

Live in Atmic Consciousness

(Divine Discourse delivered on the occasion of Makarasankranti Festival and the Valedictory Function of the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions - January 14, 2002)

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"The sun appeared serenely peaceful. The day started to get shorter. And the chill wind blew fiercely. The fields were ripe with golden crop. The farmers rejoiced in singing.

The buds of flowers blossomed on the banks of rivers like garlands.

The sweet festival of Sankranti has arrived filling our homes with the newly harvested grain. "

"When people give up hatred and violence, inculcate the feelings of love and acquire the wisdom to realize the unity of mankind, the earth will then become verily the heaven."

Embodiments of Love! Boys and Girls!

During the last four days, Prasanthi Nilayam looked like a unique world. Students of Prasanthi Nilayam, Anantapur and Brindavan campuses, and also of Higher Secondary School and Primary School worked hard with dedication and devotion and displayed all-round skills. Not merely the students but also the teachers, young and old alike, rendered all possible help to the students in their preparation. Truly speaking, such principles of love, unity, devotion and dedication cannot be found in any other institution in the world. The world will be rid of all problems if such institutions are present everywhere.

Students - boys and girls displayed wonderful items of skill and beauty. In addition to academics, students have demonstrated their talents in diverse fields. Awareness is life. Our students excelled not only in sports and games but also in performing on the Band and Nadaswaram, giving joy to all. The lion dance group consisted of boys from Higher secondary school as well as from postgraduate courses like MBA, M.Tech, M.Sc, etc. They performed with great enthusiasm and perfection and

made everybody happy. Girls from Anantapur Campus have undergone training under experts and have learnt Nadaswaram, particularly for performing on Swami's Birthday and Convocation functions. This morning also you might have listened to their performance. They participated in sports, music and cultural events not for their own satisfaction but with the sole intention of pleasing Swami. They went through many difficulties and inconveniences with strong determination and achieved success.

You have just listened to the speech of a student, who hails from Darjeeling. He is a member of the lion dance group. During one of the rehearsal sessions, he went up to a height of 12 ft. to perform a daring feat. Swami had told him not to go to such a height, but in his enthusiasm to please Swami, he ignored Swami's words. He lost his balance and fell down. There was a swelling on his neck. Then I told him to take rest for a few days. He said, "Swami I have come all the way from Darjeeling only to dedicate myself at Your Feet. Let anything happen to my body, I will not give up my resolve." He was determined

to participate in the dance. I was pleased with his strong faith and determination. I gently touched his neck with My hand and told him that everything would be all right. He was completely cured. I respond to each of you in accordance with the feelings you have towards Me. My *Sankalpa* (Will) is based on your feelings. Ultimately, the boy rose to the occasion and performed the feat admirably.

Today you find many people, young and old, accomplishing stupendous tasks by dint of their strong determination. But so far no one has been able to unravel the mystery of mind and matter. All the activities of man, from dawn to dusk, are related to these two. Even the highly educated do not make any effort to understand this. If you ask them, what is mind, they say, "It does not matter". They argue that there is no point in trying to understand the nature of the mind. If you ask them, what is matter, they say, "Never mind". First and foremost, man should understand the relationship between mind and matter. The one who does not know the nature of the mind can be called a fool. The one who understands the nature of the mind is truly a *Mahaniya* (noble).

What is the form of the mind? Where has it originated? What is its nature? What is the mystery behind it? One should make an enquiry on these lines.

The Atma has three powers associated with it:

- 1) The *Manas* (mind)
- 2) *Buddhi* (intellect) and
- 3) *Samskara* (culturally inherited mental propensity from past and present lives).

The vastness of the mind is indescribable. It can travel to any distance in a trice. Its power is beyond description and human comprehension. No task can be accomplished without the power of the mind. The mind has no form. It works only with the help of the *Atmic* power. Therefore, it is the inner Self that operates through the mind and performs all activities in the world. Even ages of effort is inadequate to understand the nature of the mind.

The second is the power of intellect. It is full of illumination. It discriminates between good and evil without giving room to selfishness.

The third is the power of *Samskara*. Its results are experienced not only in this birth but also in future births. *Samskara* is giving up of evil and cultivating goodness in thought, word and deed. It is not possible for any book to describe in detail the powers of *Manas*, *Buddhi* and *Samskara*. Hence, I have decided to explain to the students about these three.

To begin with, try to understand the relationship between the mind and matter. One cannot exist without the other. Here is a rose. This corresponds to matter. Without the mind, you cannot see this rose flower. The mind is based on the principles of reaction, resonance and reflection. A true human being is one who understands the nature of the mind and its effect. You think that the mind is a bundle of thoughts. Then from where do the thoughts arise? The Self is the basis of thoughts. They arise out of *Chaitanya* (awareness). Everyone is endowed with *Vijnana* (wisdom). But some foolish people feel proud of their bookish knowledge. Such people cannot be called truly educated. Without the

knowledge of the Self, all other forms of knowledge are useless.

