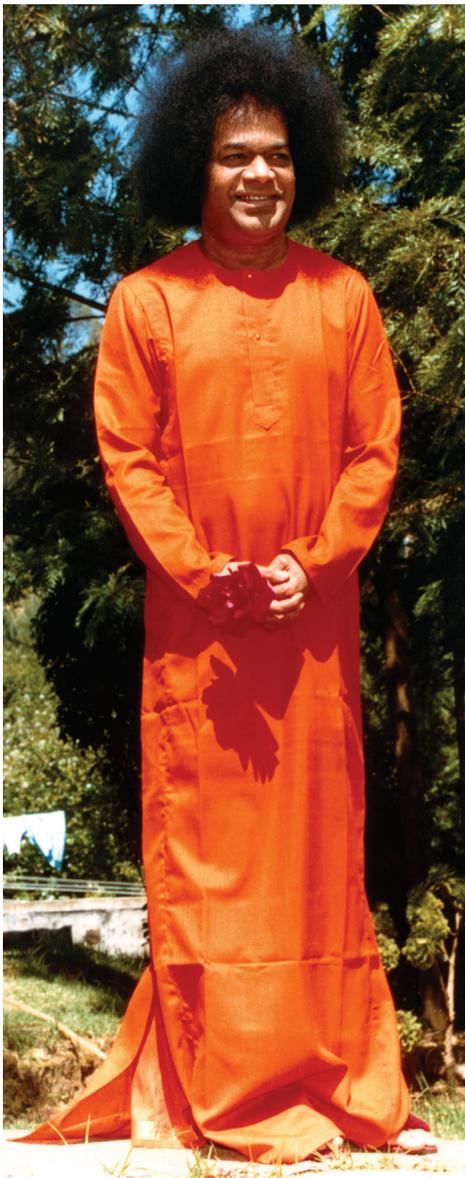


DIVINE TEACHINGS OF
Sri Sathya Sai Baba

VOLUME 4



Forbearance

Forbearance: Being patient; having self-control; having the ability to forgive; showing restraint when provoked.

Forbearance is the grandest and the noblest among virtues.

When the mind is filled with good thoughts, such as truth, love, forbearance, and compassion, one's life is filled with peace and serenity.

The chief characteristics of Sathya Sai are equanimity and forbearance.

Develop forbearance and goodwill. That is the cure for jealousy.

All religions are paths leading men to the same destination. All of them teach love and compassion, humility and forbearance.



Divine Teachings
of
Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Volume 4: Forbearance





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Dedicated with love and reverence
to
Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba





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Forbearance

Preface

During His sojourn on Earth, Sri Sathya Sai Baba delivered more than 2,000 discourses, most of which were subsequently compiled in *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks* and *Summer Showers*. In addition, He wrote 16 books in the *Vahini* series. You can find these at this website: <http://sssbpt.info/>.

Sri Sathya Sai Baba was born in a small village in India on November 23, 1926. He left His body on April 24, 2011, having become one of the most revered spiritual teachers in the world. He exhibited love, wisdom, and knowledge beyond our comprehension. His devotees regard Him as an incarnation of God in human form (an *Avatar*).

Sri Sathya Sai Baba did not come to establish a new religion. Instead He exhorted people to practice their own religion and to respect the differences among faiths. His mission is best described in His own words:

I have come to light the lamp of love in your hearts, to see that it shines day by day with added luster. . . . 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 path of love, . . . this duty of love, this obligation to love.

All religions teach one basic discipline: the removal from the mind of the blemish of egoism, of running after little joy. Every religion teaches man to fill his being with the glory of God and evict the pettiness of conceit. It trains him in the 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 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.

His discourses and writings focused on what He had come to give us: a path toward realizing our own Selves, toward realizing and experiencing the oneness of all creation. His discourses and writings are filled with simple explanations of how we should live and how we should treat our fellow humans in order to further ourselves along the path to enlightenment.

We are pleased to offer our readers *Divine Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba*, Volume 4. It includes the topic, “Forbearance.” The quotations are selected from *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks*, *Summer Showers*, and the *Vahinis*. Each quotation is numbered, and references are provided.

In one of His Divine discourses Sri Sathya Sai Baba said: “Practice what I teach. That is enough. That is all I ask.” Let us imbibe His words, apply them in daily practice, and find fulfillment in life.



Forbearance

Forbearance: Being patient; having self-control; having the ability to forgive; showing restraint when provoked.

The following are highlights of the full quotations that begin on page 14.

Of all the good qualities, forbearance is the best quality. It is only when one has forbearance, there will be sense control and intense yearning.

Forbearance and forgiveness are the qualities that should be fostered by all individuals.

Forbearance is not a sign of weakness or cowardice. No other weapon has the power of forbearance.

Among the qualities that make up a flawless character, love, patience, forbearance, steadfastness, and charity are the highest and have to be revered.

Develop forbearance and goodwill. That is the cure for jealousy.

Forbearance should be your life-breath and your ideal. By your fearlessness set an example to the world.

Forbearance is the grandest and the noblest among virtues.

The chief characteristics of Sathya Sai are equanimity and forbearance.

The most important qualities a human being must cultivate in his life are patience and forbearance.

Bear with others with patience and understanding; practice forbearance and sympathy. Try to discover points of contact, not of conflict.

Through Karma Yoga man achieves control of the senses and develops the qualities of universal love, forbearance, and compassion.

It is qualities like kindness, compassion, forbearance, and sympathy that differentiate human beings from animals.

For spiritual transformation, the qualities that are needed are kindness, love, forbearance, and compassion.

Kshama (forbearance) is truth; kshama is righteousness; kshama is Veda; kshama is non-violence; kshama is happiness; kshama is compassion; and kshama is everything in this world.

Forbearance is identified by the scriptures with truth, righteousness, knowledge, sacrifice, and joy. Without forbearance man cannot be happy even for a moment.

One must cultivate forbearance and inner strength, in order to avoid resentment at criticism and ridicule while one is engaged in joyful service.

When the mind is filled with good thoughts, such as truth, love, forbearance, and compassion, one's life is filled with peace and serenity.

Pure qualities like love, forbearance, and compassion have to be imbibed. Life has to be divinized.

Qualities like love, kindness, compassion, forbearance, and sympathy have to be developed to get rid of negative and bad thoughts.

When there is forbearance, all organs coordinate harmoniously and work in unison.

Sacrifice, love, compassion, and forbearance are the sterling human qualities that should be fostered, shedding jealousy, hatred, ego, and anger, which are animal qualities.

Qualities like kindness, sympathy, compassion, truth, and forbearance arise from the heart. These are internal traits.

Man should share in harmony with others his qualities of goodness, compassion, forbearance, and charity.

The truly human qualities are calmness, forbearance, and compassion. Man should lead a contented life.

You do not need to make any special effort to acquire the noble qualities like compassion, love, forbearance, etc., as they are latent in you.

The flower of forbearance is very dear to the Lord.

Only one with compassion, love, forbearance, sympathy, and sacrifice is a true human being.

One who is devoid of the feeling of “I” and “mine,” one who takes pain and pleasure in the same vein, and one who has forbearance is most dear to Me.

It is only when you get rid of the bad qualities in you like anger, hatred, jealousy, selfishness, and ego, you will be able to enjoy the sweetness and sanctity of good qualities like truth, love, compassion, forbearance, etc.

Face all difficulties with forbearance. Accept all trials and tribulations with love. Accept both pleasure and pain with love.

Anger and jealousy are the most fearful enemies of man. They destroy the feelings of unity and forbearance.

Good qualities like peace, forbearance, love, and attachment to truth can only be promoted by eating good food.

Peace cannot reign in the malice-ridden hearts of selfish people. It can be attained only by those who, with patience, perseverance, and forbearance follow the sacred path of spirituality.

Forbearance, the paragon of virtues, makes a man remain unruffled by the vicissitudes of life.

The sharp decline of virtues like love, compassion, and forbearance is directly responsible for the widespread pollution that one sees today.

Cultivate forbearance and compassion. This is the way to foster the love principle.

Peace, compassion, love, forbearance, etc., are human qualities. When you develop human qualities, your animal qualities will automatically disappear.

Every man has to cultivate the virtues of tolerance, forbearance, and brotherliness.

One has to work along with hundreds of others, with different temperaments, so one has to learn forbearance and equanimity.

All religions are paths leading men to the same destination. All of them teach love and compassion, humility and forbearance.

Reason out and convince yourself that tolerance, forbearance, love, and sweetness can alone ensure peace for yourself and for society.

Forbearance, compassion, and incorruptible virtue are the three pillars of a happy life.

Tolerance, fortitude, equanimity—these help you to be steady in non-violence. They will remove all chance of your causing pain to others. This is called forbearance or forgiving.

Truth, forbearance, sympathy, love, and other qualities originate from the Atma (Divine Self).

Good qualities like forbearance and sacrifice lend fragrance to the life of a man.

Develop forbearance, patience, peace, and love, and carry on your work. This is your true spiritual practice.

Through forbearance and spiritual efforts, gradually the shackles resulting from past actions must be broken.

By practicing patience and forbearance we will be able to acquire all the other important spiritual qualities, such as mind control, renunciation, endurance, and concentration.

Qualities like truth, love, kindness, forbearance, and compassion, which are signs of inner vision, emanate from the heart.

Love, truth, forbearance, and compassion are the highest human qualities.

Mutual regard, equal-mindedness, and forbearance are basic qualities necessary for every human being.

Envy and egoism are animal qualities. The qualities that every human being should have are peace, compassion, forbearance, love, and sacrifice.

To enjoy peace of mind, it is essential to practice forbearance and equanimity.

What are the qualities associated with the heart? Truth, compassion, love, forbearance, sympathy, and sacrifice.

The heart is beautified by qualities such as love, forbearance, and compassion. These qualities confer enduring bliss on man.

You are embodiments of strength and not weakness. Therefore, in times of despair, you should be filled with the feeling of forbearance and be ready to forgive and forget. This quality of forgiveness is the greatest power for a human being.

To accomplish his desires, man should cultivate forbearance, love, and compassion and not resort to sinful means.

In order to promote the qualities of forbearance and peace in life, the spiritual path is very necessary.

Politeness, humility, and forbearance are pure qualities.

Be humble always; humility and forbearance go together.

Sacred qualities like compassion, love, sympathy, forbearance, and truth emanate from the heart.

By forbearance, you cultivate love.

The tree can teach you forbearance and tolerance.

The evidence for progress in meditation is to be sought in a more universal outlook, greater steadiness, peace, forbearance, and more eagerness to serve fellow beings.

Forbearance truly is the highest quality of a human being.

A man without forbearance easily succumbs to reverses and difficulties.

Adhere to basic qualities such as truth, righteousness, forbearance, and self-sacrifice, which are common to all people without regard to nationality, creed, or language.

People must first of all get rid of self-interest and self-centeredness. They must develop love, forbearance, and compassion. They must try to live harmoniously.

Plant the seed of love in your pure hearts. From that tree of love you will have the fruits of forbearance, compassion, and kindness.

Forbearance is a quality that inspires people to undertake noble deeds.

Only virtues lend value to human life, and it is qualities like compassion, forbearance, and sacrifice that make human life precious.

He who has no forbearance will face unprecedented difficulties. One who believes in forbearance remains unmoved and untouched in the face of difficulties.

A person who is a genuine vehicle of power can be recognized by the characteristics of truth, kindness, love, patience, forbearance, and gratefulness.

Forbearance instructs people to do good to those who injure them.

Humility is born of forbearance.

Humility, reverence, compassion, forbearance, sacrifice, and self-control are the qualities that reveal the outcome of true education.

*All education, all mastery of the scriptures, and all kinds of worship
will be of no avail if the heart is not filled with qualities like love,
compassion, and forbearance.*

*Morality and integrity, righteousness and charity, truth and tradition,
forbearance and non-violence are basic tenets of all religions.*

*If you lack forbearance, whatever yogic practices you undertake will be
mere physical exercises and will not confer peace of mind on you.*

*Among the qualities a man has to develop if he is to realize his Divinity, the
foremost is kshama—*forbearance or forgiveness.**

*Love, kindness, forbearance, compassion, and sacrifice are natural human
qualities.*



Forbearance

Inner Purity

Of all the good qualities, *kshama* (forbearance) is the best quality. It is only when one has forbearance that there will be *damam* (sense control) and *uparati* (intense yearning). Cultivating these qualities will help maintain inner purity. Inner purity comes by removing bad qualities, not by applying perfumes, talcum powder, snow, or soaps. Everyone can maintain external or outward purity by using these toiletries. But the inner purity is more important. The reason being, Lord Narayana is there inside, outside, and everywhere. Therefore the abode of God must always be kept clean, pure, and sacred. We may not be able to see God in the world outside. It is only the Divinity within, constantly remaining with us, that protects us always like the eyelid to the eye.¹

1. Bhagavad Gita Part II, *Karma Yoga*, Chapter 19: The Secret of *Anaasakthi Yoga*.



Forgive Even Your Enemies

Forbearance and forgiveness are the qualities that should be fostered by all individuals. You must be able to forgive even your enemies.² You cannot destroy anger by anger, cruelty by cruelty, hatred by hatred. Anger can be subdued only by forbearance; cruelty can be overcome only by non-violence; hatred yields only to charity and compassion.³ When the heart is filled with compassion, the hands are dedicated to the service of others, the body is engaged in constant help to others, the life of such a person is sacred, purposeful, and noble.⁴

2. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 13: Ganapathi Confers *Buddhi* and *Siddhi*. Divine Discourse on September 1, 2000.

3. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 11, Chapter 46: The Seasaw. Divine Discourse on September 26, 1972.

4. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 36: Purity, Patience, Perseverance: Steps to Divinity. Divine Discourse on November 23, 1993.



Forbearance Is a Potent Instrument

All things, good and bad, in the world are related to man's actions. Your well-being is based on your conduct. Your wealth is dependent on your actions. You will secure peace and prosperity when your conduct is good. This calls for *sahana* (forbearance). The Upanishadic prayer says, "Let us have forbearance toward each other. Let us rejoice together. Let us all strive together." Forbearance is a potent instrument. Dharmaraja (the eldest of the Pandavas) was able to score many victories with the weapon of forbearance.

Forbearance is not a sign of weakness or cowardice. No other weapon has the power of forbearance. It should not be used only as an individual instrument. It has to be experienced collectively also. That is the reason why the scripture has commended collective forbearance at the very outset of the spiritual quest. What is its inner meaning? "Let us live and move in harmony. Let us grow together. Let us cherish the wisdom that we have acquired together. Let us live in complete harmony without any misunderstanding." Therefore do not have any misunderstanding amongst you. All of you should live in amity as the children of one mother.

God is all-powerful. But, at the same time human effort is also necessary. Without it, man cannot enjoy the benefit of God's grace. It is only when you have both Divine grace and human endeavor that you can experience bliss, just as you can enjoy the breeze of a fan only when you have both a fan and the electrical energy to operate it.⁵

5. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 26: The Divine and Destiny. Divine Discourse on July 21, 1993.



The Highest Qualities

Among the qualities that make up a flawless character, love, patience, forbearance, steadfastness, and charity are the highest and have to be revered. The hundred little deeds that we indulge in every day harden into habits; these habits shape the intelligence and mold our outlook and life. All that we weave in our imagination, seek in our ideals, and yearn in our aspirations leave an indelible

imprint on the mind. Distorted by these, we form our knowledge, our picture of the world around us, and it is to this picture that we get attached.

One's present is but the result of one's past and the habits formed during that long period. But whatever the nature of the character that one has come by, it can certainly be modified by changing the accustomed process of thought and imagination. The wickedness of no man is incorrigible. Wasn't Angulimala, the robber, turned into a kindhearted person by Buddha? Didn't the thief Rathnakara become Valmiki, the sage? By conscious effort, habits can be changed and character refined. People always have within them, within their reach, the capacity to challenge their evil propensities and to change their evil habits. By selfless service, renunciation, devotion, prayer, and reasoning, the old habits that bind people to earth can be discarded, and new habits that take them along the Divine path can be instilled into their lives.⁶

6. Prema Vahini, Subtitle: Noble Qualities form the Path for the Aspirant.



Develop Forbearance and Goodwill

Society today is racked by jealousy and hatred. Jealousy is a disease, which gives rise to hatred. Develop forbearance and goodwill. That is the cure for jealousy. I have often declared, "My life is My message." Often many have extolled Me or derided Me. I do not get elated by praise or depressed by criticism. I treat everything alike.⁷

7. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 28, Chapter 30: Fill the World with Love. Divine Discourse on November 18, 1995.



Always Be Patient

You must realize that if you give up forbearance and forgiveness, you will have no peace. I am always at peace. What is the reason? Because I am always patient. You must also remain likewise. Whatever anyone may do to you, do not bother about it. What is it you lose on account of their behavior? If you resort to retaliation, you will worsen your condition. You have no idea of either your

strength or your disability. You must face boldly such attacks and not allow yourself to get agitated over them. Students should win by their forbearance. Forbearance should be your life-breath and your ideal. By your fearlessness set an example to the world.⁸

8. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30, Chapter 1: Let *Prema* and *Thyaga* Be Your Ideals. Divine Discourse on January 14, 1997.



Forbearance, the Grandest and Noblest Virtue

True and selfless love manifests as sacrifice. Such love knows no hatred. It envelops the entire universe and is capable of drawing near even those who are seemingly far away. It is love that transforms the human into the Divine. It can transform *pasu* (a bestial person) into *Pasupathi* (Divinity). In the phenomenal world, you come across many shades and derivatives of this primordial love. You love your father, mother, brother, sister, friends, and so on. In all such cases, there is always a tinge of selfishness somewhere or the other. Divine love, on the other hand, is totally free of even the slightest trace of selfishness. You must surrender to such love, become completely submerged by it, and experience the bliss it confers.

For acquiring such love, the quality of *kshama* or forbearance is a vital necessity. [*Kshama* is a word rich in meaning. Besides forbearance, it also implies extreme patience and an enormous capacity to forget and also forgive. In view of this, the word *kshama* is directly used in most places in order not to dilute Bhagawan's emphasis.] Every individual must cultivate this noble quality. *Kshama* is not achieved by reading books or learnt from an instructor. Nor can it be received as a gift from someone else. This prime virtue *kshama* can be acquired solely by self-effort, by facing squarely diverse problems, difficulties of various sorts, anxieties, and suffering as well as sorrow. In the absence of *kshama*, man becomes susceptible to all kinds of evil tendencies. Hatred and jealousy easily take root in a person lacking this virtue.

Divinity is nothing but the combined manifestation of *prema* (love) and *kshama*. At one stroke, *kshama* subsumes *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), and the entire *Vedas*. It is the greatest among *tapas* (penance). It is the grandest and

the noblest among virtues. It is all encompassing. The *Mahabharata* and the *Srimad Bhagavatam* both contain many episodes that illustrate the disaster that befalls when *kshama* is lost. Jealousy is the first bad quality that makes its entry when *kshama* makes its exit. The *Mahabharata* gives a graphic portrayal of how a life that is otherwise smooth, can be totally shattered by jealousy.

The golden island Lanka was like the very heavens, but Ravana's jealousy reduced it to ruins. Whereas *kshama* can give complete protection, its absence can plunge one into distress and disaster. Impatience breeds selfishness and promotes jealousy, which together spur infighting and divisive tendencies of various kinds. The troubles the country is currently passing through are largely due to the absence of this noble quality of *kshama*. Impatience has ruined even very great spiritual aspirants. Likewise, kings have been reduced to beggars. Absence of *kshama* can make *yogulu* (*yogis*) into *rogulu* (sick persons). Without *kshama*, mankind becomes degraded and starts declining, but if it has this quality then it can progress by leaps and bounds. *Kshama* is thus the very breath of life.

Can there be smoke without fire?

Can a car move without a driver?

Can a traffic light flash without a bulb?

How then can there be Creation without a Creator?

Everything must have a basis. For spiritual progress and advancement, *kshama* is the real basis or foundation. When *kshama* disappears, disturbance sets in, and there is a decline. Great countries have lost their glory, prestige, and reputation for this reason. Patience is therefore a vital virtue that must be assiduously cultivated, if one is to successfully face troubles and tribulations. Without patience and the capacity for forbearance, one becomes spiritually weak. Such weakness leads to bad feelings, undesirable thoughts, and unbecoming actions. When patience is gone, the greatest of men get reduced to utter fools.

The importance of *kshama* cannot be overstressed. This virtue is best cultivated under adverse circumstances, and one must therefore gladly welcome troubles instead of regarding them as unwelcome. Difficulties help one to nurse and build the capacity for patience, as the example of the Pandavas clearly shows. When they were in power and authority, the Pandavas were somewhat deficient in

kshama, but once they went into exile and had to face numerous hardships, *kshama* automatically began to develop in them. Thus times of distress offer the ideal opportunity for the development of patience and forbearance. In fact, pain and *kshama* go together, because *kshama* grows best in an environment of sorrow and misery. However, because of mental weakness as well as ignorance, we invariably shun painful experiences and distress.

You should not be weak; be brave and welcome troubles. Let them come, the more the merrier. It is only with such a courageous attitude that you would be able to bring out the *kshama* hidden within you. Can you get promoted to a higher class without passing an examination? It is only when you secure the prescribed marks and pass the examination that you are declared eligible to advance to the next higher class. While preparing for the examination, you have to face stress and many difficulties, but how sweet is the promotion! So, welcome troubles as tests that prepare you for higher things.

Some people may wonder, “If I develop *kshama* as Swami says and my life gets packed with troubles, how then will I survive?” Well, it all depends on what is meant by survival. *Kshama* is the true breath of life. It is the greatest ornament that one can acquire. It is *kshama* that enables you to develop equanimity and go beyond duality. Going beyond duality is the real purpose of life, and this cannot be done without *kshama*. You must therefore be happy when troubles descend on you because that is when *kshama* truly blossoms.

Students! Often you are seized with doubts. You wonder, “We are happy here because we are close to Bhagawan and are able to have great devotion for Him. But the moment we leave here, our devotion and love both diminish. Why?” This happens because one is deficient in *kshama*. Doubts arise frequently in an impatient person. Such a person has no tolerance, and intolerance is a fertile breeding ground for doubts. An impatient person is drowned in doubts about God. Devotees with great faith too are sometimes gripped by doubts. Why? Because of lack of *kshama*. It is therefore important to continuously assess the state of your patience and your capacity for forbearance. You must constantly ask yourself, “Is my *kshama* getting strong or weak?” You must then say, “Patience is my very life-breath, and I cannot afford to let it slacken.”

Kshama is no ordinary thing. It is the consolidation of *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), *ahimsa* (non-violence), and all such values that the *Vedas* extol. It is the ultimate in happiness and also an incomparable treasure. It is the most valuable asset and property that one can acquire. When people abandon *kshama*, politics becomes degraded, criticisms and accusations are exchanged freely, and there can even be turmoil. This is what happens when forbearance is eclipsed.

The moment *kshama* makes its exit, *asuya* (jealousy or envy) makes its entry. The opposite of *asuya* is *anasuya*. These two qualities are like two sisters but with diametrically opposite tendencies. In the scriptures, there is the story of a woman named Anasuya who had three sons. They were no ordinary sons for they were none other than Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwara. Swami has already told you that in the individual, Maheshwara represents a pure heart, Vishnu represents a pure mind, and Brahma represents pure speech. Thus, if a person's nature is *anasuya*, then that person will have a pure heart and a pure mind; moreover, the speech of the person will be pure and sweet.

If Anasuya has three sons, so has Asuya; the three offspring are hatred, pomp, and anger. Why is there such a huge difference between the two sisters? Because one is courageous, while the other is not. Anasuya is courageous; it is her courage that enables her to face all difficulties; and it is also her courage that is the fountainhead of *kshama*. One must always be courageous, for this is the only way to acquire *kshama*.

Remember how mighty Ravana was? He possessed enormous physical strength, worldly intelligence, and various related capabilities in an abundant measure. In spite of all this, because of the total absence of *kshama*, his heart became polluted with envy and hatred. Now, love has the extraordinary capacity to draw near even those who are far to start with.

Hatred, on the other hand, drives away even those who are near. Ravana had no love. He lacked *kshama* but was rich in *asuya*; as a result, he eventually had to pay a very heavy price. Is it possible to have *kshama* if one's looks are bad, if one lends one's ear to foul words, and if one's actions are rooted in evil? No! Man today is seeing what he ought not to, hearing what he should not, and doing what is

most undesirable. How can there be peace in such a polluted heart? Ravana's heart was completely polluted, which is why Hanuman, that great devotee of Rama, advised Ravana thus:

*O Ravana, I shall teach you a lesson!
Lanka is no longer yours, O evil one!
Listen carefully and waste not this opportunity.
Ignoring the intellect,
And becoming a slave to evil tendencies,
You have got yourself into the clutches of death!
Sita is the Mother of all beings;
She is your mother too.
By abducting her,
You have committed a terrible sin.
One arrow of Rama,
Will remove all your ten heads!
O sinner! I destroyed your minions holding Sita a prisoner,
And in retaliation you have set fire to my tail.
Now watch while I make Lanka burn,
Before putting out the fire in my tail.*

Hanuman said, "Ravana, your discrimination has been totally warped by jealousy."

