you love everyone in
this manner, all evil qualities
like hatred, anger, and greed
will leave you. When you
become free from these evil
qualities, you will attain
liberation easily.**

So many people have gathered in this hall. Though they took different routes to come here, the destination for all of them was the same. In the same way, all have to reach one God. Divinity is immanent in every human being. Human life is not possible without divinity. “God is in the form of a human being (*Daivam manusha rupena*).” Who is a human being? Without understanding the meaning of this term, people consider someone as a human being who is endowed with human form, with hands, feet, ears, eyes, etc. like a human being. But it is not so.

In fact, a human is not different from God. A human is not a separate entity. One who realises one’s oneness with God is a true human being. There may be differences in physical forms of human beings, but the same divine principle is present in all. However, some people cause differences between person and person by various ways. This is the cause of all types of conflicts, sorrows, and miseries in the world today. When one understands the truth that the same divine principle is present in all, there will be no room for differences

and troubles. Therefore, always focus on the divinity of humanity. All our difficulties arise when we multiply our differences, forgetting our divinity. Therefore, we should firmly install the divine principle in our heart, which is the same in everyone.

You can accomplish everything by chanting the divine name

I told you a few days ago, how Hanuman crossed the ocean and reached Lanka by the power of the divine name of Rama. Before this, all the monkeys (*vanaras*) gathered on the seashore were asked the question, “Who can cross the ocean in one leap?” Some of them said they could cover a distance of 40 leagues; others said they could go up to 50 or 60 leagues. But when the same question was put to Hanuman, he said, “By the grace of Rama, I can cover any distance.” While others merely had a limited understanding of Rama’s divinity, only Hanuman had total perception of the reality.

It is not spiritual practices like repetition of God’s name, penance, *yoga*, and rituals that give us direct perception of God. Many people have been undertaking these practices, but what have they experienced and achieved? These are merely physical and external practices.

It is the name of God that is most important. When you know this truth, you will know everything. That is why I keep on telling you from time to time “*Hari bhajan bina sukha shanti nahin...* (There can be no happiness and peace without chanting the name of God).” You can accomplish everything by chanting the name of God alone. Hanuman crossed the vast ocean by con-

stantly chanting the name of Rama. But other monkeys misunderstood this truth.

At the time of construction of the bridge over the ocean also, Hanuman told the monkeys to write 'Ra' on one stone and 'ma' on the other and throw them in the ocean. The stones would then join together to form the bridge. Rama, Lakshmana, and the monkeys crossed the ocean and reached Lanka by walking on this bridge constructed on the principle of unity of the divine name of Rama. We should treasure this truth in our heart.

Instead of observing differences on the basis of names like Rama, Lakshmana, Bhima, etc., we should recognise the *Atmic* principle in them and consider all as embodiments of divinity. Spiritual practices like repetition of the name, meditation, sacrifices, and *yoga* have little significance if the divine name is absent in your heart.

You have a name, which was given to you by your parents after your birth; you were not born with this name. What you are born with is the principle of Rama. That is the *Atma*. Call it *Atma*, call it *Om-kara*, call it Rama, all refer to the same divine principle. Even if you come across your enemy, offer your salutations to them. Your salutations do not go to your enemy, they reach God. When you greet your enemy lovingly, saying "hello," they will also give up hatred and become friendly with you. But people today out of their ego identify themselves with their names. They consider themselves as Ramaiah, Krishnaiah, etc., instead of saying "I am *Brahman (Aham Brahmasmi)*". This is the root cause of all our differences.

You may chant any name of God, but you should have firm faith that the *Atma* within you is the divine principle. Then you will not have any difficulties.

The name that is universally present in all is the name of Rama. When you offer your salutations to others while contemplating on Rama, your salutations will reach Rama. Therefore, do all actions to please God. All our daily chores like cooking, eating, etc. are suffused with the principle of Rama. People undertake worldly, external, and physical practices because they do not understand this subtle truth.

Ego and Attachment are the Cause of Bondage

All the developments in science are only at the worldly and physical level. Scientists have developed planes that can fly at high speed and cover hundreds of miles in a minute. But they expose people to all sorts of dangers. All worldly things are bound to perish one day or the other. A potter makes many pots, but if they slip from our hand, they break into pieces.

There is no greatness in all that we do for our individual benefit; whatever we do should be beneficial to society and the community. Our welfare lies in the welfare of society, but, today, nobody thinks about society. Wherever we go, we find selfishness and self-interest rampant. That is why

You cannot be happy when others are not happy. Therefore, pray for the welfare of all, including small creatures and insects. This is the real meaning of unity.

there are so many conflicts and differences in the world.

There are divisions even in one family. Due to the increase of differences among people, unity has been shattered. Therefore, strive for unity. You and your neighbour are one. There is difference only in your names, but divinity immanent in both of you is the same. There is no mistake in calling people by different names when the divine principle of unity is firmly embedded in your heart.

Perform your duty as a householder. But this is your worldly duty, and you must recognise your duty as a divine being (*daiva dharma*), which is universal. That is why I address you as “Embodiments of Divine *Atma* (*Divyatma Swarupulara*).” When a man wants to say that what he is saying is absolutely true, he would use the term ‘*Atma sakshi*’ meaning *Atma* is his witness. Therefore, we should conduct ourselves recognising the principle of *Atma*.