Take for instance a person who is highly educated in the physical sense. Ask him a question, "Who are you"? He will not be able to give the correct answer in spite of his high qualification. He might say, "I am Rama Sastri". This is the name given to his body and it does not correspond to his true Self. If you put the same question again, he will say, "I am a scholar". Even this is not the correct answer, because it corresponds to his worldly education and has nothing to do with his true Self. If you ask him the same question again, he will say, "I am an Indian". He fails to understand that neither his name nor his profession nor his nationality correspond to his true Self.

The body and the mind are only instruments. They are under your control. Do not identify yourself with the instruments. You are the master. Master the mind and be a mastermind. When you explain to him in this manner, he will realize the truth and give the correct answer, "All these days I was deluded with body attachment. Now I realize that I am the *Atma* which transcends the body; is beyond time and which cannot be comprehended by worldly education."

It is the unseen *Atma* which makes the body function. People forget the Master (the *Atma*) and get deluded by their attachment to the body. All that is related to the body, i.e., name, profession and education are temporary. Truth is your name. You are the Self, which is eternal. Hence, give up body attachment and live in *Atmic* consciousness. So long as one is attached to the body, one can never

attain the knowledge of the *Atma*. You may be able to quote from the scriptures but that corresponds to only bookish knowledge which cannot lead you to your true Self. You are the *Atma*, which is the source of all powers. In order to understand the power of the *Atma*, first of all enquire into the nature of the mind. The effects of the mind cannot be described in words. The mind is responsible for birth, death, action, family, childhood, old age, happiness, sorrow, success and failure.

The entire life is based on the mind. Once you understand the nature of the mind, you will know the nature of matter. To understand the nature of the mind, you should have control over your senses. How can you control others when you cannot control your own senses? You should have sense control in order to become a good leader.

The mind is very powerful. Without understanding its power, man feels proud of his limited knowledge. It is utter foolishness. He feels he knows everything. He is diverting his mind on trivial objectives without trying to know the *Atma*. This is the reason why man is subjected to difficulties and misery. You are responsible for your happiness or misery. You should not blame others for your condition. As you are unable to realize your true Self, you are experiencing the dualities of pleasure and pain. Once you know your true Self, you will not be affected by them. It is a sin to blame others for your suffering. You suffer because of lack of morality in your feelings and improper conduct. Your destiny is based on your character. Character is based on actions. Actions are based on thoughts. Therefore, cultivate morality and sacred thoughts.

None can escape the law of action. It is based on the mind.

Embodiments of Love!

You cannot exist without the mind. The mind is with you always. You can be called a human being only when you know the nature of the mind. This is the teaching of the Vedanta. Vedanta is the essence of the Vedas, which teach the *Atma Jnana* (knowledge of the Self). *Atma* is like the control room. Once you gain access to the 'control room', all your senses and the mind will be under your control. When the main switch of the house is turned on, the bulbs in all the rooms will glow. The *Atma* is like the main switch and the senses are like the bulbs in different rooms.

Take for instance a mansion consisting of various rooms like bedroom, storeroom, dining room, bathroom, kitchen, etc. These rooms are of your own making. Each room is separated from the other by a wall. Once the walls are demolished, only one big hall remains. Body attachment is like the wall that separates one from the other and which comes in the way of realizing the Self. Once this wall is broken down, you will realize the infinite and immortal Self. Instead of realizing the infinite and immortal Self, you are developing attachment to the body over a number of births. Develop detachment at least from this birth. You claim something as 'mine' but it will be yours only so long as your body exists. After your death, what you earlier claimed as yours will belong to somebody else. Such being the case, why should you develop attachment to worldly possessions? Human life is based on 'I' and 'mine'. 'I' refers to the *Atma* and 'mine' refers to matter. The mind has originated from the *Atma*.

Matter is the effect of the mind. Once you know the nature of the mind and matter, everything else will be known.

Students!

You have a long life ahead of you. Do not wait till old age to take to the path of spirituality. Start early, drive slowly, and reach safely. Be very cautious in this age and do not waste your time in trivial pursuits. Time is very precious and once it is lost, you can never get it back. Make every effort to know what ought to be known while your sensory faculties are strong. If you cannot do it now, you can never do it in your life.

"Oh man, do not take pride in your physical beauty, youth and sensory powers. Very soon, you will become old. Your hair will turn grey, your skin will develop wrinkles and your vision will be blurred. The children will make fun of you, calling you an old monkey. Your body is nothing but a doll made of skin. Try to understand the mystery behind this puppet show."