Jealousy is the greatest enemy of man, and it takes root when *kshama* is absent. If you possess the virtue of *kshama*, then none of these enemies can come anywhere near you. If the hearts of today's students are polluted, it is because of the absence of *kshama*. This is a quality that has to be painstakingly cultivated by self-effort and cannot be acquired as a gift from others; nor can it be obtained from books or even a teacher. It is only your own tenacity and firm determination that will help you cultivate this virtue. You must be resolute and ready to face any difficulty in the quest of your goal. Life is a challenge; meet it! In fact, it is a series of challenges and not just one or two. Face them squarely, resist the obstacles, and firmly march forward. Such determination alone would take you to your goal. If the heart is devoid of *kshama*, it becomes vulnerable to doubts.

Man today does not even know what to doubt and what not to doubt! Caught in the whirlpool of doubts, modern man sometimes sinks to depths much lower than that of animals. In fact, at times he makes animals look better! Animals behave within certain bounds, and the dictates of season and reason. Man, on the other hand, knows no such bounds; for him, there is neither reason nor season. Absence of *kshama* is responsible for all this. Cultivation of *kshama* must therefore be an important priority. No doubt you will face many difficulties on the path, but they should not deter you. Knock them aside and bravely march on, taking courage from the fact that once you have *kshama* there is nothing that you cannot achieve.

Students sometimes start earnestly on meditation, but after a while they lose their seriousness. As a result, whatever progress was made initially, gets wiped out. Whose fault is it? Can you blame God? No! You alone are responsible for whatever has befallen you. Instead of facing the impediments to your meditation, you become impatient; once you become impatient, you start having doubts about the utility and the efficacy of meditation; after that your interest starts slackening—all this because of the lack of patience. So, *kshama* is indispensable. *Kshama* is life itself and the very breath of life. Life bereft of *kshama* is meaningless, and one who lives so is no better than a corpse. Therefore acquire and protect *kshama* at all costs.

Students! The stage of life you presently are in is most important. This is when you can easily overcome all sorts of obstacles and tide over all difficulties. If you miss this chance to cultivate patience, when do you think you are going to do it? Is it after becoming old? Habits must be formed when one is young. You cannot acquire the habit of thinking about God in your old age.

*When the messengers of death are at your doorstep,
When your relatives have given up hope
And are preparing for your last journey,
When your wife and children are lamenting about
your imminent departure,
Is it possible to acquire in that last moment,
The habit of chanting God's name?*

Impossible! Such a thing cannot be done. Good habits must be cultivated in

the stage of life you are in now. This is when you should start stockpiling patience and accumulate a lot of it! This is the stage when *kshama* becomes the principal weapon of your life. If bad thoughts arise in you, resist and say, “These thoughts are coming because I am deficient in *kshama*. Let me counter the deficiency.” Bad thoughts cannot penetrate one who possesses *kshama*. If the doors are slammed shut, can anyone enter? For aspirants on the spiritual path, *kshama* is indispensable.

In life, your capacity for forbearance will be constantly put to test, and you must therefore be very careful. In the class, you are expected to be ever ready for surprise tests. You cannot excuse yourself saying that you have not prepared and are not ready. The teacher will not accept that plea because you are always expected to be ready.

You know what photographers do before snapping a group photo. Just before clicking they say, “ready.” The Divine cameraman, however, does not follow this practice. With Him, you have to be ever in readiness, for no one can say when He will click the shutter. If you are not ready, the picture will not be good. So, in life you must always be ready for tests; achieving this preparedness is true *sadhana* (spiritual discipline). Do not imagine that *sadhana* is a drill performed according to a set timetable. Time is not beholden to you and will therefore not oblige you. Time will not follow you; rather, you must follow Time.

Students! In every one of your spiritual endeavors, you must make the resolution, “This I MUST achieve; this virtue I SHALL acquire.” This is the way to *prema* (love) and *kshama*. If you proceed in this manner with unshakeable faith and idealism, then without any doubt, your life will be fully redeemed. All your actions and feelings must be dripping with *kshama*, *prema*, and *dhaya* (compassion). Love knows no hatred and is totally free from desires. Thus God is said to be love personified. *Kshama* will grow if you have unshakable faith in God. Once you have learnt to be infinitely patient, love will walk in almost immediately.

Love combined with *kshama* is the surest way to fulfillment. Therefore, when you worship God, make sure you repose total faith in Him. Without faith, what is the use of worship? Faith alone will take you beyond worries. Life is full of worries. They seem to come in an endless procession. What is it that does not

cause anxiety?

*Birth is a worry, and so is existence itself;
family life is a worry; death is a worry;
childhood is a worry; old age is the same;
living is a worry; working is a worry;
pain causes worry; pleasure too causes worry.
Worry, worry, all the time!*

You are plagued by multiple worries all the time. In this world, troubles will come for sure, but one must learn to rise above worry; this is possible only with *kshama*. Welcome troubles with a smile saying, “Come my friend, you are the bearer of joy!” Truly speaking, it is not friends but enemies who give one bliss. Do you know how? Enemies put you on your guard and help you to develop *kshama*. When one is filled with *kshama*, one cannot help being blissful. That is why Swami is stressing so much the acquisition of this incomparable virtue.

Along with love, also cultivate *kshama*. What is normally professed as love is not real love because it invariably tends to be narrow, restricted, and tinged with selfishness. Do not mistake this distorted feeling for love. This so-called love is based on selfishness and self-interest. Liberate this shackled love from the various clutches, purify it, and then direct it toward God. Once you have gone through this cleansing process, *kshama* will grow automatically.

The absence of *kshama* is responsible for most of the problems the world over and the decline in the innate humanness of man. Where virtues and values are concerned, man is able to achieve hardly anything. When blades of grass stand all by themselves, they become a ready meal for cattle, but when stranded and plaited into a rope, even a mad elephant can be tied down—that is the power of unity. Therefore you should always be united. Unity promotes patience and strengthens it. What is the type of unity that Swami wants from you? Unity in matters relating to God and good activities. Such unity will develop purity, and once purity is attained, Divinity becomes accessible. Go forward, trampling over difficulties. To reach great heights, you must have courage. And how does one become courageous? When the heart is full of *kshama*, the spirit of courage will automatically make its appearance.

Vibhishana provides the classic example. It was through *kshama* that he acquired the courage to defy Ravana and cross over to the side of Rama. He arrived in Rama's camp chanting "Rama, Rama, Rama." Seeing Vibhishana in the distance, Rama immediately raised His hand as a gesture of grace and protection. However, the people around Rama said, "Lord, that person is a *rakshasa*, a demon. He is the brother of your enemy. You must therefore not grant him protection." Meanwhile, Vibhishana kept on telling Rama, "I am Yours, I am Yours." Rama then said, "The moment a person tells Me 'I am Yours,' that person shall receive My protection, come what may." Such was Rama's determination; you too must have similar determination in every spiritual endeavor of yours.

One day during the Lanka War, there appeared a young man on the battlefield. Vibhishana drew the attention of Rama to this warrior, saying, "Rama, this person is mighty, powerful, and valorous. He is stronger than most, and You must slay him without fail." In response, Rama dispatched an arrow felling the *rakshasa* warrior; the young man was dead. Vibhishana then went near the dead body and began weeping profusely. Rama gently lifted Vibhishana and said, "What is all this? Why are you crying over this man?" Vibhishana replied, "This is Neeludu my only son. I urged You then to kill him since he was with the enemies, but now my emotion as a father is overwhelming me. I am unable to bear the sight of the death of my dear son right before my eyes. So please grant me the power of patience and forbearance so that I can rise above such tragedies."

Notice how unique Vibhishana's prayer is. He said to Rama, "*Kshama* is my *sathya* (truth) and *dharma* (righteousness); it is also Rama for me! *Kshama* is my God, and I cannot ever afford to forget it." This episode reveals how even great men suffer pain if they lose their grip over *kshama*. On the other hand, with *kshama*, there are no limits to what can be achieved.

Drive away bad thoughts, and make room for good and noble ones. Through sacred thoughts, foster *kshama*. This will give you multiple capabilities, enabling you to transform your life into an ideal one. Study of books alone will not enhance your capability; it will merely provide you with superficial or bookish knowledge. This obviously is not enough. Real capability and strength come by tapping the Inner Power latent in you. All that is outside is artificial. Real truth and power are

both inside, in your heart. It is the heart that must be strengthened, but, unaware of this fact, people become furiously active in the external world, only to get lost there.

There are many types of food catering to the needs of the gross body, but what about food for the heart? That food can be obtained only when you turn your head toward God. You must understand the subtle linkages here—food, head, and God. Thus, along with the acquisition of worldly knowledge, you must also give importance to culture and refinement. Earlier, the Vice Chancellor spoke about the culture of *Bharat* (India). He crisply summarized the essence of many ancient texts. *Bharatiya* (Indian) culture is timeless, sacred, deep, profound, and full of inner strength, and it provides full protection. Today, we are losing our grip over such a great culture. Instead of ignoring and brushing it aside, we must do everything possible to nurse and foster it.

Refinement accumulates and manifests as culture. Here is a cloth. It has been woven from yarn. Where did the yarn come from? From cotton. By processing cotton, one obtains yarn. By further processing yarn, one gets cloth. Likewise, this table has come from wood that has itself come from a tree. Refinement comes about only through processing and shaping. Farmers grow paddy. Can you eat raw paddy? No; it has to be polished first and then cooked before it is eaten. In life too, refinement is necessary. And culture is nothing but accumulated refinement. *Bharatiya* culture is ideal in this respect and worthy of being followed by everyone at all times. Therefore, with God's name on your lips, and unshakable faith in your heart, acquire *kshama*, allowing it to manifest as *dhaya* or compassion.⁹

9. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 12: *Kshama*, the Grandest and Noblest Virtue.



The Chief Characteristics of Sathya Sai

Of what avail is it if you simply worship My name and form without attempting to cultivate the *samathwa* (equal love for all) that I have, My *santhi* (unruffled equanimity), My *prema* (love), My *sahana* (patience and fortitude), My

ananda (ever-blissful nature)?¹⁰ The chief characteristics of Sathya Sai are, let me tell you, equanimity and forbearance.¹¹

10. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 8, Chapter 19: The Revelation. Divine Discourse on May 17, 1968.

11. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 15, Chapter 33: An Ideal University. Divine Discourse on November 22, 1981.



Forbearance—a Noble Quality

*Forbearance is truth, forbearance is righteousness,
Forbearance is Veda, forbearance is non-violence,
Forbearance is the true path,
Forbearance is happiness, forbearance is compassion,
Forbearance is the basis for everything.*

The most important qualities a human being must cultivate in his life are patience and forbearance. It is not possible for every individual to realize the *atmatatwa*, which is the eternal truth and which is infinite, indivisible, and indestructible. People who think that *Atma* (Divine Self) is not eternal and the body is permanent cannot understand the *atmatatwa*. People who identify themselves with the body (*dehatma bhava*) cannot understand *paramatma tatwa*. *Atmatatwa* can be taught and discussed in several ways. But it is only by the adoption of certain *abhyasa* (practice) and *sadhana* in daily life that the eternal truth, which is *Atma*, can be realized. One who has never experienced the sweetness of sugar can never understand it either. Only he who has had the taste of sugar can understand its sweetness. It is only when we experience the Divine qualities and Divine feelings in our daily life by certain practice that we will be able to understand the nature of the changeless, eternal *Atma*.

I have told you several times that removal of immorality is the only way to immortality (*amritatwa*). When man is able to remove his weaknesses like anger, envy, jealousy, pride, etc., he can understand the truth about immortality. It is only when we put into practice at least some of the qualities mentioned in the *bhakthi yoga* of *Bhagavad Gita*, it will be possible to understand the nature of the *atmatatwa*, at least to a certain extent. Among these, patience and forbearance are

the noblest and most important qualities of a devotee. It is not possible to acquire this by the study of scriptures. It does not come by the teachings of a *guru*. It cannot be purchased from the market. It has to be acquired by systematically following certain *abhyasa* (practice) and *sadhana*.

To maintain patience in times of difficulties, sorrows, losses, scandals, and harsh words is like a test. It is only in such times we have to develop our patience and fortitude. There is one weakness that is lying hidden in man. It manifests exactly during such times. That is *dwesha* (hatred). We have to necessarily keep our patience during such times of weakness. Devoid of patience, we will be exposed to several types of agitations and anxieties. We may even resort to certain undesirable practices during such times.¹²

12. Bhagavad Gita Part II, Chapter 10: Forbearance—A Noble Quality.



Spread Brotherliness

Anger, malice, greed, envy—all these are obstacles in the path of love and cooperation. They lower man from the Divine to the animal level. Bear with others with patience and understanding; practice *sahana* (forbearance) and sympathy. Try to discover points of contact, not of conflict. Spread brotherliness and deepen kindness through knowledge. Then life becomes worthwhile, without fail.¹³

13. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 6, Chapter 20: The Tree of Life. Divine Discourse on August 3, 1966.