Unity of the world today has been destroyed due to the abnormal increase in the differences of people. Therefore, do not observe differences on the basis of names and forms. Develop faith in the *Atmic* principle. *Atma* is only one. It is indivisible and cannot be broken into pieces. Only the body dies, but

the *Atma* lives forever. It is said that every human being undergoes the cycle of birth and death. But it is only the human body that takes birth, grows, and dies, not the *Atma*. Therefore, know the oneness of the *Atmic* principle.

Let people say anything, you should recognise that your *Atma* is your witness. Do not give up this divine principle under any circumstances. Whatever you do, do it for the sake of *Atma*. Whatever delicious items of food you eat, consider them as an offering to God. Whatever you do in life, do it with the feeling of offering it to God. “Do all actions to please God (*Sarva karma bhagavad pretyartham*).” When you have such sacred feelings, you can attain liberation easily.

One can attain *moksha* (liberation) only when one gives up *moha* (worldly attachment). The feeling of ‘I’ is the cause of ego and the feeling of ‘mine’ is the basis of attachment. Ego and attachment are the cause of your bondage. Therefore, first and foremost, try to get rid of ego and attachment. As much as you reduce these two, that much closer you will get to liberation. Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure. Reduce the burden of your desires. But people, on the other hand, keep on adding to the burden of desires as they grow. As their desires increase, humanness in them decreases, and they lose awareness of their divinity. Therefore, we should develop divinity in us. Everything else is bound to perish one day or the other. Howsoever safe and secure we may keep our possessions, ultimately, we have to lose them. We may deposit all our money in a

big bank, put it under lock and key, and arrange proper security for it. In spite of all that, we are bound to lose it sometime or other. Do not have temptation for things that are perishable. What remains with us forever at all places is the principle of the *Atma*.

Develop the spirit of unity

Though thousands of years have passed since Rama incarnated as the son of Dasaratha, all people, from a child to an old man, even today chant His name. People say, 'Rama, Rama' when they encounter any difficulty. This sacred name is whispered into the ears of a dying man. It is Rama's name that you should love and nothing else. Since He attracted everyone, He was given the name 'Rama.'

You may chant any name of God, but you should have firm faith that the *Atma* within you is the divine principle. Then you will not have any difficulties.

We accumulate so much money, but for whom? Can we carry even a *paisa* with us when we depart from this world? No, no. We leave even our body here. The mind may waiver and the intellect may be clouded, but the *Atma* remains as the eternal witness. That is the principle of Rama.

The name Rama does not denote any particular form. It denotes the Divine Principle. Therefore, always chant the divine name, be it Rama, Krishna, or any other name. Shiva means auspiciousness. It is only the name of God that imparts auspiciousness to us. We may say Srinivasa, Venkatesha, Rama, etc. All these denote the same divine principle. Install this divine principle in your heart.

**Whatever work we do,
we should do it with the
spirit of unity. Perform all
your actions to please God.
That will surely lead to
universal good.**

People chant 'Ram, Ram, Ram,' performing repetition of the name. When the repetition comes to an end, Rama is also forgotten. But we should never forget Rama. Whatever work we may be doing; we should constantly chant the divine name. In the *Kali Yuga* (the present era), remembrance of the name (*namasmarana*) is prescribed as the means to attain liberation. Realising this truth, Guru Nanak started the practice of community singing. All should come together and sing *bhajans* (devotional songs). The mind of some may go in other directions. But at least a few of them will focus it on God's name. Therefore, when you sing *bhajans* in a group, the prayers of at least one or two may reach God, which will benefit all.

Do we eat all the fruits that ripen on a tree? No. We eat only a few and distribute the rest to others. We prepare a desert in our house. All the family members partake of it; one who prepares it does not consume the whole lot.

When Dasaratha performed sacrifice for the birth of a son (*putrakameshti yajna*), an effulgent being emerged from the sacrificial fire and gave him a vessel of sweet pudding (*payasam*) to distribute to his three

You will realise divinity when you burn all your impurities. When you develop love, all your evil qualities like hatred, etc., will wither away.

wives, Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi. (Here Swami narrated the story of the birth of Rama, Lakshmana, Bharata, and Shatrughna and revealed the mystery of why Lakshmana always followed Rama and Shatrughna followed Bharata.)

There was such a strong bond of love between Rama and Lakshmana as well as between Bharata and Shatrughna that they never left each other's company. See how much power this unity holds! Union is strength. When you don't talk to each other and don't develop unity, you achieve nothing. Even if some feelings of enmity arise in you, try to adjust with each other. Devotees should conduct themselves gracefully with proper understanding and adjustment. Even if someone criticises the deity you worship, do not react to that criticism. Rather, think only that your deity has assumed the form of the critic. Praise and censure make no difference to God.

