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Be Good, Do Good, and See Good

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Convocation Discourse

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*Bereft of truth, righteousness, peace, and love, the value of all your education is zero;
Bereft of truth, righteousness, peace, and love, the benefit of all your acts of charity and kindness is zero;*

*Bereft of truth, righteousness, peace, and love, the utility of all your positions of power is zero; and
Bereft of truth, righteousness, peace, and love, the result of all your good deeds is zero.*

*Sathya, dharma, santhi, and prema (truth, righteousness, peace, and love) are verily the pillars of
the mansion of Sanathana Dharma.*

What else is to be conveyed to this assembly of noble souls.

(Telugu poem)

*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 evil qualities.*

What is the use of acquiring education that cannot lead you to immortality?

Acquire the knowledge that will make you immortal.

(Telugu poem)

People pursue education and obtain high degrees in different disciplines. But, in their day-to-day life, their behaviour is totally at variance to the principles they learnt. In spite of their high academic qualifications, they woefully lack knowledge about the essence of education. What they acquire is only worldly, evanescent, and unreal education.

There are millions of students and highly educated people in the world. They obtain all sorts of degrees starting from A to Z, but of what use are their degrees? What is their contribution to the welfare of the world? Do they help the poor and forlorn at least to a small extent? They earn crores of rupees; but they don't give even a penny in charity. They are too selfish. They do not at all control their desires. One who controls his desires can work wonders in the world. People are not at all satisfied with their earnings. They accumulate huge amount of wealth and still crave to earn more.

The *Vedas* declare *Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaike amrutatthwamanasu* (immortality is not attained through action, progeny, or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice). People do not at all strive to attain immortality. Wherever you see and whomever you come across, you find selfishness, selfishness, and selfishness alone. Of what use is the education of such selfish people?

No doubt, education has to be pursued and some activities have to be undertaken in the world for leading a comfortable life. One has to take care of the worldly needs for oneself and one's family, like food, clothing, and shelter. But to what extent? These are all activities that one undertakes for the sake of oneself and one's family, not for others.

Modern education is breeding selfishness. It is for acquiring goods and services for one's own comfort. These are worldly pleasures. The qualities of *kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada*, and

matsarya (desire, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and envy) drive man's efforts in pursuit of worldly pleasures. No doubt worldly education helps to provide comfort and joy in the objective world, but it does not at all contribute to inner bliss.

Only the five human values of *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), *santhi* (peace), *prema* (love), and *ahimsa* (nonviolence) confer inner bliss. A person who cultivates these five human values will always be happy. The five senses of action provide external pleasure; but the five human values confer inner bliss. Education helps to obtain various conveniences for external pleasure, whereas inner bliss can be experienced only by Educare. There is a lot of difference between Education and Educare. Education involves reading of books written by someone and listening to the lectures delivered by someone. Educare, however, has nothing to do with books. It has no form at all! It is Truth that has no form. The *Upanishads* ordain "*Sathyam vada, dharmam chara*" (speak truth, practise righteousness). Truth has to be spoken and righteousness has to be practised. But, nowadays, people lecture about these values but do not follow. This is not correct.

Love is one quality that is common to all human beings, nay, animals, birds, beasts, and even insects. Every living being loves its progeny. And, love is divine. Whoever cultivates love, God manifests in them. It is only the divine quality of love that saves us from sorrows, difficulties, and calamities. Unfortunately, people do not cultivate love and instead go after transient things. "Love is God, live in love." Worldly possessions give momentary pleasure, but love confers eternal bliss. Real love manifests from the depth of one's own heart. One has to attain such divine love. Wherever you go, whatever activity you may undertake, let your heart be filled with love. Such a person, wherever he is, whether in the town or in the forest or in the sky or in a deep sea will surely be protected. Divine love neither grows nor diminishes. It always remains the same.

Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma (God is one without a second). To attribute various names to God such as Rama, Krishna, Govinda, etc., is only your imagination. That which has neither birth nor death is one and only one. It has no beginning and no end. That is *Brahma*. Hence, whenever someone enquires, "Who are you? What is your name?", reply with "*Aham Brahmasmi*" (I am *Brahman*). There is nothing real and eternal except *Brahman*. Hence, do not waste his time in pursuit of transient things. What is the use of acquiring such objects? No doubt worldly education is necessary. However, always remind yourself that it is all temporary.

Brahman is ONE without a second. Zero gains value only when it is placed after the digit one. Likewise, the zero of *samsara* (worldly life) will have value only if it is associated with the ONE that is *Brahman*. We are going after the impermanent and transitory things forgetting the ONE.