Who will come to your rescue in the old age? Hence, make proper use of your senses and be self-reliant. Nobody can say for sure what will happen to the body in the next moment. So, do not develop body attachment. But you should take care of it properly so that you do not depend on others. Do your duty sincerely.

You refer to yourself as 'I', which is nothing but the *Atma*. Let your body be under the control of the *Atma* and none else. When you ask, who is Ramaiyya, somebody will get up and say 'I': if you ask who is Anil Kumar, the person standing here will say 'I'. In this manner, the principle of 'I' is fundamental and is

present in one and all. Just as one lamp lights another, it is from the fundamental 'I' that all other 'I's have emerged. The same current illumines all bulbs. Each being is like a bulb and God is like the generator.

If someone were to ask you, "Who are you", you should say with conviction that you are the *Atma*. What is Mind? It is an aspect of the Self. Just as sugar is the basis for all sweets, the *Atma* is the basis for the body, mind and intellect. One should hold on firmly to this fundamental principle. You belong to mankind. Do not let your mind behave like a monkey. In fact, monkey is better than man in the sense that it participated in the service of Rama. Once a monkey taught a lesson to a man thus: "Oh mad fellow! You make fun of me, but in fact, I am far better than you. Are you participating in the service of God, just as I did? I obeyed the command of Lord Rama, crossed the ocean and found the whereabouts of Mother Sita. I stood in front of Lord Rama like a *Deena* (obedient servant) and faced Ravana like a *Dheera* (one of valour). Likewise, you should be humble before the noble and face the wicked with courage."

Today man is behaving like a mad monkey. He may not have a tail, but he has the traits of a monkey. Give up monkey traits and take to the sacred path keeping the *Atma* as your goal. Understand that you are the spark of the *Atma* and strive to harmonize the mind, the intellect and the *Samskara*. *Samskara* is very subtle. You may not understand its implication now. It follows you like a shadow from birth to birth. *Samskara* refers to the process of refinement. You have the power to refine yourself but you are not making use of it. You have

to refine yourself. This is the sacred teaching of Indian culture.

Indian culture is like pure gold, but such a precious culture is being ignored today. People do not respect their parents and elders. They have forgotten the sacred values of love and humility. They give importance to only worldly education and material possessions. These will be with you so long as you are alive. When you leave the body what follows you is only *Samskara* (innate tendency) and not *Samsara* (family). But you ignore *Samskara* and get caught up in *Samsara* and suffer from lack of peace.

"In spite of his education and intelligence, a foolish man will not know his true Self and a mean-minded person will not give up his wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to total wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal."

You will attain immortality only when you acquire the knowledge of the Self.

"Oh student! You struggle hard in life merely for the sake of filling your belly. You acquire many forms of knowledge from various fields. Examine and enquire for yourself what great happiness you have achieved by spending all the time from dawn to dusk in acquiring knowledge and earning wealth while forgetting God."

Merely by looking at the world map, can you say that you have toured the length and breadth of the world? Likewise, mere acquisition of bookish knowledge

is of no use. Enquire, what have you gained by forgetting God and reposing your faith in the world? Nothing whatsoever! You may go abroad and earn crores of rupees, but can you take with you even a Naya paisa when you depart from this world? What is the use of merely going round the world? Does the spoon, which is used to serve various items like *Sambar*, *Chutney*, *Rasam* and *Payasam* (sweet pudding) experience their different tastes? Likewise, man is going to various countries and reading various books without any benefit.

Embodiments of Love! Students!

Develop love and share it with others. Transform this world into a paradise of love. Then there will be no misery at all. Understand the nature of the mind and you will be redeemed. You took part in Sports Meet, exhibited great talent and won many prizes. This is also very essential from the worldly point of view. Worldly education is for life here and spiritual education is for the life hereafter. So, both are essential. Worldly education is like left leg and spiritual education is like right leg. Both the legs are needed for marching. Likewise, both forms of education are needed for progress in life. Left (world) has to be left some day or the other, but right (spirituality) is always right. Most of us use right hand to do our work. What does it mean? It means that we should do only right things and make everybody happy. Even in the daily life, the left hand is used to clean the dirt and the right hand is used for performing one's duty.

What is the goal of human life? One has to recognize the fundamental truth, i.e., the principle of *Atma*. It is within you. It is possible to know this only through the

intellect because it has the capacity to discriminate. If you want to partake of an orange, you have to peel out the bitter rind. Even the monkey peels out the skin of a banana before partaking of it. Likewise, the intellect should give up evil and accept the good. What is the use of human birth if man acts in the same manner as a monkey or a buffalo? There is a lesson to be learnt even from buffaloes and cows. They graze in the fields without wasting a minute and masticate leisurely whatever they have eaten. Likewise, whenever you come across anything good, accept it without delay. Later on contemplate on it and assimilate it.