Always love all. When you love everyone in this manner, all evil qualities like hatred, anger, and greed will leave you. When you become free from these evil qualities, you will attain liberation easily. You claim that you are a devotee, but what is the use when you have hatred, anger, jealousy, hypocrisy, malice, etc. in you? These evil qualities will

ruin your life. Talk smilingly to others and develop the spirit of unity.

So many people have come here. All of them have participated in *bhajans*, but how many have true devotion in their heart? Even if there are ten people with true devotion, it is enough.

All of you should imbibe the spirit of unity. Whomsoever you come across, say, "He is my brother, she is my sister." In this way, consider all as your brothers and sisters and conduct yourself with unity. All are children of God. Therefore, if at any time feelings of hatred develop between you and others, remind yourself that you are not separate from them. Consider that all are one, attain unity, and experience its bliss. Seeing unity in diversity is divinity and true spirituality. Study of scriptures, performing rituals, doing worship, etc. do not signify true spirituality. Recognising the unity of the *Atmic* principle is true spirituality. When you realise this unity, you will earn divine grace.

You are always chanting, "Sai Ram, Sai Ram, Sai Ram," but this alone will not develop devotion in you. You should imbibe the spirit of unity and chant the divine name to develop true devotion. If you have even a trace of true devotion in you, do good to others and live in harmony with them. Do not hate anyone. Love all. If you have love and faith, you will develop nonviolence. Only then can you experience bliss.

Unity of the Human Race is Imminent

What is the real purpose of telling you to develop truth, righteousness, peace, and love? Righteousness emerges from truth.

“There is no *Dharma* greater than adherence to truth (*Sathyannasti paro dharma*).” Without truth, there can be no righteousness. Similarly, love cannot exist without righteousness. If you have love, you will not hate or disrespect anybody. Truth, righteousness, peace, and love (*Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, and Prema*) are the primary human qualities. Anger, jealousy, malice, hypocrisy, lust, hatred, and greed are not human qualities. If you have love and peace, all other virtues will develop in you automatically.

People keep on repeating, “I want peace, I want peace.” Can anybody get peace by this type of constant repetition? No, not at all. You can have peace only when you develop love. Peace is not a commodity that you can buy in the market. It comes from a heart that is filled with love.

Where does love come from? Love comes from righteousness, and righteousness comes from truth. Hence, truth is the source of righteousness, righteousness is the source of love, and love is the source of peace. Where there are both peace and love, nonviolence comes there on its own. Therefore, truth, righteousness, peace, love, and nonviolence are the qualities of a true human being. Consider them as your five life-breaths (*pancha pranas*).

Today, people have forgotten these five life-breaths of human qualities. Instead they harbour evil qualities like lust, anger, etc., considering them as their life-breaths. That is why people are enmeshed in so many difficulties. When you develop human qualities, you will surely attain peace. Therefore, preserve your innate human qualities like

the five life-breaths. Keep away from evil qualities like lust, anger, etc.

Believe it or not, in the next 25 to 30 years, the entire human race will become one. People of all religions like Hindu, Muslim, Christian, etc. will be united. There will be complete unity in the world. It is from *Bharat* (India) that the spirit of devotion for God will spread to all other parts of the world. Treasure this truth in your heart.

People consider culture as a way of life. No, no, it is not so. Unity of all is culture; purity is culture. You will realise divinity when you burn all your impurities. When you develop love, all your evil qualities like hatred, etc., will wither away.

People develop hatred and jealousy against those who excel them, saying, “Look how much money he accumulated! What a high position he attained!” They hate those who have greater achievements. This is not good. If someone has achieved more than you, consider your own incapability as the cause of your lesser achievement. Expand your love and broaden your heart. Then you will succeed in achieving more.

Victory and defeat depend on the feelings of your heart. It is with reference to this that the *Vedas* declare, “The mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of man (*Manaeva manushyanam karanam bandha mokshayo*).” Our mind is the root cause of our feelings of love or hatred. Whatever work we do, we should do it with the spirit of unity. Perform all your actions to please God. That will surely lead to universal good. After *bhajan*, we all chant, “May all the worlds be happy (*Samasta lokah sukhino bhavantu*)! What is the great achievement if

you alone are happy? All should be happy. Your happiness lies in the happiness of all, your well-being lies in the well-being of all. You cannot be happy when others are not happy. Therefore, pray for the welfare of all, including small creatures and insects. This is the real meaning of unity. Only the heart that desires the well-being of all is dear to God.

All that I have said today is profound truth. This is the essence of devotion. What does devotion mean? It is not a big ocean. It is an ocean of bliss. That is what is described as:

*God is the embodiment of eternal bliss,
Bestower of Supreme Joy,
Wisdom absolute,
Beyond the pair of opposites,
Expansive and pervasive like the sky,
The goal indicated by the aphorism "That Thou Art,"
One without a second,
Eternal, pure, unchanging,
Witness of all functions of the intellect,
Beyond all mental conditions and the three attributes of purity (sat-
wa), passion (rajas), and inertia (tamas).
Nityanandam,
Parama Sukhadam,
Kevalam Jnanamurtim,
Dwandwateetam,
Gagana Sadrisham,
Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam,
Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam, Achalam,
Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam.*

We should attain this eternal bliss.

