



# UNITY IS DIVINITY

## STUDY GUIDE

Abridged & Highlighted version



SATHYA SAI INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION



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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

**B**hagawan 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?



## 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 Omni-presence 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/ss34-09.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>

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 ignorance 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/sss13-09.pdf>



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## EXAMPLE

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?



## 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://sssbt.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://sssbt.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://sssbt.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>

### **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>

### **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>



## PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLE

### Fine Tuning Our Spiritual Practices

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>

### Fostering Expansive Love

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 the 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

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>



## EXAMPLE

### 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>

### Mind-set 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>

# UNITY AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL (*VYASHTI*)



## 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>

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 cooperate 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>

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## PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLE

### Synergising Thinking, Speaking and Acting

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 *dharmic* 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>

## EXAMPLE

### Adi Shankara

The pandits of Benares arranged for a grand assembly of scholars in the holy city. Many scholars had gathered there in all their regalia. 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/ss29-43.pdf>

# UNITY AT THE SOCIETAL LEVEL (*SAMASHTI*)

## Unity in the Family



### 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/ss36-04.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/ss23-31.pdf>



### PRACTICING 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/ss33-17.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>



## EXAMPLE

### **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 Kauravas 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/sss36-04.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/sss36-04.pdf>

# UNITY IN THE SATHYA SAI ORGANISATION



## 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>

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>

### **Selfless Service**

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>

### **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 mind-set 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>

## PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLE

### Following the Example of Sai

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>

### 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>

### 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>

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>



## PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLE

### **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

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/ss16-29.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>

### 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. 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>

### 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/sss16-29.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 Ekabhava (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>

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/sss09-01.pdf>

### **World Conflicts Based on Religions**

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>

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>



## PRACTICING 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**

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>

# UNITY IN SOCIETY



## 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/ss35-10.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/ss17-14.pdf>

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) 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/ss35-10.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>

### **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>

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/sss32p1-08.pdf>

## The Secret of Social Progress

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/sss16-29.pdf>



## PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLE

### Developing Tolerance and Mutual Respect

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>

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>

### 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/sss33-19.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>

### **Serving Incessantly**

Man expects much from society without contributing anything to it. How can you expect good from society without you 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>

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/sss23-31.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/sss36-19.pdf>

# UNITY AT THE CREATION LEVEL (*SRUSHTI*)

## Unity in Nature



### UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLE

#### **Nature – God’s Vesture**

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>

#### **Seeking Within**

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>



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## PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLE

### **Worshipping God through Revering Nature**

I shall tell you of one form of worship which will endow you with divine strength. God-head 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, *Ishavasyam idam sarvam*: All this is divine. *Vasudevas sarvamidam*: 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**

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>

# UNITY AT THE ALMIGHTY LEVEL (*PARAMESHTI*)

## Unity is Divinity



### 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>

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>

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>

#### The Non-Dualistic Experience

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); and *Vasudeva sarvam idam* (All this is God, Vasudeva).

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/sss08-22.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>



## PRACTICING 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.

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>

### 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>



## EXAMPLE

### 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/ss39-09.pdf>

Buddha taught that we should not have anger, we should not find others' faults, we should not harm others, because all are embodiments of the pure, eternal principle of the *Atma*. Have compassion towards the poor and help them to the extent possible. 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. 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.

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.

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>

### **Shirdi Sai Baba**

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 modes of worship to Mother Kali. 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/d05109.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/sss13-27.pdf>

# UNITY IS THE PURPOSE OF SATHYA SAI AVATAR

## **The Mission of the Triune Incarnation**

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 part2/ 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>

# HIS FIRST AND FINAL MESSAGE TO US

## **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

**E**mbodiments of the Divine Spirit! 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

Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.16/Ch.29: 31 October 1983  
<http://sssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume16/ss16-29.pdf>



# 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)

**H**uman 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**

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).

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!

### **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. 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 non-violence.

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 living 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 safe-guarding 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).

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.

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. 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.

### **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. 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.

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.

### **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.

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.

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

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



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 *Prathibhasika*. 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 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. 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. 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. You don't thank your own people. 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. 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

**E**mbodiments 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."

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 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 forever. 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 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 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 *Dakshinamurthi*. 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 there, 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.

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.

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.

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. 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. 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.

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 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.

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.

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)

**E**mbodiments 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.

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."

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**

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. 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 *Omkara*, 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.

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. All worldly things are bound to perish one day or the other.

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 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 waver 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.

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.

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, non-violence comes there on its own. Therefore, truth, righteousness, peace, love, and non-violence 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 (satwa), passion (rajas), and inertia (tamas).*

We should attain this eternal bliss.

Discourse given at Brindavan

31 May 2008



# 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 benefitted 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.

## **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 benefitted 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.

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, 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. 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 him.

What is the nature of this bliss? 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. 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. 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.

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. 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.

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. 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.

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.

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# THE SAI RELIGION

**W**hom the Muslims adore as Allah, the Christians as Jehovah, who grants, in answer to their 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 setback. 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.

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. 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 undercurrent of energising power in all cases is love, love of all beings towards 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, was 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), *Ishwara sarva bhoothanam* (God is immanent in all), *Ishavaasya 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 solution 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 *visishta* (special) *adwaita* (non-dualism). The path of devotion was laid down to enable man to merge with God.

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 *visishta adwaita* 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).

## **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 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; 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

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[sathyasai.org](http://sathyasai.org)