Control of the Senses

The ancient sages emphasized the importance of *Karma Yoga*, the discharge of one's duties in life in a dedicated spirit. Through *Karma Yoga* man achieves control of the senses and develops the qualities of universal love, forbearance, and compassion.

Everyone should realize that the body has been given to us for performing selfless service. It should also be realized that nothing in creation is intended for the exclusive use of any one person. We should therefore discard the feeling

“These things have been given for my exclusive use, they are my own.”¹⁴

14. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 28: Equality through Love. Divine Discourse on December 11, 1985.



Qualities That Differentiate Human Beings from Animals

Do not be deluded by the belief that life has been given to you for eating and drinking and enjoying other physical pleasures. This is not the reason for human birth, which is a rare blessing. What is the difference between a human being and the animals? It is qualities like kindness, compassion, forbearance, and sympathy that differentiate human beings from animals. But man tends to forget these inherent qualities out of absorption in selfish, mundane desires. Those wearing the glass of selfishness can only see selfishness all around them. A defective vision produces an apparent defect in creation. There is nothing wrong with *srishti* (creation). Every defect is related to the defective *dhrishti* (vision).¹⁵

15. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 36: Purity, Patience, Perseverance: Steps to Divinity. Divine Discourse on November 23, 1993.



Develop a Friendly and Loving Attitude

How should one's attitude to society be changed? One should give up talking ill of others, reviling them or ridiculing them, feeling envious of good people. Evil traits like these lead to loss of peace in society. People should develop a friendly and loving attitude toward their fellow beings in society. To develop a sense of helpfulness, there should be the spirit of sacrifice. People should also cultivate the feeling of sympathy and understanding. For spiritual transformation, the qualities that are needed are kindness, love, forbearance, and compassion.¹⁶

16. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 28, Chapter 31: Supreme Need for National Unity. Divine Discourse on November 18, 1995.



Purify Your Thoughts

We think something, say something else, and act in a totally different manner. God will not accept such deviation in our thoughts, words, and deeds. The ultimate result we get will be according to our nature. As is the flour, so is the cake; as is the food, so is the belch; and as is the thought, so is the expression. Therefore you must make a sincere effort to purify your thoughts. You must cultivate pure love. You must develop forbearance. There is nothing greater than forbearance in this world.

“*Kshama* (forbearance) is truth, *kshama* is righteousness; *kshama* is *Veda*; *kshama* is non-violence; *kshama* is happiness; *kshama* is compassion; and *kshama* is everything in this world”—thus goes the saying. *Kshama* means patience and forbearance. When you have patience, you will be able to attain Divinity. Today, we are developing a sort of tension and temperament on every trivial issue. This anxiety and tension are very dangerous. This will reduce the life span of an individual.¹⁷

17. Bhagavad Gita Part I, Chapter 5: The Self-Effulgent Flame In One’s Own Body.



Forbearance Promotes Divine Qualities

Kshama (forbearance) is identified by the scriptures with truth, righteousness, knowledge, sacrifice, and joy. Without *kshama* man cannot be happy even for a *kshasya* (moment). It promotes Divine qualities. It reveals inner Divinity.

One has to undertake spiritual practices to earn it and establish oneself in it. Nourish the idea that God is equally present in all, in spite of ridicule from the ignorant and sarcastic criticism from the blind or even praise from admirers. Do not mind them.¹⁸

18. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 15, Chapter 25: The Garden of the Heart. Divine Discourse on October 6, 1981.



Service Must Emanate from the Heart

Service rendered without egoism, however small, can be highly beneficial. It must emanate from a tender heart that responds to every sob and groan and is ready to renounce and suffer gladly. One must have the eagerness to get involved with others to feel fullness thereby. One must cultivate forbearance and inner strength, in order to avoid resentment at criticism and ridicule while one is engaged in joyful service.¹⁹

19. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 23: Love Is the Only Offering I Accept. Divine Discourse on November 21, 1985.



Fill the Mind with Good Thoughts

When the mind is filled with good thoughts, such as truth, love, forbearance, and compassion, one's life is filled with peace and serenity. If, on the other hand, one allows thoughts of hatred, envy, anger, and conceit to grow, life becomes perpetual misery.²⁰

20. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 19, Chapter 15: *Mano Moolam Idam Jagath*. Divine Discourse on July 31, 1986.



Good Actions Produce Good Results

Man is the architect of his own happiness or misery. Only good actions can produce good results. When the individual is good, the family is good. When families are good, the society is reformed. When society improves, the nation improves. When the nations improve, the world is transformed. Hence the transformation must begin with the individual. How can this transformation be brought about?

There are two impurities in man which have to be cast out: selfishness and conceit. But that is not enough. Pure qualities like love, forbearance, and compassion have to be imbibed. Life has to be divinized. What is the kind of existence people lead today? They are engaged in talking ill of others. They indulge in carping criticism. They are filled with envy. They gloat over trivial

achievements. They speak one thing and act in a contrary way. This type of behavior dehumanizes them. There should be unity in thought, word, and deed.²¹

21. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 19: Redemption through Renunciation. Divine Discourse on September 5, 1987.



Fill the Mind with Good and Sacred Thoughts

As regards internal purity, it should be noted that the mind is polluted by bad thoughts and bad desires, by attachments and aversions. You must strive to fill the mind with good and sacred thoughts. Qualities like love, kindness, compassion, forbearance, and sympathy have to be developed to get rid of negative and bad thoughts.²²

22. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 26: Disciplines of the Spirit. Divine Discourse on September 3, 1989.



Make All Sense Organs Work in Unison

One may raise the question as to how to get over the dangerous pests of jealousy and hatred. This is possible when you make all the sense organs function in unison. If you look at the functions of the sense organs, you may notice that even if one organ stops functioning in harmony, life will be limping. When the mind conceives a thought, all the organs are coordinating to get the thought executed. If senses do not follow thoughts, life will become miserable. When there is forbearance, all organs coordinate harmoniously and work in unison.²³

23. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 27, Chapter 1: Cultivate Forgiveness and Love. Divine Discourse on January 1, 1994.



The Sterling Human Qualities

Sacrifice, love, compassion, and forbearance are the sterling human qualities that should be fostered, shedding jealousy, hatred, ego, and anger, which are animal qualities. What is the use of being born as a man and leading a life of birds

and beasts?

Man should maintain equanimity in pleasure and pain, loss or gain. Without pain you cannot enjoy pleasure. Sorrow is verily the royal road to joy. Sufferings are the stepping stones that lead man toward virtuous conduct. One should neither be elated by pleasure nor dejected by pain.

You must understand the wonderful human life created by God. God created everything in the world and entrusted man with the responsibility to look after them. God allowed man to use things in the world as he wished, but on one condition. He has to suffer the consequences of his actions, good or bad.²⁴

24. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 27, Chapter 10: Foster Love: Eschew Hatred. Divine Discourse on April 11, 1994.



The Internal Traits

All that emanates from the head is related to the physical world. In Vedantic parlance, this is called *pravritti lakshanam* (externalism). These external activities include studies, moving about, earning and spending, and ultimately passing on. All these relate to the mundane and are not enduring reality. Qualities like kindness, sympathy, compassion, truth, and forbearance arise from the heart. These are described as *nivritti lakshanas* (internal traits). Of the two tendencies, the external and the internal, it is not good to follow the external traits. The quest for truth means understanding the difference between the two paths. This quest embraces every kind of action—seeing, speaking, doing, etc.²⁵

25. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 28, Chapter 29: Render unto the People What Is Theirs. Divine Discourse on November 17, 1995.



Spirit of Sacrifice Is Most Essential

In this vast world, in which countless human beings are leading miserable lives, pursuing endless desires and unattainable aspirations, the spirit of sacrifice is most essential. Trees bring forth fruits for the benefit of others. Rivers carry water for the use of others. Cows yield milk to benefit others. Likewise, man should

share in harmony with others his qualities of goodness, compassion, forbearance, and charity.²⁶

26. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 28, Chapter 31: Supreme Need for National Unity. Divine Discourse on November 18, 1995.



Show Gratitude to God

Man is the beneficiary of innumerable gratuitous gifts of God: wind, rain, sunlight, and so on. What gratitude is man showing to God for all these while he is paying a big price for every small benefit he derives from services like water supply and electric power? God is the provider of all that is essential for life. What recompense is man making to God?

On the contrary, he goes on praying for more benefits. This insatiable desire is the cause of all man's evil qualities. The truly human qualities are calmness, forbearance, and compassion. Man should lead a contented life. God has given to man a wonderfully beautiful world, with mountains, forests, rivers, and the glorious moon. Above all, God has endowed man with a compassionate heart. But he is polluting it.²⁷

27. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 29, Chapter 24: Not Salaries but Service. Divine Discourse on July 1, 1996.



Keep Control over Your Food and Habits

From where do the evil qualities like lust, greed, etc., arise? They arise out of the food you consume. So, keep control over your food and habits. Take only *satwic* (pure) food. Then you will have only sacred thoughts. God has gifted you with many noble qualities. They are innate in you. But you are neglecting them. Reading, writing, taking up jobs, earning money, building mansions, etc., originate from the head and are related to the *pravritti marga* (outward path). These are all acquired by you with some effort. But you do not need to make any special effort to acquire the noble qualities like compassion, love, forbearance, etc., as they are latent in you.

Head is the source of bad thoughts and heart of noble thoughts. Follow the heart; do not follow the head, lest you should be caught up in the mire of worldly life. The head puts you in many dangers. If you follow the head, you may lose your head itself! Turn your vision inward. Follow the heart, which is the source of all noble qualities like truth, righteousness, peace, love, and non-violence.

Here we find many bulbs glowing in this hall. How? Current flows through the wire, enters the bulb, and gives us light. Likewise, when the current of truth flows through the wire of righteousness and enters the bulb of peace, we get the light of love. A true human being is the perfect combination of these five human values. These are, in fact, the very life-principle of man, without which he is just like a corpse. But, unfortunately, these are missing in the modern man.²⁸

28. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 7: Sanctify Your Life by Sacred Actions. Divine Discourse on April 5, 2000.



The Flower of Forbearance Is Very Dear to the Lord

The Pandavas suffered a lot at the hands of the Kauravas. But never did Dharmaraja lose forbearance, even when Draupadi was being humiliated by the Kauravas. It was the virtue of forbearance that protected the Pandavas and made them an ideal to the rest of the world. This flower of forbearance is very dear to the Lord. God will be pleased with you and confer boons on you only when you offer Him the “flowers” that are dear to Him. No benefit accrues from offering the flowers, which fade away and decay. The ever-blooming flowers of *ahimsa* (non-violence), *indriya nigraha* (sense control), *dhaya* (compassion), and *kshama* (forbearance) are liked by God.²⁹

29. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 12: Flowers That Never Fade. Divine Discourse on August 22, 2000.



The Qualities of a Good Mind

Years have rolled by, but man has not developed noble feelings. A true human being is one with a good mind. These are the qualities of a good mind: it

has the brightness of the sun and coolness of the moon; it makes one utter sacred words and confers peace on society. Only one with compassion, love, forbearance, sympathy, and sacrifice is a true human being. But in modern man such sacred qualities have become scarce. How can one, bereft of human qualities, be called a human being?³⁰

30. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34, Chapter 1: Good Thoughts Herald the New Year. Divine Discourse on January 1, 2001.



Who Is Most Dear to God?

“One who is devoid of the feeling of ‘I’ and ‘mine,’ one who takes pain and pleasure in the same vein, and one who has forbearance is most dear to Me” thus declared the *Gitacharya*.³¹

31. Bhagavad Gita Part I, Chapter 5: The Self-Effulgent Flame in One’s Own Body.



Take the Sweet Drink

If you keep a pinch of salt in your mouth, even a sweet drink will only be salty in taste. It will not taste sweet. In the first instance, you have to spit out the salt in your mouth and rinse your mouth with fresh water. Then take the sweet drink. It will now taste sweet. Similarly, it is only when you get rid of the bad qualities in you like anger, hatred, jealousy, selfishness, and ego, you will be able to enjoy the sweetness and sanctity of good qualities like truth, love, compassion, forbearance, etc.³²

32. Bhagavad Gita Part I, Chapter 5: The Self-Effulgent Flame in One’s Own Body.



Accept All Trials and Tribulations with Love

Face all difficulties with forbearance. Accept all trials and tribulations with love. Accept both pleasure and pain with love. Fill your heart with love and not

with the poison of evil qualities. Even poison becomes *prasadam* (sacred food) if it is offered to God. When Mira was given a cup of milk mixed with poison, she offered it to Krishna. Krishna accepted the poison and gave her the milk as *prasadam*.³³

33. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 39, Chapter 11: The Youth Should Follow the Path of *Sathya* and *Dharma*. Divine Discourse on May 27, 2006.