Discourse given at Brindavan, 31 May 2008

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UNITY, PURITY, DIVINITY

During his childhood man develops absorbing interest in play in the company of other children.

In youth and middle age, he is entangled in worldly matters and deeply engrossed in money earning.

Finally in old age, he craves for this and that without contemplating on God even at that ripe age.

Thus, he wastes his precious human birth.

(Telugu poem)

In this world, there are millions of educated people. Right from a child to a learned old man, everyone is interested in reading books and acquiring knowledge. But in what way are they benefited by the acquisition of bookish knowledge? Such education can only help you to eke out a livelihood. Right from a pauper to a millionaire, everybody wants his children to be well educated. Parents are prepared to spend any amount of money and they even borrow money (even beyond their means) to provide quality education to their children. In spite of the fact that the parents face a lot of hardship in educating their children, the children do not have any gratitude towards their benefactors. They do not introspect, “Who is responsible for all my development? Who has made me what I am today?” Under these circumstances, we should enquire into the true purpose of education. One may study a number of books and master various branches of knowledge, but does he enjoy peace and tranquillity? All the knowledge that we acquire from books can only take care of our physical needs. The fact is, true knowledge is latent in everyone. Women do not lag behind men in academic excellence. People think that education confers on them respect and esteem. But people lack true wisdom in spite of their high academic achievements.

First, purify your senses
and develop unity.
Consider all as your
brothers and sisters
and live in harmony.

Education Must Result in Transformation

At present, parents want their children to pursue solely job-oriented education. But what is the use of such education which does not bring about transformation among children? Neither are the children benefited nor are they able to render any help to their parents. Modern man develops ego on account of his educational achievements. Humility is the hallmark of true education. If a man lacks *viveka* (discrimination) and *vinaya* (humility), all his education is of no value. You should understand that your education is meant for the welfare and progress of society. But, in what way is society benefited by educated people? Actually, you are learning many things from society and derive benefit from it. But power of discrimination which is found even in uneducated people is not to be found in the so-called educated people today. When this is the true state of affairs why should the educated get inflated with ego? There is scarcely any humility among students today. They show no respect towards elders. They do not realise their responsibilities towards society. What is the use of merely acquiring bookish knowledge if one does not respect elders and serve society? One who leads such a life is not true to his nature. His walking, talking,

reading, writing, everything becomes an affectation. If this is the result of academic education, why should one go to college at all? Every student must enquire into himself, "What am I doing in the college? What am I supposed to do?" Only when he conducts such self-enquiry, can he understand the true meaning of education. Mere bookish knowledge is not true education. It is merely transfer of what is contained in *pustaka* (book) to *mastaka* (head) and vice-versa. In this manner, people are entangled between *pustaka* and *mastaka* without really understanding the true meaning of education. They are wasting their time in the pursuit of bookish knowledge instead of acquiring practical knowledge. No doubt there is a lot of information in *pustaka*, but what purpose does it serve if the *mastaka* is filled with filth? You can never achieve the desired results from such an education. The same was explained by the chief guest in his address. "Though all people learn and study, what is the ultimate result out of this?" he questioned. People spend thousands of rupees for acquiring academic education. What is the role the educated people play in society today? Do they contribute for peace in society? Do they try to bring about transformation in individuals? No. In fact, they are unable to inculcate discipline to their own children. Most children may pretend to be well behaved and humble in the presence of their parents, but they behave like rowdies once they step out of their houses.

Students should strive to earn a good name in society. Today's education is making the students materialistic. It does not prepare the students to turn inward to listen to

their inner voice. One should acquire *Atma prabodha* (*Atmic* knowledge). That is true education. Without awareness of the Self, all other knowledge is useless. Why should one pursue such education?

Deeds Must Follow Words

People are interested in exercising their influence and power; they are not making efforts to cleanse their mind and heart. This is the result of modern education. People have learnt to talk sweetly, but they do not translate their words into action.

Embodiments of Love! Mere learning by rote the contents of books is not important. You should imbibe the *gandha* (essence) of all *granthas* (texts). That is true education. People read a number of books, but what is the use? They merely quote what others have said. Is this what you are supposed to learn? You should listen to your inner voice and share it with others. But scarcely anybody thinks on these lines today.

Embodiments of Love! You must put into practice at least one or two principles of what you have learnt and set an example to others. There are many learned scholars, but do they practise what they have learnt? They appear to be people of eminence ('chief'), but they are cheap in their behaviour. The end of education is character. We should consider character as our very life-breath. Education without character is useless like half-cooked rice. We should practise at least one or two principles and only then venture to preach to others.

There are three important principles in every human being? *Manas* (Mind), *Buddhi*

(Intellect) and *Atma* (Self). What is the nature of Self? It is all-pervasive. True education is that which originates from the heart. The reference in this context is to the spiritual heart and not the physical heart. There are many noble souls who are setting ideals to society by translating their knowledge into action. If you do not act in a principled manner, all your education becomes useless. It is what you practise that matters, not what you speak. Wherever you may go, your behaviour should be exemplary. That is what pleases Me.