We think that the qualities of anger, envy, jealousy, pride, etc., are God-given, but it is not true. God does not make any distinction between people by granting positive attributes to some and negative qualities to others. All these differences are man-made. God has nothing to do with them. When our wish is fulfilled, we praise God. On the other hand, if something goes wrong, we attribute our failure to God and blame Him. God is only a witness to everything that goes on in the world, good or bad. He neither gives nor receives anything. All our sorrows and difficulties are of our own making.

The thoughts that flow from our mind are expressed through speech. Hence, mind is the source for our speech. This mind has its origin in our breath (inhaling and exhaling). Therefore, the inhaling and exhaling (*soham*) is *Brahman* verily, and the mind represents Vishnu.

It is said, *Manomoolam idam jagat* (the world is a projection of the mind). Our *vak* (speech) represents Shiva. Hence, we need not go in search of the Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara) somewhere in a distant place. God is in us, with us, above, below, and around us. In fact, you are God. Your mind alone is responsible for your joy or sorrow. We think these are thrust on us by someone from outside. No, all these experiences flow from you only. You are responsible for everything. If you realize that these experiences emanate from your own mind and think that you are God, you will become God. On the other hand, if you identify yourself with the world and think “I am so and so,” you will remain separate from God.

Do not cultivate excessive desires. “Less luggage, more comfort makes travel a pleasure.” Hence, reduce the luggage of your desires. It is natural for people to have some desires, but one has to enquire which one of those desires is good for one and which causes harm. Unfortunately, this sense of discrimination is lost in present times. All these desires, which are the result of *kama*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada*, and *matsarya* (desire, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy), have their origin in the mind.

When you marry a girl, you develop love for her in the beginning. After sometime, if for any reason she goes against your wishes, you develop hatred for her. Your anger and hatred will ultimately land you in difficulties. If you can reduce your desires and expectations, you will be able to lead a happy married life.

Students too behave in the same way. As one goes on acquiring degrees, one loses one’s peace because of limitless desires. Whatever may be one’s expectations in pursuing higher education, one has to put into practice what one has learnt in the college or University. Merely acquiring a number of degrees without putting into practice what one has learnt through education is a waste. It does not help him in any way. Education without practising the principles of education leads to loss and worry. Hence, practice (*abhyasa*) is of utmost importance.

For example, you are enacting a drama. Is it not true that you do a number of rehearsals before finally performing on the stage? It is the practice that makes you perfect. Hence, practice is needed in all your endeavours — reading, writing, medicine, surgery, etc. The *Gita* says:

*Sreyohi Jnanamabhyasat,
Jnanaddhyanam vishishyate,
Dhyanat karmaphala thyaga,
Thyagat santhiranantaram.*

Better indeed is knowledge than practice.

Better than knowledge is meditation on God.

But better than meditation is renunciation of the desire for the fruits of actions.

For peace follows immediately.

Where is peace? Peace is very much in us only. It is futile to search for peace somewhere in the outer world. If you want to attain peace, search for it in oneself.

You have acquired all this knowledge from textbooks and your teachers. This is bookish knowledge. If you put it into practice, it becomes practical knowledge, which will remain with you permanently.

Rain water is pure. When you place a vessel while it is raining, you can collect pure water. It is like distilled water. By drinking that water, you will not be troubled by any ailment. When the same water is mixed up with other substances, it gets polluted. In the same manner, the mind which is always pure is polluted by desires.

Hence, do not pollute your mind by cultivating desires. Keep the mind always pure. Whenever a desire arises in your mind, brush it aside to keep your mind free from pollution. Apart from reading your text books and acquiring knowledge, keep your mind always pure and free from pollution. This is what you have to learn today.

You may or may not worship God, but you must respect your mother and father, who are responsible for your birth. Respect your mother. Keep her always happy. No one can estimate or describe a mother's love. No one can pollute it. If only you are able to win the love of your mother, it amounts to acquiring all degrees. Our scriptures enjoin on us to respect mother, father, teacher, and God in that order. First and foremost is the mother, who gave you birth. The father brings you up and puts you on the road to development. The mother is the foundation for the mansion of your life; father represents the wall and the *guru* (teacher) is the roof. And, finally, God is your life itself. Hence, those who yearn for God must love their mother first. If only you keep her happy, all other things of happiness will be added unto you.

Nowadays, people keep their aged parents in the old age homes. This is not correct. The *Upanishads* exhort one: *Mathrudevo bhava! Pithrudevo bhava! Acharyadevo bhava!* One who forsakes his mother is not a human being at all! It is your mother who brought you up to this stage. Hence, love your mother and serve her when she falls sick. You must develop the feeling that whatever your mother says is for your good only. Do not get angry when she chides you. Even her anger is for your good only.