The Worst Enemies of Man

Anger and jealousy are the worst enemies of man. One who has these two cannot be called a human being. Such a person can never attain Divinity. One who flies into a rage from moment to moment shows a lack of humanness. It shows only his animal quality. Therefore first of all control anger and jealousy. This is what all our sacred texts like the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Upanishads* teach. These two are more powerful and fierce than even a lion and are always waiting to overpower you. The anger of a lion is short-lived; the lion can kill anyone in a few minutes. But man harbors anger and jealousy for months and years, and he does not give them up easily. Therefore anger and jealousy are the most fearful enemies of man. They destroy the feelings of unity and forbearance.³⁴

34. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 42, Chapter 6: No Society Can Exist without Morality. Divine Discourse on February 25, 2009.



Use Sense Organs in the Correct Manner

Although everything in the world is God's creation, we must cultivate the wisdom to make proper use of things. Our sense organs, for instance, have also to be used in the correct manner. Each particular organ has a distinctive feature. Amongst them, the one that tastes, namely the tongue, is a very important one. It is imperative that we keep it in check. Sometimes to satisfy our palate we consume all types of food, not knowing that through it bad qualities like lust, anger, greed, attachment, arrogance, and selfishness grow in us. Many of the different foods that we eat change, in the gross appearance at least, into waste matter that is not of any

value and is excreted. In a subtle way, the same food is changing into our blood and muscle.

Even more subtle parts of this food will appear as our mind. Therefore, either for the distortions in our mind or for the sacred thoughts that generate therefrom, the food that we take is mainly responsible. Therefore good qualities like peace, forbearance, love, and attachment to truth can only be promoted by eating good food. Indian culture, as contained in the *Vedas*, advises us that control of our sensory organs and living on *satwic* (pure) and good food are the paths for realization of the self and liberation thereof. This is the reason why from time immemorial, in our Indian traditions, the *rishis* (sages) ate *satwic* food and drank clear flowing water. They kept their minds perfectly clean, and this is how they were able to understand the Divine Spirit. You should make an attempt to control your tongue when you are young. If, at this age, you do not control your tongue and all other sensory organs, you will have to face many difficulties in your later life.³⁵

35. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1973, Chapter 14: Young Persons Should Have Full Control over the Tongue.



Sustained Efforts Confer Peace of Mind

Peace cannot reign in the malice-ridden hearts of selfish people. It can be attained only by those who, with patience, perseverance, and forbearance follow the sacred path of spirituality. Effort is required for achieving results both in the world of mundane affairs and in the spiritual realm. *Sadhana* or steady, systematic, and sustained effort alone can confer peace of mind and inner tranquility. However, the path of *sadhana* does present obstacles to the seeker who will have to overcome them by his perseverance. *Na sukhaat labhyate sukham*—pleasure cannot be the source for further pleasure. There is no joy without sorrow, no pleasure without pain, and no gain without loss. Therefore, abiding joy and everlasting bliss, conferred by the absolute peace and tranquility of the mind, can be attained only through sincere and painstaking *sadhana*.³⁶

36. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1979, Chapter 28: *Ananya Bhakthi*.



Remain Unruffled

Forbearance, the paragon of virtues, makes a man remain unruffled by the vicissitudes of life. Neither elated by a happy turn of events nor dejected on the occurrence of a tragedy, a man with fortitude is unperturbed by the ups and downs in the endless drama of life. Such a person endowed with inner tranquility and peace of mind is the *sthithaprajna* portrayed in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

In Buddha's time, there was a particular village headman who despised the holy man and His teachings. Once he heard that Buddha and His disciples were coming to his village. The tyrannical headman ordered all the villagers to shut the doors of their houses and refrain from giving alms to them. While the villagers followed his order, the headman himself stood near the entrance to his own house. Arriving with His followers, Buddha went to the headman's house to ask for alms—“*Bhavati bhikshaam dehi,*” He said.

The headman lost his temper and hurled abuse upon abuse at Buddha in the most uncivil language. Just as he was about to hit the sage, Buddha smiled and said, “I have a doubt. Suppose you give me alms that I do not accept. What will you do then?” The haughty headman answered, “I will take them back.” Hearing this, Buddha stated in the most polite manner, “You have offered me insult and calumny. I do not accept them; you must, therefore, take them back.” The headman became silent and hung his head in shame and remorse.

A little forbearance and patience on our part will make the abusive epithets of our enemies boomerang on themselves just as a registered letter goes back to its sender if it is returned unaccepted by the addressee.³⁷

37. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1979, Chapter 28: *Ananya Bhakthi*.



For Good Conduct, Virtues Are Essential

Man has no doubt mastered many ways of accumulating wealth and amassing fortune. Yet, happiness eludes him. Why? Because his conduct is not proper. For good conduct, virtues are most essential. A virtuous person can

accomplish anything. A son lacking in virtues and a life without a meaningful goal are of no value. Without virtues, life ceases to have any meaning. Good conduct should be the real basis for life. However, modern man is totally lacking in character and virtues. No wonder both peace and happiness elude him. Because of man's misconduct and immoral behavior, there is pollution everywhere—in air, water, land, and food. All the five elements have been severely contaminated, consequent to man's unbecoming behavior. If man behaves properly, is pollution of the elements conceivable?

It is all due to the extensive prevalence of immoral feelings and improper behavior. The sharp decline of virtues like love, compassion, and forbearance is directly responsible for the widespread pollution that one sees today. In fact, one might even say that the five elements are afraid of man! The five elements as God created them are all pure and sacred. There is nothing wrong with them whatsoever. It is man's misconduct that has caused them all to become polluted. Impurity within gets reflected as pollution without.³⁸

38. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 2: The Sanctity of the Five Elements.



Love Grows by Giving and Forgiving

Man should develop the qualities of love and forbearance. Love grows by giving and forgiving. Selfishness grows by getting and forgetting.³⁹ You must cultivate forbearance and compassion. This is the way to foster the love principle.⁴⁰

39. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 11: God's Response. Divine Discourse on June 18, 1989.

40. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30, Chapter 4: The Gospel of Work, Love, and Sacrifice. Divine Discourse on February 13 1997.



Always Cultivate Sacred Feelings

Because of the fickle nature of the mind, sometimes you get unwanted thoughts. At that time, remind yourself, “I am not a monkey, I am a human” repeatedly. When you do so, the quality of a monkey will vanish from you. Anger,

waywardness, etc., are animal qualities. Peace, compassion, love, forbearance, etc., are human qualities. When you develop human qualities, your animal qualities will automatically disappear.

All qualities are there in the human; they do not come from anywhere outside. Some people think bad company will give rise to bad thoughts. You will be influenced by bad company only if there are evil tendencies already in you. Are there no good feelings and good thoughts outside? Why do they not enter your heart? They do not enter your heart because primarily there are no good thoughts and good feelings in you. That is why, since ancient times, company of the good (*satsang*) has been given great importance. The good thoughts and feelings in you will develop when you associate yourself with good company.

Always cultivate sacred feelings. What is meant by sacred feelings and thoughts? Thoughts of God are sacred thoughts. It does not matter what name of God you contemplate on. God is one. “The one God has many names.” Fill your heart with any Divine name. Then there will be no scope for other thoughts to enter it. Your heart is like a single chair. Once you enshrine Divine love in it, no evil thought can enter it.

At a young age, students are obsessed with many types of thoughts. Bad company is not alone responsible for these evil thoughts. Your food and habits are also responsible for this. Your foolishness is also a cause for this. What is this foolishness? You yourself do not know what is good, but at the same time you do not listen if someone tells you what is good. This is the greatest foolishness of humanity.⁴¹

41. Virtues are the Foundation of Peace. Divine Discourse on July 26, 1996.



The Greatest of the Virtues Is Love

The peace of the world depends on peace and amity between nations; the peace of nations depends upon the peace between the concomitant units, the villages, the families, and finally, the individuals of each family. So, every individual has a responsibility to love others, have faith in them, and revere them as sparks of the Divine. Every man has to cultivate the virtues of tolerance,

forbearance, and brotherliness.

If one loses wealth, he may regain it, by some ruse or other. If he loses health, some doctor might prescribe a tonic to win it back. If one loses status and authority, he may by sheer pluck gain them back. If virtue is lost, it is lost forever; nothing can restore the pristine purity. So one has to be ever vigilant and never slacken.

The greatest of the virtues is love. Love is the basis of character. You may have all other desirable things in plenty; but, if you have no character, that is to say, virtue, which is all strung on love, you can have no genuine peace. Money comes and goes! But, morality? It comes and grows! Morality has to be grown in the heart by feeding it with love; only then we can have justice, security, law, and order. If love declines among the people, nations will weaken, and mankind will perish.⁴²

42. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 11, Chapter 38: Give and Gain. Divine Discourse on February 3, 1972.



Promote Tranquility

Love is the spring wheel of a factory. One has to work along with hundreds of others, with different temperaments, so one has to learn forbearance and equanimity. One has to create an atmosphere of tranquility around oneself. No one should be looked upon with envy, malice, or hatred. Tranquility can be promoted if each one does his duty, faithfully and efficiently; that is the highest *sadhana* (spiritual practice) also.

Duty is God; work is worship. When you do your duty to the best of your ability and skill, and to the best advantage of the organization of which you are a limb, you have worshipped God, and He will certainly be pleased.⁴³

43. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 11, Chapter 38: Give and Gain. Divine Discourse on February 3, 1972.



All Religions Teach Love and Compassion

Love all religions and all nations. Recognize and accept all religions as paths leading men to the same destination. All of them teach love and compassion, humility and forbearance. I bless all of you and ask you to promote love, sympathy, and compassion toward all beings; God is present in every one of them, and it is your duty to revere God in each of them.⁴⁴

44. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 11, Chapter 40: The Toughest Armor. Divine Discourse on March 29, 1972.



Be Happy and Calm

Be happy when grief strikes you. Be calm when anger tries to inflame you. How can you put down fire with fire? Reason out and convince yourself that tolerance, forbearance, love, and sweetness can alone ensure peace for yourself and for society.⁴⁵ Be eager to serve, to help, to come to the rescue of others. For this, one must cultivate *sahana* (fortitude, equanimity).⁴⁶

45. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 12, Chapter 12: *Bhaarathi-Bhaaratham*. Divine Discourse on April 4, 1973.

46. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 7, Chapter 7: No Mirror, No Image. Divine Discourse on March 9, 1967.



Three Pillars of a Happy Life

Defeat and victory are the obverse and reverse of the same coin; when you welcome one, you have willy-nilly to welcome the other too. Forbearance, compassion, and incorruptible virtue are the three pillars of a happy life. Only such a life can be called civilized; the rest is barbarian existence.⁴⁷

47. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 12, Chapter 14: Your Image in His Eye. Divine Discourse in Hyderabad, April 1973.



Pardon Faults of Others

Ahimsa (absence of violence) does not mean merely not injuring a living being. You should not cause hurt even by a word, a look, or a gesture. Tolerance, fortitude, equanimity—these help you to be steady in *ahimsa*. They will remove all chance of your causing pain to others. This is called *sahana* (forbearance) or *kshama* (forgiving). Assess the worth of whatever others do to you or say about you, and cultivate fortitude and the understanding to appreciate their behavior and pardon their faults. This capacity is as invaluable as truth, righteousness, wisdom, non-violence, renunciation, delight, and compassion. It is all that one need possess for spiritual advancement.

Living becomes a glorious experience only when it is sweetened by tolerance and love. Willingness to compromise with others' ways of living and cooperation in common tasks, these make living happy and fruitful.⁴⁸

48. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 14, Chapter 46: Be Human. Divine Discourse on February 17, 1980.



Qualities That Originate from the *Atma*

Even the distinction between man and women relates only to the physical body. The Indwelling Spirit in both of them is the same Divine. In fact, every human being can be divided into two constituents. One is the body. The other is the *Atma* (Divine Self). Hunger, thirst, sleep, work, etc., are qualities derived from the body. Truth, forbearance, sympathy, love, and other qualities originate from the *Atma*. If the truth is gone into, it will be seen that man is not the body, though he identifies himself with it.

The physical body is common to all living beings. It is made up of the same five elements. It is subject to decay and death. Food, sleep, reproduction are common to all living things. It is the Indwelling Spirit in man that is immortal. That Spirit is Divine. Man strives hard in many ways to acquire worldly things. But he will not make the sacrifice needed to realize his Divinity.⁴⁹

49. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 16, Chapter 24: Honor the Mother. Baba's Inaugural Discourse at the Symposium on "The Role of Women in Social Change" organized by the Kingdom of Mother Sai, September 1983.