Strive To Acquire Spiritual Knowledge

Happiness is union with God. You are not ordinary mortals. All are essentially divine. In order to realise your true nature, practise what you preach. Only then can you experience bliss. Verily, bliss is the true nature of man. Why should you give up that which is natural to you and lead an artificial life? Wherever you see, in colleges and schools, students lack practical knowledge. They give importance, only to bookish knowledge and become 'books' themselves. True education is that which originates from the heart. Heart is very important for human existence. When a child is born, the first thing that people observe is the heart beat. You should rely more on your spiritual heart than on the physical heart. Conscience is another name for spiritual heart. Keep your heart pure. That should be your main endeavour. Whatever is done with love and purity of heart will confer bliss on you. In fact, bliss is latent in everyone. But man is unaware of this truth. One should make every effort to manifest one's innate bliss in

If your heart is not suffused with love, your life will become artificial. Life is meaningless without love.

him. What is the nature of this bliss? *Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam, Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam* (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, He is the bestower of great joy, He is wisdom absolute, beyond the pair of opposites). It transcends duality. So long one is immersed in duality one cannot experience bliss. First of all one should understand the principle of unity. Unity leads to purity and purity leads to divinity. A true human being is one who strives for unity, purity and divinity. Otherwise, he is no better than birds and animals. First, purify your senses and develop unity. Consider all as your brothers and sisters and live in harmony. In public meetings, we hear the speakers addressing people as brothers and sisters. But do they really mean what they say? Do you find unity among brothers and sisters today? No. True happiness lies in unity. Human life can be compared to a tree. Our relations are like branches and sub-branches. Contemplation of God is like a flower from which you will get the fruit of bliss.

Students! You can certainly acquire secular knowledge. But you should not rest contented with that. You should turn inward and acquire spiritual knowledge as well. Only then can you attain peace.

Embodiments of Love! Love is the essence of education. Bereft of love, education is artificial. Therefore, develop love in the

first instance. Understand that the Indweller is the same though bodies are different. Hold on to this fundamental principle and experience *ananda* (bliss). So many of you have assembled here. Everyone's attention is focused on Swami. In the same manner, let your mind be focused on divinity always. Contemplate on God. Serve your fellowmen. If a person who has been starving for ten days is served a sumptuous feast, you can well imagine the joy he experiences. When all the tanks and lakes are dried to a trickle, you can imagine the joy that a continuous downpour brings with it. Similarly, serve those who are in desperate need of your help. Give them happiness. You can attain divinity only through service. Human life is most precious. But man is behaving like an animal and thus wasting his life.

Students! Being *Vidyarthi* (seekers of knowledge, students), you should endeavour to acquire true *vidya* (education). There is no point in merely going through books without understanding the true meaning of *vidya*. Always contemplate on the fundamental principle of life. Beings are many, but the Divine principle is one and the same. Hence, recognise the principle of divinity that is present in all in the form of *Atma*. *Atma* is *adhara* (support) and body is *adheya* (the supported). Consider *Atma* as the basis of your life and everything else will be taken care of. Everyone can have the vision of the *Atma*. All are endowed with such power. Enquire into yourself what have you achieved by going through a number of voluminous books? You have become hard-hearted. If this is the result of your education why should you study at all? First of all, develop love. When you have love in

you, everyone will become your friend. If your heart is not suffused with love, your life will become artificial. Life is meaningless without love. If everyone shares his love with his neighbour, there will be no room for hatred at all. Share your love with everyone and live like brothers and sisters. Today we find conflicts and differences even among brothers and sisters, because they lack proper understanding.

Understand the Principle of Oneness

People do not understand the true meaning of love. Their love is tainted with physical and worldly feelings. When you understand the principle of love and develop love to love relationship, all will become one. The *Veda* (scripture) says, "*Sahasra Seersha Purushah ...*" It means that all heads, all eyes, all feet are His. Once you understand the principle of oneness that is present in all, you can live in tune with the true spirit of brotherhood.

Our hand has five fingers and each of them has a specific duty assigned to it. All the fingers work in unison and harmony while performing a task. Once an argument ensued among the five fingers of the hand as to which finger among them is the greatest. The thumb claimed, "It is not possible to undertake any work without me. Hence, I am the greatest." Then the index finger smiled and said, "Look here, Oh thumb! How can you perform any task without my support? Moreover, I am used as pointer to identify individuals. Hence, I am greater than you." The middle finger intervened and said, "There is no point in what you say. I am the tallest among all the fingers.

Two of you on one side and two on the other are serving me as ADCs (aide de camps — assistants). Hence, I am the greatest." Then the ring-finger said, "I feel like laughing at your ignorance. Don't you know that people adorn me with gold rings studded with precious stones like diamond, emerald, topaz, etc.?" Hence, I am your King." In the end, the little finger said, "I always lead from the front when it comes to teaching a lesson to someone and punishing the guilty. Hence, I am your leader and you have to follow me." As the fingers were arguing among themselves in this manner, the heart intervened and said, "Oh ignorant ones! Each one of you is as important as the other. One cannot perform any task if there is no unity and harmony among you. In fact, you represent the five human values which are like five life-breaths of a human being." Hearing these words of wisdom, the five fingers realised their mistake and bent their head in shame. A deep enquiry reveals that the heart is the greatest of all. Body, mind and intellect are mere instruments. Hence, one should follow the advice of the heart (conscience) in all his endeavours. Understand that all are one and each one is equally important. Do not become egoistic thinking that you alone are very important. Do not waste your precious time in vain argumentation. Be friendly with all and face the challenges of life with unity and harmony.