Students!

Even birds and beasts are conducting themselves in accordance with their nature. But man, in spite of his education, has forgotten his true nature and is behaving like a fool. What is the use of securing 100 percent marks in your examinations if you do not know the fundamental principle of life? You may fill your head with bookish knowledge and vomit the same in the examination to get good marks. But how many marks have you secured in the field of spirituality? There is no point in getting first class in worldly education and getting a zero in spiritual education. No doubt marks are important, but you should also see that you do not get bad remarks.

The boy who spoke earlier narrated his experience. When he fell down during one of the rehearsal sessions, he thought that he had lost his chance, and felt extremely sad. He prayed to Me to cure him of his pain so that he could participate in the dance. Seeing his determination and faith, I cured him

instantly. Such faith and determination are necessary to win Divine grace. Saint Purandaradasa said, "Oh God! When You protect Your devotee, You are Rama and when You punish the wicked, You are Yama. To Prahlada, You appeared as Narayana and to the demon Hiranyakasipu, You appeared as Yama. You manifest Yourself in the same manner as the devotee thinks of You."

Help ever, Hurt never. The same is stated by Sage Vyasa, *Paropakara Punyaya, Papaya Parapeedanam* (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). There can be no sinner worse than the one who criticizes God. There can be no hell worse than distancing oneself from God. You may argue that there are many in the world who have forgotten God and yet lead a comfortable life. No doubt they are living, but are living their lives like dogs and foxes. One should strive to live like a devotee to earn Divine grace.

Students!

Uphold the name of the Institute and be ideals to society. This is the gratitude you are expected to show to the Institute for having given you free education. In other institutes, you cannot get a seat without paying donation. But here, education is provided totally free. Money comes and goes but morality unity. Where there is unity there is Divinity. Once you have Divinity with you, everything else will follow.

The success of the Sports Meet is the result of collective effort. There is no Institute like that of ours. The unity, harmony and love that you find here cannot be found anywhere else. Swami is the cause of all this. Swami's love has brought about this unity. I am prepared

comes and grows. So, cultivate morality. Having been the recipients of Swami's love, every drop of your blood should be filled with gratitude.

Here is a small example. The Vice Chancellor made a phone call to Singapore and asked a trainer to come here and train the boys in the lion dance. Accordingly, he arrived and trained the boys. Yesterday, I called the warden and asked him, "The trainer came here and made us happy. How can we express our gratitude to him?" The warden said he had no idea. I said that we would give him 40,000 rupees towards his traveling expenses. In this manner, I give personal attention to every boy and every trainer. You may think that Swami is somewhere and does not know what is happening, but Swami is here, there and everywhere as the principle of the Atma. I give satisfaction to one and all and take upon Myself all the difficulties and losses that may arise out of your actions. But you are unable to understand this.

All the teachers worked hard to make this Sports Meet a grand success. In spite of their advanced age, Radhaswamy and Ramamurthi worked tirelessly and extended their support to the students. They are serving in our Institute even after retirement. All have worked with

to spend crores of rupees for the benefit of students. My only aim is to transform them into ideal citizens. Some people act in an ungrateful manner after receiving Swami's love in abundance. That is their fate. Uphold the name of the Institute wherever you go. That is what I desire from you. I am prepared to give you whatever you ask for. Many people who come here are very happy seeing our Institute.

Girl students from Anantapur Campus also have worked very hard. Truly speaking, those living in Puttaparthi are very fortunate because they are able to have Swami's *Darshan*, *Sparshan* and *Sambhashan* everyday. But the Anantapur students do not enjoy such privilege. It is twelve years since I visited Anantapur, yet they are working with steadfastness and devotion with the conviction that Swami is always with them. Their devotion and sincerity will certainly yield rich rewards. Very soon I will visit Anantapur and confer bliss on all of them. There is result for every action, but one has to wait for the appropriate time.

Today many people are fear-stricken thinking that there is going to be a war between India and Pakistan. No such war will take place. Bharat will be

blessed with auspiciousness. Bharat is a sacred land and will be safe always. There may be minor skirmishes here and there. These days there is no unity even in a small family consisting of four members. In such a situation, how can a country with crores of population be free from minor conflicts? But there will be no war. All will stand united as one family.

Pray wholeheartedly for the welfare of humanity - *Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu* (May all the people of the world be happy). You can be happy only when the world is happy. There is an intimate and inseparable relationship between you and the world. Chant the Divine Name. Pray for the welfare of the world and participate in service activities.