Good Qualities Lend Fragrance to Life

What is it that gives savor to human existence? Good qualities alone impart savor to life. Good conduct alone is the right source of strength to a man. A man without good conduct becomes a weak and pitiable creature. Again, good qualities like forbearance and sacrifice lend fragrance to the life of a man. Without good qualities, righteous actions and the attitudes of forbearance and sacrifice, life is worth nothing.⁵⁰

50. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 22: Practice What You Preach. Divine Discourse on November 17, 1985.



Be Bold and Courageous

There should be no room for ego or hatred. Whatever the difficulties, we should not become despondent or dejected. You must be bold and courageous and plunge yourselves in the service of society. This is what Sai would like everyone to do. This is the ideal before you. Develop forbearance, patience, peace, and love, and carry on your work. This is your true *sadhana* (spiritual practice).⁵¹

51. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 27: The Quest for Peace. Divine Discourse on December 9, 1985.



Whatever Happens Is Good for You

As long as rice is covered by husk, it cannot be consumed. Likewise, man cannot experience bliss until he gets rid of the cloak of ignorance. He must welcome whatever happens as good for him. He must develop the quality of forbearance. Through forbearance and spiritual efforts, gradually the shackles resulting from past actions must be broken.⁵²

52. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 8: *Samanvaya* and *Samarasa*.
Divine Discourse on May 1, 1987.



Important Spiritual Qualities

Whatever the circumstances we are confronted with, we should not get excited or agitated. We should allow time for the nobler feelings to well up from inside us and manifest themselves. By practicing patience and forbearance we will be able to acquire all the other important spiritual qualities, such as mind control, renunciation, endurance, and concentration. This will bring a state of inner purity and abiding peace. Inner purity is even more important than outer purity. The Lord is ever present both inside and out. Therefore, both the inner and the outer, the entire place where the Lord is to be found, must be purified and sanctified. Then the indwelling God will protect you wherever you go.⁵³

53. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 11: Developing the Inner Vision.
Divine Discourse on the *Gita*.



Inner Vision

Man has two important organs: the head and the heart. The head is ever engaged in seeking external objects. It desires only transient and mundane objects and the things and beings of the phenomenal world. Its chief characteristic is *pravritti* (preoccupation with the external). All thoughts arise out of contact with the external. Qualities like truth, love, kindness, forbearance, and compassion, which are signs of inner vision, emanate from the heart. Man becomes pure only when he concentrates on the heart. Hence the *Vedanta* has enjoined cultivation of the *antardrishti* (inner vision). The first is the *pravritti marga* (path of the external), the second is the *nivritti marga* (path of the internal).

One who is absorbed in the path of the external cannot understand the path of the internal. One who regards enjoyment of worldly objects and transient sensory pleasures as the *summum bonum* of life and continually strives for securing them cannot understand the promptings of the heart and cannot experience its

ecstasies. Although the heart is inside the body, the body is unable to grasp the unique significance of the heart. Can the tree know the sweetness of the juice of the fruit that it bears? Can the creeper know the fragrance of the flowers that bloom on it? Can the sweetness of a poem be experienced by the book in which it is printed? Can a scholar preoccupied with knowledge of the external be aware of the joy arising from the experience of the internal?⁵⁴

54. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22, Chapter 25: Krishna's *Prema Tathwa*. Divine Discourse on August 24, 1989.



The Highest Human Qualities

When people claim to be Sai devotees, they should lead ideal and exemplary lives. Broaden your minds. Cultivate human values. Love, truth, forbearance, and compassion are the highest human qualities. Hatred, envy, and greed are animal qualities. If you develop at least a few human qualities, you can progress toward God-realization.

At present, when you approach God, it is only out of selfish concerns. Selfishness is rampant in every action. It is most essential to get rid of selfishness. Only then Divinity will manifest itself in you. Develop sacred love in your hearts. The feeling “I and you are one” should grow. Spirituality consists of filling the heart with love, dedicating all actions to the Divine, and striving for the welfare of all.⁵⁵

55. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 7: Give Up Selfishness: Cultivate Unity. Divine Discourse on April 27, 1990.



Cherish Good Feelings

If you desire to secure genuine peace in the world, you should not have any antipathy toward religion. You must hold *neethi* (morality) as superior to your *jaathi* (community). You must cherish good feelings as more important than religious beliefs. *Mamatha* (mutual regard), *samatha* (equal-mindedness), and *kshamatha* (forbearance) are basic qualities necessary for every human being. Only

the person with these three qualities can be regarded as a true man. It is essential that everyone should cultivate these three sacred qualities.⁵⁶

56. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 36: Love: Sacrifice: Unity. Divine Discourse on December 25, 1990.



Happiness Arises from Pure Love

Love is the form of the Divine. Love alone can merge in love. When one is filled with Divine love he can experience oneness with the Divine. Happiness arises from pure love, which is also the source of truth, righteousness, peace, and forbearance.⁵⁷

57. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 25, Chapter 21: Power of Divine Love. Divine Discourse on May 30, 1992.



Foster Divine Feelings

Envy and egoism are animal qualities. The qualities that every human being should have are peace, compassion, forbearance, love, and sacrifice. These are the qualities that should be developed in all people, not vices like hatred, greed, envy, pride, and others. Cultivate the feeling of love. Get rid of old prejudices and differences. Foster Divine feelings. Only then the nation can make all-around progress.⁵⁸

58. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 25, Chapter 26: Work Together for the Nation's Progress. Divine Discourse on August 29, 1992.



All Belong to One Family

All religions and scriptures agree that going to the aid of fellow beings in times of need and saving them from distressing situations is the greatest virtue of a person. Every human being has equal rights in the world. All belong to one family. To enjoy peace of mind, it is essential to practice forbearance and equanimity. There are persons good and bad, rich and poor, educated and uneducated in every

country of the world. Though born in the same family and breathing the same air, some persons are narrow minded and have crooked ideas and indulge in selfish deeds, while others are good and selfless.⁵⁹

59. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 25, Chapter 39: Unity Based on Divinity. Divine Discourse on December 25, 1992.



Qualities Associated with the Heart

What are the qualities associated with the heart? Truth, compassion, love, forbearance, sympathy, and sacrifice. These human qualities emanate from the heart. So, in human life, the head and the heart play crucial roles. These two are kept in balance by the hand. Thus the heart, the head, and the hand are the three H's that are important in studying the human predicament.⁶⁰

60. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 5: Doctors, Patients, and Society. Divine Discourse on February 7, 1993.



Become an Ideal Human Being

Man devotes considerable time and energy to decorating his home, expecting to derive joy from it. But how long can this last? What he should seek to beautify is his heart. This is not visible to anyone, but the beauty of a pure heart is beyond description. What is it that lends beauty to the heart? The heart is beautified by qualities such as love, forbearance, and compassion. These qualities confer enduring bliss on man. Such a man's words and actions are sweet. He is worthy of adoration. Every man should aim at becoming such an ideal human being.

What does adoration of the Lord mean? It is not mere offering of worship with the paraphernalia of rituals. It is an attempt to merge in the Divine, experiencing the bliss of oneness with the Divine, recognizing unity in diversity and the Divinity that is present in all beings.⁶¹

61. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 20: Beyond the Mind. Divine Discourse on May 22, 1993.



Greatest Power

When you are confronted with problems and difficulties, you should not get upset and become victims of depression, which is a sign of weakness. In such a situation, you should bring tolerance and an attitude of forgiveness into play and should not get agitated, giving rise to anger, hatred, and a revengeful attitude. You are embodiments of strength and not weakness. Therefore, in times of despair, you should be filled with the feeling of forbearance and be ready to forgive and forget. This quality of *kshama* (forgiveness) is the greatest power for a human being. If one loses this quality, he becomes demonic.

Kshama is sathyam, truth

Kshama is dharma, virtue

Kshama is ahimsa, non-violence

Kshama is yajna, sacrifice

Kshama is santhosha, happiness

Kshama is dhaya, compassion

*Kshama is everything in the world.*⁶²

62. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 27, Chapter 1: Cultivate Forgiveness and Love. Divine Discourse on January 1, 1994.



God Responds to Unsullied Love

To accomplish his desires man should cultivate forbearance, love, and compassion and not resort to sinful means. Your desires will not be fulfilled by causing harm to others. You cannot please God if you are full of envy, pride, and ostentation. God will respond only to unsullied love and not to wealth or position.⁶³

63. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30, Chapter 21: Welcome God's Tests. Divine Discourse on September 14, 1997.



True Education Relates to the Heart

Unless the head is empty (free from evil) it cannot be filled with good. Modern education relates to the head, but true education relates to the heart. Sacred qualities like compassion, truth, forbearance, and love originate from the heart. Here is a small example. Physical features like height, weight, and complexion can be seen by the naked eye, whereas there are innumerable qualities like compassion, truth, and love that are unseen. Merely acquainting oneself with the physical features of an individual does not make one aware of one's true personality.⁶⁴

Worldly education, which relates to the head, is ephemeral. Reading, writing, eking out a livelihood, and attaining name and fame—all these result from worldly education. Worldly education makes man great, whereas the spiritual education makes man good. Spiritual education relates to the heart, which is the origin of sacred qualities like compassion, truth, forbearance, and love.⁶⁵

64. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 43: Fuse Spirituality with Education. Divine Discourse on November 22, 1998.

65. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32-2, Chapter 1: Heart Is the Source of True Education. Divine Discourse on July 26, 1999.



The Spiritual Path Is Very Necessary

Man must learn to face the ups and downs of life with equanimity and equal-mindedness. Then, alone, life will have a meaning for him. Forbearance and peace will become available only in the ordinary run of life. In order to promote these qualities of forbearance and peace in life, the *adhyatmic* way, or the spiritual path, is very necessary. Because we have forgotten the ancient traditions and the ancient scriptures outlining the spiritual path, life has become devoid of character.⁶⁶

66. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1977, Chapter 7: All the Characters in the Story of *Ramayana* are Ideal Examples.



Three Qualities

Politeness, humility, and forbearance are *satwic* qualities; shyness, fear, and

indolence are *tamasic* qualities; and aggressiveness, willfulness, and envy are *rajasic* qualities.⁶⁷

67. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1979, Chapter 27: The Nature of *Prakruthi*.



Forbearance Is a Golden Virtue

There is a lot of difference between mere patience and *kshama*; people often mistake one for the other. *Kshama* is the golden virtue that enables you to face with equanimity all difficulties, troubles, obstacles, losses, suffering, calumny, etc. The world is not aware, but it is because of *kshama* that Swami generously forgives and forgets all the misdeeds done against Him.

Without *kshama*, it would not be possible to put up with, even for a moment, what is going on around! Yet, Swami is so forgiving that He tolerates every mistake, including very big ones—which is possible only when there is *kshama*. It is Swami's *kshama* that will bring the whole world to Him. Adhere firmly to *sathya* (truth) and *dharma* (righteousness), and you will have no reason to worry about anything. Only then will you be able to achieve anything you want. Students must therefore be humble always; humility and *kshama* go together.⁶⁸

68. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 14: My Life Is My Message.



The Inward Qualities

All sacred feelings arise from the heart. Sacred qualities like compassion, love, sympathy, forbearance, and truth emanate from the heart. They are all called inward qualities. The world is nothing but a combination of external and internal tendencies. Just as a sapling grows into a huge tree giving you flowers and fruit, likewise, thoughts that are sacred lead to actions that yield fruits of all goodness.⁶⁹

69. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31, Chapter 26: True Education Fosters Human Values. Divine Discourse on August 10, 1998.



Three Disciplines

Practice when you are here the three disciplines of silence, cleanliness, and forbearance. In silence can be heard the voice of God, not in the revelry of noise. Through cleanliness you earn purity. By forbearance you cultivate love.⁷⁰

70. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 8, Chapter 45: Give the Giver the Gift. Divine Discourse on November 23, 1968.



Trees Teach Us Forbearance and Tolerance

You may have vast scholarship, fame, and fortune. But, the bee can give you a lesson on how to be free from torment. The tree can teach you forbearance and tolerance. It offers shade to all, irrespective of age, sex, religion, nationality, or economic status. It helps with fruit and shade even the foe who lays his axe on its trunk! The dog can teach you lessons in faith, selfless service, and the process of dedication.⁷¹

71. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 11, Chapter 44: Lessons from the Sea. Divine Discourse on July 26, 1972.



The Foremost Goal

The foremost goal modern youth should set before themselves is to sow the seeds of love, rear the plant of forbearance, and distribute the fruits of peace to society through dedicated service. The secret of peace is not in the external world but is within each individual. He should realize that the whole universe is permeated by the Divine. Today the world is filled with strife. It is not possible to make a distinction between a human being and a demon. Man, who evolved from the animal, instead of proceeding toward Divinity, is regressing to animality. Man's primary duty is to uphold the human values of truth, righteousness, peace, and love. Man today is enveloped in attachment and hatred. The moment he casts them off, he will realize his Divinity.⁷²

72. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 29, Chapter 33: God Is the Sole Refuge. Divine Discourse on August 16, 1996.