Students! You have to lead your lives in an ideal manner. In fact, all ideals are latent in you. They cannot be learnt from books. The principle of 'I' is common in all. If someone asks, "Who is Sai Baba?" I respond saying, 'I'. If someone asks who is the Vice

Chancellor? He will say, 'I'. The single letter 'I' represents the principle of *Atma*. The *Vedas* declare, *Ekameva Adviteeyam Brahma* (God is one without a second). True spirituality lies in knowing your true Self. But you are unable to know your true Self as you identify yourself with the body. Identification with the body gives rise to ego. One with ego cannot know the reality. Your welfare and also of others will be ensured when you have a firm conviction that all are one. Develop such a spirit of unity. You cannot expect divinity to manifest in you unless you cultivate such unity. The *Veda* has exhorted:

*Let us all move together, let us all grow together,
Let us all stay united and share our knowledge,
Let us live together with friendship and harmony.*

(Telugu poem)

Some students do not share even their textbooks with others. How can they attain happiness if they are so self-centred and narrow-minded? You should all stand united. Where there is unity, there is bliss.

Embodiments of Love! There is only one thing that you have to learn. Develop love. The same principle of love is present in you, in Me and in everyone. I see only love in others. Hence, all are one for Me. You too should develop such feelings of love and equality. All are one, be alike to everyone. This is what you have to learn today.

Embodiments of Love! Along with the acquisition of secular knowledge, you should

also make efforts to understand the principle of oneness. Only then can you achieve unity and harmony. Take for instance this rose flower. It consists of a number of petals. Likewise, our heart can be compared to a flower and the virtues are like petals. The petals of a rose flower may fade and fall by the next day, but the flower of heart remains ever fresh. It symbolises the principle of oneness. People worship the *navagrahas* (nine planets) to invoke their blessings. You might have observed that there is perfect unity and harmony among the nine planets. (*Bhagawan* with a wave of his hand materialised a gold ring studded with nine types of gems.) Here you see a *navaratna* ring. Whoever wears this ring will be protected by the *navagrahas* wherever he goes.

Develop unity. Be courageous and develop the necessary strength to face the vicissitudes of life. I don't want to take much of your time. Whatever you have learnt here, let it be imprinted in your heart. Only then can you attain peace and your education will become meaningful.

Embodiments of Love! I shower My love and blessings on one and all. Be always united and spend your time in a bliss. Make your parents happy. Your body is given to you by your parents. Hence, first of all, express your gratitude to them for this gift. Only then can you find fulfilment in life. *Bhagawan* concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan*, "*Prema Muditha Manase Kaho*".

Discourse at International Conference of Educators, Prasanthi Nilayam, 17 August 2005

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THE SAI RELIGION

Whom the Muslims adore as Allah, the Christians as Jehovah, the Vaishnavas as Phullabjaaksha and the Shaivites as Shambhu, who grants, in answer to their several prayers, health, prosperity and happiness to all, wherever they may be, He, the One God, is the God of all mankind.

India has been teaching since ages the message of the Spirit and the means to gain and ensure equanimity and joy. She has stood forth as the preceptor of the world for centuries. The prayer that she has taught her people is: *Lokah samastha sukhino bhavanthu* (May all people everywhere be happy). This is the consummation of Vedic thought since time the seers and *yogis* (God-centred persons) who guided the populace, and the chaste mothers who reared generations in the atmosphere of spiritual effort.

But due to vicissitudes in the country's history, when the people were subjected to pressures and counter-pressures, these ideals suffered a set-back. The abstractions of faith received concrete form and got crystallised into specific identifiable names and forms. Each new attitude or aptitude, each new concretisation, became a special sect and every theory enveloped itself in its own shell.

Growth of new sects and sets of belief in India

Thus the one Vedic religion became the parent of a number of sects and sets of belief, like *Gaanaapaathya* (centring around the concept of Ganapathi), *Shaaktheya* (centring around the concept of Cosmic Energy as the expression of the Divine), *Soura* (centring around the Sun as the source, sustenance and goal of spiritual achievement), *Chaarvaka* (centring around the concept of pleasure and material prosperity) and *Veerasaiva* (centring around Shiva as the inner motivator of all beings). Every one of these sects, and many more besides, elaborated their own rituals and modes of worship, their own priorities in spiritual attainment and their own body of doctrines about the individual, the objective world and God.

If only each one lives up to the ideals propounded by the founders of one's religion, unaffected by greed or hate, the world will be a happier and more peaceful habitation for man.

The purpose of these codes and modes was, in all cases, to purify the mind and insist on the practice of high moral virtues. But this was soon ignored, and importance came to be attached to superficial conformity and outer purity. The craving for personal aggrandisement and power made every sect, faith and religion, rigid and dry. There is a great need today to discover the inner spring of all faiths, the spring that fertilises the outer rites and ceremonies. A little quiet study will reveal that there is an undercurrent of moral enthusiasm and spiritual adventure.