Once Kuchela, a poor Brahmin, went to meet his childhood friend Krishna. He was afraid that the guards standing at the gate of Krishna's palace might not let him in. But God is so compassionate that He will not forsake any individual. Lord Krishna Himself came to him and enquired, "Dear friend Kuchela, what do you want?" Kuchela replied, "Swami, I do not want anything. I will be happy if I have Your love and grace. Oh Lord! That is enough". When Kuchela returned to his place after taking leave of Krishna, he could not recognise his house. In place of his hut stood a palatial building. His wife and children were moving about in gorgeous clothes, wearing glittering ornaments. This is the gift of love from God. Hence, if only we are able to win God's love, everything else will be added unto us. Therefore develop firm faith in God.

You will not come up in life unless you get rid of your bad qualities. Even if you have accumulated wealth and attained positions of power, they will not last long. It is not wealth but noble qualities that are important for a human being. Hence, develop human qualities.

You call yourself a human being. Unless there are values in you, how can you be called a human being? Only when you develop noble qualities are you entitled to be called a human. God will protect a person with human values by constantly guarding and guiding him. Hence, develop human values; do not crave for money.

We often come across people changing jobs with a hope of getting high salaries. Do not develop this craze for money. Money comes and goes, morality comes and grows. Develop morality and love for God. When you develop love for God, the demonic qualities in you will be removed. When people get rid of demonic qualities, society itself will change into a better society. You will earn a good name. People will praise you, "so and so is a good man. We must have people like him."

If you wish to earn such a good name, you must be fully involved in prayer to God. The prayer must constantly ring in your heart. Love for God, fear of sin, and morality in society, these are the qualities that you have to develop. Then only you will be entitled to be called a

good person. Be good, do good, and see good. Never entertain bad thoughts. It is quite common to get bad thoughts in your age, but do not give them a place in your heart. Just brush them aside.

You may be a boy now, but you will grow into an old man after some years. Child, boy, man, grandfather — these are all the different stages in one's life. They all belong to the same person. Only the names and the body change, but the individual is one. Similarly, God is one in which ever name and form He is worshipped. The names and forms ascribed to God may differ but God is one, as per the saying "*Ekam Sath viprah bahudha vadanthi*". Develop total faith in this maxim.

Wherever you are and whatever activity you are engaged in, constantly contemplate on God. Then only will your life be fruitful. May you all develop good qualities, good behaviour, good thoughts, and good feelings. Be happy. Our boys are always good boys.

Today, wherever you see, you find people spending time watching cinemas and TV shows and hearing cinema music from tape recorders. In addition, almost everyone, regardless of sex and status in society, is using cell phones. People waste a lot of time talking to someone using cell phones. They even talk to strangers. Because of the proliferation of the entertainment media and the indiscriminate use of cell phones, human beings have lost their value. Very often, due to the misuse of cell phones, people, especially the younger generation, land themselves in serious trouble. Most often, cell phones are put to misuse than proper use.

I would advise you, particularly the boys and girls, not to give your cell number to anyone. You will face great danger by doing so. Try to avoid using cell phones. Even if you buy one, do not give your number to others indiscriminately. There are some people who continuously talk over cell phone for hours together. This is totally wrong. By doing so, you will be committing sin. Once you give your cell number to others, they will call you back. You will feel happy in the beginning. Later, they will be talking to you frequently. Unnecessary contacts will develop by doing so. Finally, they mislead you and spoil your life. In the beginning, they introduce themselves to you saying, 'I am your friend'. The friendship gradually leads to establishing relationship. You will be deceived and you will land in deep trouble in the end. Hence, do not give scope for such unnecessary contacts. Always spend your time in the contemplation of the divine name or reading good books.

Today is convocation day. Some of you might be entering the outside world, having acquired degrees. Let your contact with the outside world be good. It is possible that there may be significant changes in the lives of most of the students from today. I wish you all to earn good name for yourselves, your parents, and the institution in which you studied. Samuel Sandweiss also told you the same thing in his convocation address. He talks about his divine experiences. The advice of these elders must be imprinted in your hearts. They always speak good words.

I am very happy. It is not possible for Me to talk to you all, individually. Hence, I gave a discourse that is applicable to all. Our students are all good when compared to those in the other institutions. Let that good name be upheld. I am very happy.

(Bhagawan wanted all the students to sing a song. The students sang in chorus the song "*Hum ko tum se pyar kitna ...*")

Your song has given Me immense happiness.