Sacred Duty of Good Education

Every thinking individual concerned with education is today faced with a large number of problems; problems that have been agitating the minds of students and of teachers. It is the duty of everyone to see that these problems are solved and the right solutions are put into the hearts of young people, and thereby infuse a sense of the Divine in their minds. Because good qualities like sacrifice, forbearance, truth, and love have been somewhat pushed to the background, the society is suffering from various ills. It is the sacred duty of good education not only to rectify such ills and give proper shape and form to society, but also to rid the minds and hearts of people as well, of all evils.⁷³

73. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1972, Chapter 1: Exhortation to the Students.



Meditation Must Reveal the Divine in Man

Many practice *dhyana* (meditation), but the evidence for progress in meditation is to be sought in a more universal outlook, greater steadiness, peace, forbearance, and more eagerness to serve fellow beings. Meditation must reveal the Divine in man and thereby induce self-confidence, self-sacrifice, and self-satisfaction. So regulate your lives in such a manner that you do not dislike others nor have others dislike you. Love all as embodiments of the same Divine Principle.⁷⁴

74. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 13, Chapter 39: Controlled Pride. Divine Discourse on December 30, 1977.



The Highest Quality

Kshama or forbearance truly is the highest quality of a human being. But in human life, because he develops narrow ideas, man wants to live in a constricted place. He thinks “I” and “my family” are what matter; others are all different from “me.” It is not possible for us to develop the flower of forbearance as long as these ideas are in us. It is only when we love that we can have patience and forbearance.

One's love should encompass all living beings. That will fructify as forbearance.

Here is a small example. In our home there are our children. Along with our children, there is also a servant. In the house, a son may be pilfering something or the other and developing bad habits. In many ways we will try and control that son by beating, by scolding, and persuading him to return to good ways, but we will never take him and hand him over to the police. In the same house, if the servant boy steals a small spoon, at once we will take him and hand him over to the police.

What is the inner meaning of the situation in which we do not punish a son, even if he steals day after day, but we hand over a servant boy immediately to the police when he steals even a small thing? The reason for this is the narrow idea that “this boy is my son.” Because the servant does not belong to you, there is no place for forbearance and patience. So you see that when you have the broad idea that “everyone is mine,” there is room for patience and forbearance. It is only then that our love will also grow.⁷⁵

75. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 15, Chapter 9: The Flowers That God Loves. Divine Discourse on May 12, 1981.



Envy Destroys One's Entire Life

Next to truth, you must cultivate forbearance. Forbearance endows you with the strength to face “the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.” A man without forbearance easily succumbs to reverses and difficulties. Together with truth and forbearance, you have to cultivate freedom from *asuya* (jealousy or envy). Envy is like the pest that attacks the root of a tree. It can destroy one's entire life. We may be enjoying many things in life—knowledge, wealth, position, power, and the like. But if the virus of envy enters our minds, it can pollute everything.

We should not give a place to envy even in the smallest matter. If a fellow student scores higher marks than you, you should not feel envious. If others do better than you, you should feel happy rather than allow yourself to be consumed by envy. If someone is better dressed than you or is more wealthy, you should feel that he is enjoying what he has, and you should be content and happy with what you have. To be free from envy is a Divine quality. It makes you feel happy over

others' happiness or success.⁷⁶

76. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 16, Chapter 31: Be Exemplars of Sai Ideals. Divine Discourse on December 30, 1983.



Divinity Is Present in Everyone

Students should develop self-reliance and self-confidence. They have to adhere to basic qualities such as truth, righteousness, forbearance, and self-sacrifice, which are common to all people without regard to nationality, creed, or language. They must cultivate a broad outlook, based on the fact that the Divine is present in everyone. There is nothing that they cannot accomplish if they have faith in God and earn God's grace.⁷⁷

77. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 21, Chapter 4: Earn God's Love. Divine Discourse on January 14, 1988.



Live Harmoniously

People must first of all get rid of self-interest and self-centeredness. 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. The *Veda* has emphatically declared that immortality can be attained only through *thyaga* (sacrifice) and not by any other means.⁷⁸

78. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 36: Love: Sacrifice: Unity. Divine Discourse on December 25, 1990.



Always Be Smiling

Plant the seed of love in your pure hearts. From that tree of love you will

have the fruits of forbearance, compassion, and kindness. Always be smiling. Face every situation in life, including death, with a smile.⁷⁹

79. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30, Chapter 2: Be Prepared for a Life of Sacrifice. Divine Discourse on January 19, 1997.



The Foremost Quality

The foremost quality expected of a devotee is forbearance. What is *bhakthi* (devotion)? Several people are under the mistaken notion that worshipping some idols, observing certain vows and performing some rituals is *bhakthi*. It is not as simple as that. The foremost duty of a devotee, especially of the *Bharatiyas* (Indians), is observing the quality of forbearance in practice. Adherence to truth is the real *tapas* (penance). Man today has forgotten this principle.

Forbearance is a quality that inspires people to undertake noble deeds. This noble quality is to be taught to others as well, to enable them to imbibe it.⁸⁰ Humility, forbearance, sincerity—these are the primary virtues of a genuine son or daughter of *Bharat* (India).⁸¹

80. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 37, Chapter 11: The Form of God Is Love. Divine Discourse on July 2, 2004.

81. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 13, Chapter 13: The Basic Error. Divine Discourse on May 11, 1975.



Forbearance and Equanimity Can Be Found in a Few High-Souled Persons

There is a method by which the demands of the senses can be reconciled and harmonized. This is by treating both good and bad with equal-mindedness. Tukaram is an illustrious example in this regard. He was a great devotee and very gentle by nature. His wife was a shrew. Nevertheless, by his calmness and forbearance, Tukaram managed to get on well with her. Only when one is in the habit of retaliating word for word, tit for tat, tooth for tooth, and nail for nail does one have to face discord and trouble. But Tukaram was the very embodiment of forbearance.

He used to cultivate his small farm of half an acre to maintain his family. At the insistence of his neighbors, he once raised sugarcane in that small plot of land. When the crop was mature, taking undue advantage of Tukaram's good nature, many passersby used to pluck a couple of sugarcanes and chew them. Finally, Tukaram harvested whatever crop was left behind, bundled the canes, and was taking them home in his cart. On the way, the children of the village gathered round him and pleaded for a piece of sugarcane each. In his usual generosity, Tukaram allowed the children to help themselves to the canes in the cart. At last when he reached home, there was only one cane left in the cart. Seeing this, his wife flew into a rage and strongly scolded Tukaram, condemning him as unfit for family life; she took out the only cane on the cart in a fit of anger and struck Tukaram with it. The cane broke into three pieces, two of which fell on the ground, and the other was in her hand.

Tukaram calmly remarked, "I was wondering all along the way how to distribute the remaining cane to the three members of the family. I am glad you have nicely solved the problem for me. You can eat one piece, which is in your hand, and give the other two, which have fallen on the floor, to the two children." Such forbearance and equanimity can rarely be found except in a few high-souled persons. These qualities can be acquired only through devotion and faith. You need not feel disheartened with the fear that you will not be able to control the senses. By developing one-pointed devotion and complete surrender to God, the senses can definitely be brought under control.

Kabir is an example of another godly man in a different situation. Unlike Tukaram's wife, Kabir's wife was highly devoted and faithful, totally dedicated to serving her husband and obeying him implicitly. One day Kabir was plying his handloom, chanting, as usual, the name of "Ram" all the time. Suddenly he called his wife, and saying that one thread has snapped, he asked her to bring a lamp. It was noon, and when she brought the lighted lamp, Kabir asked her to take it back as it was not necessary (because of daylight). Any other wife in her position would have retorted, saying, "Have you no eyes to see the daylight? Why did you waste my time and effort by unnecessarily asking me to bring a lighted lamp and to take it back? Do you think I have no other work?" etc.

But Kabir's wife was different. She silently took back the lamp, without a murmur or uttering even a single word of resentment. Hence, with such a dutiful and obedient wife, Kabir was able to develop his devotion unhampered and expressed his gratitude to God for His grace in giving him such a good partner in life.⁸²

82. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1990, Chapter 4: Mastery of the Senses.



Virtues Lend Value to Human Life

It is most important to understand the role and the value of the human body. It is the body that shelters the Divinity within. The body is like an iron safe used for storing jewelry and other such valuables. In the case of the body, the valuables stored are good feelings, good thoughts, and virtues. If lost, they cannot be recovered easily. Only virtues lend value to human life, and it is qualities like compassion, forbearance, and sacrifice that make human life precious. But man today does not have the faintest idea of what is meant by human values.⁸³

83. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 4: The Human Body and Its Importance.



Difficulties Cannot Unsettle a Person of Forbearance

No amount of difficulties can unsettle a person of forbearance. He who has no forbearance will face unprecedented difficulties. One who believes in forbearance remains unmoved and untouched in the face of difficulties. The *Bharatiyas* (Indians) are filled with such forbearance.

Another form of forbearance is love. Love is also synonymous with peace. Thus forbearance, love, peace—all mean the same. *Manava* (human) is referred to as love by the *Upanishads*. *Bharatiya* is one who possesses love as his nature. Indians today give up Indian culture and run after worldly, materialistic, and transient things that cause misery. If you ask what is the power of forbearance, it is too great to put in words. It cannot be measured by mind and speech.⁸⁴

84. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2002, Chapter 13: Fundamental Principles of Indian Culture.



The Effulgence of the *Atma* Is Obscured by Ego

A person who is a genuine vehicle of power can be recognized by the characteristics of truth, kindness, love, patience, forbearance, and gratefulness. Wherever these reside, ego cannot subsist; it has no place. Therefore seek to develop these.

The effulgence of the *Atma* (Divine Self) is obscured by ego. Therefore, when ego is destroyed, all troubles end, all discontents vanish, and bliss is attained. Just as the sun is obscured by mist, so the feeling of ego hides eternal bliss. Even if the eyes are open, a piece of cloth or cardboard can prevent vision from functioning effectively and usefully. So too, the screen of selfishness prevents one from seeing God, who is, in fact, nearer than anything else.⁸⁵

85. Prema Vahini, Subtitle: *Ahamkara* Causes *Ashanthi*.



Karmic Burden

With the attitude of forbearance, one refuses to be affected or pained when afflicted with sorrow, loss, and the ingratitude and wickedness of others. In fact, one is happy and calm, for one knows that these are the results of one's own actions now recoiling on one, and one views those who caused the misery as friends and well-wishers. One does not retaliate or wish them ill. One bears all blows patiently and gladly.

The natural reactions of people, whoever they may be, when someone injures them is to injure in return; when someone causes harm, to do harm; and when someone insults them, to insult back by some means or other. But this is the characteristic of the worldly path (*pravritti*)—the path of objective involvement. Those who seek the inner path of sublimation and purification (*nivritti*) have to avoid such a reaction.

Returning injury for injury, harm for harm, or insult for insult only adds to

the karmic burden, which has to be endured and eliminated in future lives. This burden is termed “impending (*agami*).” One can’t escape undergoing the consequences of one’s thoughts, words, and deeds in due course. Paying evil for evil can never lighten the weight of *karma*; it will only become heavier. It might confer immediate relief and contentment, but it can only make the person suffer later. Forbearance therefore instructs people to do good to those who injure them.⁸⁶

86. Sutra Vahini, Subtitle: *Athaatho Brahma Jijnaasaa*.



Love Is Divine

The world is full of egoism and acquisitiveness, lust, and hatred. When man tries to utilize nature to get rid of these bad traits, then he will be able to experience peace, love, and forbearance. Love can be got only through love and by no other means. Hence spiritual aspirants should develop Divine love. Love is Divine. It seeks no return. Its only aim is to realize God.⁸⁷

87. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 26: Role of the *Avatars*. Divine Discourse on August 14, 1990.



Inner Voice Leads to Detachment

The word “Educare” has a sacred inner meaning. That which is manifested by “Educare” cannot be seen by the eyes, cannot be heard by the ears, and cannot be felt by the mind. But all that education confers can be seen, heard, and felt. Education fosters desires and leads to rebirth, whereas “Educare” confers immortality. There will be no rebirth. The innate Divine qualities like truth, righteousness, peace, patience, forbearance, and love cannot be seen by the naked eye, and they lead to no birth. Modern education is giving rise to desires, which form the basis for rebirth. You need to develop detachment to control desires. Attachment leads to bondage and restlessness. The innate values alone can control the desires. The inner voice leads to detachment. You have to inquire into the difference between attachment and detachment. To attain detachment, you must obtain release from worldly bondage.

Here is a small example. When you insert the key into the lock and turn it to the right, the lock opens; you turn it to the left, it is locked. The heart is the lock, the mind is the key. You get attachment when your mind is turned toward the world. When it is turned toward God, you attain liberation. It is the same lock and the same key that are responsible for bondage and liberation. The mere change in the direction causes a change in the consequence, namely, bondage or liberation. Liberation is not some specific location—an air-conditioned paradise. It is a state of supreme peace.⁸⁸

88. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 16: Educare Is Human Values. Divine Discourse on September 26, 2000.