There is only one caste, the caste of Humanity

The word generally used for religion is *matha*; the word to indicate the mind is *mathi*. Putting the two together it can be said that *matha* is primarily engaged or ought to be engaged in straightening and strengthening the *mathi*. The goal, the purpose, the key, the essence of all creeds, faiths and religions is just this. The sublimation of the mind of man to guarantee liberation for the individual concerned and happiness for the society of which he is a unit. Principles and practices have grouped

around this prime need, and various creeds are the result.

Religions attempt to implant holy ideals in the heart of man, but man does not allow them to sprout and grow. His egoistic craving for power and competitive success has, in most cases, persuaded him to use religion as an instrument of torture and persecution. Instead of uniting mankind in a common endeavour, it has become a system of walled enclosures, guarded by hate and fanaticism. So each religion is an armed camp sunk in self-aggrandisement, trying to wean others into itself and preventing defections from itself. Religion, therefore, is being condemned as the root of chaos and conflict. In spite of great progress in many other areas of life, religious animosity is aflame even today in many parts of the world.

It has to be emphasised that religion is not the root cause of this state of affairs. The factional fights and fanatic hatred are due to the unruly ego that is given free play. Religion strives to destroy just this vicious tendency. So it has to be supported, not condemned. What has to be condemned is the narrow, perverted attitude of hating those who do not agree with you or who hold different opinions of the mysterious force that animates the universe. Religious wars and conflicts breed in the slime of ignorance and avarice. When people are blind to the truth that the human family is one indivisible Unity, they grope in the dark and are afraid of strange touch. The cultivation of love, alone, can convince man of this truth that there is only one caste—the caste of Humanity, and only one

religion—the religion of Love. Since no religion upholds violence or despises love, it is wrong to ascribe the chaos to religion.

The diversity we experience is not a true picture

It is also not advisable to engage in campaigns of vilification or exaggerated propagation of any religion with a view to draw votaries. If only each one lives up to the ideals propounded by the founders of one's religion, unaffected by greed or hate, the world will be a happier and more peaceful habitation for man.

The religion of the Hindus stressed the Unity of all creation and declared that the diversity we experience is not a true picture. Since only the pure mind can experience oneness, the religious teachers advocated duality and even multiplicity of deities. The most widespread of these qualities is the Shaivite and Vaishnavite faiths, centred around the Shiva and Vishnu aspects of the One. This process of splitting into diverse viewpoints has taken place in all the major religions.

Islam has the Shia and Sunni sects; Christianity has Catholics and Protestants. But however deep the cleavage, no sect denies God and no sect extols violence and falsehood. Names may be different, the facets emphasised may be different, but the Almighty Providence is denoted as Absolute and Eternal. The terminology may be different, but the concept is not different. God may be referred to as Allah, prayer may be called *namaaz*, priests may be known as *khaajees*, scholars may be hailed as *mullahs*. The undercurrent of energising power in all cases is love, love of all beings towards

When you seek joy from something outside you, remember that a far greater joy lies in wait within your own inner consciousness.

all beings. The founders had always in view the Unity of all life and the progressive march of man from mere humanness to the heights of Divinity.

Shankaracharya's Adwaita philosophy

The first among the interpreters of the *Vedas* (most ancient revealed scriptures) to found a school of philosophy and lay down the path of spiritual discipline to benefit from that school, is Shankaracharya, born in the State of Kerala. During his very short life, he established on secure foundations of logic and intuition, the truth that there is only One God and that all else is an appearance of the One Reality. This is the 'no-two' or *adwaita* philosophy or faith, that explains the individual nature and God in perfect harmony. The Vedic axioms – *Ekoham Bahushyaam* (I am One, let Me become many), *lshwara sarva bhoothanam* (God is immanent in all), *lshavaasya idam sarvam* (All this enveloped and penetrated by God) – are thus illumined by the intellect of Shankaracharya into patent truths.

Merging in the Source is the ultimate destiny

Monism, as propounded by Shankaracharya on the basis of Vedic texts, seemed to the majority of individuals too simple a solu-

The holy duty of man is to be ever aware of the *Atman* (Divine Spirit) that is installed in every living being. This will make him conscious of the kinship he has with all.

tion to satisfy their inner urges. They had in them the yearning to worship, to dedicate themselves to a higher power. They could not grasp the truth of their inner Reality being the one and only. Their emotions and activities had to be sublimated by disciplines of devotion. Therefore, Ramanujacharya commented upon the *Vedic* texts and religious scriptures from a new point of view. This made the *adwaita* take on a special outlook. So it was called *visish-ta* (special) *adwaita* (non-dualism). The path of devotion was laid down to enable man to merge with God.

The goal is mergence, as the rivers know and strive for. The waters of the sea are raised by the Sun as clouds into the sky and the clouds pour them as rain back onto the earth, to flow back into the sea through many a ravine, as a stream or tributary-fed river. Merging in the Source from which one took form, is the ultimate destiny. The river has the passion of overwhelming love which leads it down the slopes until it reaches the loved one, where the lover, loved and love, all three merges in one illuminating ecstasy. *Prema* (highest love) is the attachment to God that does not allow anything to interfere or diminish its quality

or depth. God is loved by the *bhaktha* (devotee) for His sake and not for any incidental benefit or blessing. It is spontaneous, sustaining and sublime, like a child before the mirror enjoying the reflections of its own pranks and gestures. Complete surrender to the extent of the annihilation of one's own individuality is also beyond most aspirants. Sugar cannot be tasted and enjoyed by sugar; you have to be an ant so that you can revel in the sweetness of the stuff. This craving of man was sought to be satisfied by Madhvacharya, who declared that *the jeeva* (individual Soul) will remain ever separate from the Universal, and there can be no merging. In *adwaita*, a flash of intellectual illumination reveals that the *Atman* (Divinity) alone exists, and that all else is deluding appearance. The *visishtaadwaita* posits that the river is an integral part of the sea. *Dwaita* points out that the joy derived from adoration and worship is enough to draw the fulfilling *grace* of God.

All paths laid down by all seers lead to the same goal

There were other seers, too, who laid down paths towards the same goal. They announced that the universe belongs to God and that man should not desire to accumulate or appropriate any portion of the Divine treasure. They advised that the sapling of devotion must be protected from the pests of sloth, doubt and fanaticism by the cultivation of valour and vigilance.

Of the major religions I may mention one, namely Buddhism. Buddha was so agonised by the suffering that haunts the life of man that he investigated the behaviour of the mind and intellect of man and discovered

remedial disciplines; he analysed the vagaries of the mind which lead man into the whirlpools of desires; he analysed the ways of reason, too and spotted the areas where prejudice takes root; above all, he preached surrender to *dharma* (righteousness), to compassion and to *Buddha* (the Enlightened One). Jainism, the religion that was rendered an all-India movement by Mahavira extols *jina* (the heroic conqueror of the senses), the emotions and the stratagems of the intellect. He called upon all to carry out the duties commensurate to their status and professions, with steady faith and enthusiasm. He declared that all things and beings are holy in their own right and are but pilgrims on the road to Realisation. Any injury inflicted on any of them is an intervention in that sacred journey and so has to be scrupulously avoided.

The 'Sai religion' is the essence of all faiths

Zoroastrianism, the Parsi religion, was founded by Zoroaster, who wanted that man should ever have the Fire of Wisdom blazing in his consciousness so that evil thoughts and tendencies might be reduced to ashes. It has to infuse all thoughts, words and deeds with the illumination of virtue and vigour, it must destroy all worldly desire and render man pure for entry into the heaven of freedom. Adoration, meditation and acts of selfless service are essential for the dawn of enlightenment.

The Sai religion, if the name of religion in its literal sense of binding man to God is accepted, is the essence of all faiths and religions, including those like Islam, Christianity and Judaism. The motive behind the

The motive behind the formation and propagation of all these different faiths is the same. ... None had the design to divide, disturb, or destroy. They attempted to do good, see good and be good.

formation and propagation of all these different faiths is the same. The founders and propagators were all persons filled with love and wisdom. Their goal and purpose were the same. None had the design to divide, disturb, or destroy. They attempted to do good, see good and be good. They sought to train the passions and the emotions, to educate the impulses and instincts and direct the faculty of reason to paths beneficial to the individual and society. They knew that the mind, which is the breeding ground of desire and attachment, ambition and aspiration, has to be cleansed and properly oriented.

Let the family become a centre of harmonious living

Sai considers that practice of these disciplines is much more essential than blind faith in a bunch of philosophical theories. No one has the right to advise others unless he is already practising what he preaches. First establish the reign of love between the various members in your own home. Let the family become a centre of harmonious living, sympathetic understanding and mutual faith.

The holy duty of man is to be ever aware of the *Atman* (Divine Spirit) that is installed in every living being. This will make him conscious of the kinship he has with all. This is the basis of the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. Cast away the vice of egoism, the evil of greed and the poison of envy. When you seek joy from something outside you, remember that a far greater joy lies in wait within your own inner consciousness. When you are afraid of someone or something outside you, remind yourself that the fear is born, fed and fertilised in your own mind and that you can overcome it by denying it. How can fear counter the path of a spiritual aspirant? It can hide in no shadow; it can pester no *sadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) who has God in his heart. Faith in the Almighty God is the impregnable armour that the *sadhaka* can wear; and peoples of all lands are *sadhakas*, whether they know it or not. Be steady, do not waver, keep straight on, hold fast to the ideal without despair. Pray until God relents; do not turn away sadly if God does not shower grace when you expect it.

When a religion wants to extend its influence it has to resort to vilification of other religions and exaggeration of its own excellence. Pomp and publicity become more important than practice and faith. But Sai wants that the votaries of each religion must cultivate faith in its own excellence and realise their validity by their own intense practice. That is the Sai religion, the religion that feeds and fosters all religions and emphasises their common greatness. Take up this religion, boldly and joyfully.

Prasanthi Nilayam, 1 October 1976