Do Not Lose Patience

Even if others cast aspersions on us, ridicule us, say harsh words, and insult us in several ways, we should not lose patience. We lose nothing if others ridicule or criticize us. But we lose everything if we become weak and lose our patience. However, we have to use this quality of *kshama* (forbearance) very carefully at certain times. The trees, rivers, and cows are very helpful for the sustenance of living beings. Especially, human beings are greatly dependent on them for their survival. However, as much as the trees are harmed by cutting their branches again and again, they provide cool shade and sweet fruits to the very person who harms them.

Similarly, the rivers provide sweet water for human beings for the very sustenance of their life, even though they do not care to express their gratitude for this great act. Water is the very life of living beings. Even if man misuses such a life-sustaining water, the rivers do not change at all their nature, but continue to serve human beings. Now about the cows. Even by denying milk to their own progeny, they supply sweet milk to human beings and rejuvenate them. Even if you hurt and harm these cows in ever so many ways, they continue to give sweet milk. They help the very human beings who hurt them. But a word of caution. The quality of forbearance must be made use of depending upon the circumstances and with a sense of discrimination. . . . We should never make use of this great quality of forbearance while dealing with ungrateful people. So this quality of patience and

forbearance must be used with discrimination. Patience is of great help in spiritual pursuits.⁸⁹

89. Bhagavad Gita Part II, Chapter 10: Forbearance—A Noble Quality.



Divine Love Is the Basis for Everything

One can attain peace only through love. Divine love is the basis for everything. When we develop love for God, everything will be taken care of. If we do not have love for God, we will be giving scope to evil qualities such as anger, hatred, jealousy, etc. Man today has given up human qualities such as love, peace, and compassion and is leading the life of an animal. We should face all difficulties with forbearance.⁹⁰

90. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 40, Chapter 8: Develop Love and Lead the Life of a True *Manava*. Divine Discourse on March 20, 2007.



Do Not Entertain Bad Qualities

Young people should try to see that qualities like jealousy, hatred, and lack of forbearance do not enter their minds. People who have such bad ideas will be destroyed in the course of time in spite of the wealth and knowledge that they might possess. If you entertain these bad qualities in your mind, it is taking to a bad path willingly, and you will surely fall down.⁹¹

91. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974, Chapter 2: “Brahman” and “*Bharat*” as the Theme of the Discourses that Will Follow.



The Pandavas Exhibited Forbearance

It is not that Krishna alone was speaking the truth and protecting truth. The Pandavas were also great adherents of truth. The great protectors of truth, Krishna and the Pandavas, gave this country the sacred text of *Mahabharata*. The forbearance and the great breadth of vision that the Pandavas exhibited, as well as the strength of character and determination that they exhibited in their conduct,

cannot be seen in any other citizens of this country.

Because the Pandavas had always obeyed Krishna, they directly imbibed from Krishna the sacred qualities of truth and forbearance. When Ashwatthama, who killed the *Upapandavas* (Pandava children), was brought before Draupadi, in spite of her great grief at the loss of her children, she moved forward and touched his feet and paid respects to him. There are such great qualities of truth and forbearance that we observe in the Pandavas; we should respect them for these qualities.⁹²

92. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1976, Chapter 8: Man Should Promote Inner Vision for Himself.



Forbearance Is the Essence of the *Vedas*

For a human being, humility is of foremost importance. Humility is born of *kshama* (forbearance). Swami has already told you: *Kshama* is *sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), the essence of the *Vedas*; it is all-inclusive and the most important thing in the world. It was *kshama* that elevated sage Viswamitra from the status of a *raja yogi* to *Brahma yogi*.

It was on account of the power of *kshama* that Bhagiratha was able to make the sacred Ganges hidden in celestial heights to descend to the earth. It was *kshama* that enabled Emperor Janaka to transform from a *karma yogi* to *jnana yogi*. The power of forbearance can help you to achieve anything.

Students! You are not aware of this; Swami is nothing but *kshama* from top to toe. It is this that enables Swami to deal with any situation in a perfectly calm manner. Swami is never bothered by difficulties; rather, Swami welcomes them! Why? Because it is difficulty that enables one to cultivate *kshama*. But these days, people who declare themselves to be devotees welcome pleasure but abhor difficulties and pain. You must maintain equanimity and treat pleasure and pain alike—that is what *kshama* is all about.

You should accept the fact that pleasure and pain are both gifts of God and try to be unaffected. It is important that students make every effort to cultivate the virtue of *kshama*. It may happen that sometimes you might not do well in exams.

You should not be upset by that; work hard, try again, and do well the next time. Marks may seem important, but not earning bad remarks is even more important! Make sure your behavior does not attract unfavorable comments from others. Be careful that you do not earn a bad name. Let good and noble feelings be the basis of your conduct.

Wherever you go, people must say, based on your good conduct, “This person seems to be a student of the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.” Swami is not interested in earning a reputation; all that Swami wants is that you must earn a good name.⁹³

93. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 13: Always Chant the Name of the Lord.



Never Be in a Hurry

When you are in trouble, people distance themselves from you. Further, difficulties will dull your power of discrimination, and you will not be able to see clearly the distinction between good and bad. Patience and forbearance are the answer to all this. Never be in a hurry; always reflect carefully. This is the way to success.⁹⁴

94. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2000, Chapter 13: Always Chant the Name of the Lord.



Control the Five Senses

Buddha wanted to control the five senses. He decided, first and foremost, to acquire *samyak drishti* (right vision). Man today is not able to control his vision because of the fickleness of his mind. Cinema, video, TV, etc., have polluted the mind of man. He does not see good and hear good. Man is the cause of his own restlessness. Besides *samyak drishti*, Buddha emphasized the need for *samyak sravanam* (right hearing), *samyak vak* (right speech), *samyak bhavam* (right feeling), and *samyak chintanam* (right thinking).

Due to lack of these, humanness is fast giving way to devilishness and

beastliness. Animal qualities are fast increasing in man. Animals have a season and a reason, but man has none. Man today has become worse than animals. Human qualities like compassion, kindness, love, and forbearance are absent in him. He should be free from evil thoughts, which are the root cause of his worries. This requires *abhyasa* (constant and sustained practice). Man can control the mind and attain peace by *abhyasa*. It is only in a peaceful mind that noble thoughts arise. The mind should be under the control of man. *Master the mind, and be a mastermind.*

Unfortunately, instead of controlling the mind, man has become the slave of his senses. That is the main cause of his unsteadiness. Moreover, he has body attachment (*dehabhimana*). This is the reason he gets easily disturbed if people find fault with him. Why should he worry about the body when the body is like a water bubble? You should get rid of body attachment.⁹⁵

95. Summer Showers in Brindavan 2002, Chapter 11: Sense Control Is the Highest *Sadhana*.



Cultivate Love through Two Methods

How is love to be cultivated? Through two methods: (1) Always consider the faults of others, however big, to be insignificant and negligible. Always consider your own faults, however insignificant and negligible, to be big, and feel sad and repentant. By these means, you avoid developing bigger faults and defects, and you acquire the qualities of brotherliness and forbearance. (2) Whatever you do, by yourself or with others, do it remembering that God is omnipresent. He sees and hears and knows everything. Whatever you speak, remember that God hears every word; discriminate between the true and the false, and speak only the truth. Whatever you do, discriminate between right and wrong, and do only the right. Endeavor every moment to be aware of the omnipotence of God.

The body is the temple of the individual (*Jiva*), so whatever happens in that temple is the concern of the individual. So too, the world is the body of the Lord, and all that happens in it, good or bad, is His concern. From the observed fact of the individual and the body, know the truth of the unobservable fact of the Lord and the world.⁹⁶

96. Prema Vahini, Subtitle: Aspirants on the *Bhakthi* Path.



Attachment to Sense Objects

Attachment to sense objects can be removed by control of the senses (*sama*), control of the outer senses (*dama*), control of the mind by withdrawal of the senses (*uparathi*), forbearance (*thithiksha*); by developing purity, self-control, withdrawal of desires, and the ability to suffer.⁹⁷

97. Sandeha Nivarini, Chapter XI.



The Hallmark of Right Education

The educational system is beset with many problems. It has failed to promote in the young such qualities as love, forbearance, and fortitude. Instead, it serves to encourage the animal nature in students. There is no place in it for cultivating human values like truth and righteousness. It does not imbue the student with a sense of humility, which is the hallmark of right education.⁹⁸ Humility, reverence, compassion, forbearance, sacrifice, and self-control are the qualities that reveal the outcome of true education.⁹⁹

98. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 19, Chapter 2: Education for Transformation. Divine Discourse on January 20, 1986.

99. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 28: Spiritualize Education. Divine Discourse on November 22, 1987.



Purify the Heart to Receive God's Grace

Love, respect, tolerance, mutual cooperation, forbearance—these must flow from the hearts of each to all.¹⁰⁰ We must purify our hearts so that the Lord may shower His grace on us. All education, all mastery of the scriptures, and all kinds of worship will be of no avail if the heart is not filled with qualities like love, compassion, and forbearance.¹⁰¹

100. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 10, Chapter 35: Truth of Truth. Divine Discourse on November 22, 1970.

101. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 22: Significance of Ganesha Worship. Divine Discourse on September 10, 1984.



The Message of *Ramayana*

It is one's qualities that should be transformed, not the attire he wears. *Ramayana* conveys a great message. It is a compendium of qualities such as *thyaga* (renunciation), *dhaya* (compassion), *karuna* (kindness), *sahana* (forbearance), and *saanubhuthi* (empathy).¹⁰²

102. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 21, Chapter 10: The Rama Path. Divine Discourse on March 26, 1988.



The Destination for All Mankind Is the Same

The essence of all religions, the message of all scriptures, and the destination for all mankind is the same. But because of selfishness, narrow-mindedness, and concern for self-interest, religion is used as a pretext for promoting differences and conflicts. "All religions teach only what is good if they are studied intelligently. If your mind is good, what religion can be bad?" says a Telugu poem.

Morality and integrity, righteousness and charity, truth and tradition, forbearance and non-violence are basic tenets of all religions. These basic truths are common to all religions. But over the years men have forgotten these truths and have fostered divisive tendencies in the place of unity. As a result, respect for human values has gone. It is essential to recognize the Divine unity that suffuses all the diversity in human existence.¹⁰³

103. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 29, Chapter 53: Realize God through Love. Divine Discourse on December 25, 1996.



Do All Actions to Please God

Whatever work a person undertakes, he should do it to please God. Do all actions to please God. There is no use doing any spiritual practice without inner

peace. Similarly, if you lack forbearance, whatever yogic practices you undertake will be mere physical exercises and will not confer peace of mind on you. If you lack inner peace and contentment, the chanting (*japa*) that you do will become merely artificial and will not be pleasing to God. Everything that you do, do it to please God.

Even a small task is enough if it pleases God. God sees quality, not quantity. Even a spoonful of cow's milk is better than a barrel of donkey's milk. You think you are doing great spiritual exercises. You sit for meditation for one hour. But during this one hour of meditation, how long does your mind remain steady? When your mind is not steady even for a second, what is the use of wasting time in this manner?

Whatever work you do, consider it God's work. This is the most correct and easy path. Why do you subject yourself to so much hardship leaving this easy path? Even your household work is God's work. How can we say that? God is the indweller of your heart. It is only due to the presence of God within you that you are able to perform all actions. Your eyes can see and ears can hear only because of the power of God that is within you. In fact, all your sense organs are governed by Divine power.

Therefore any work that you perform with any of your sense organs is in reality performed by God and for God. For whose satisfaction do you perform a particular task? You may say that you are performing it for your own satisfaction, but what does "you" refer to? Are you the body? No. If you are the body, how can you say, "This is my body?" If you think you are the mind, how can you say, "This is my mind?" When you say, "My body, my mind," whom does "my" refer to?

You are not the body; you are not the mind. You are the master. Body, mind, and senses are mere instruments. It is God in the form of Atmic consciousness who makes these instruments function. This consciousness is present in everyone. There is no one in this world without consciousness. Hence, God is present in everyone in the form of consciousness.¹⁰⁴

104. Love Is the Greatest Binding Force. Divine Discourse on July 5, 1996.



Four Kinds of Purity

Qualities like *kshama* (forbearance), *dhaya* (compassion), truth, love, and sympathy are not associated with any particular nation, faith, or community. They are spiritual qualities and are essential for people anywhere, at all times.

Among the qualities a man has to develop if he is to realize his Divinity, the foremost is *kshama*—forbearance or forgiveness. It is essential for every human being. It is supreme among virtues. *Kshama* is truth, righteousness, sympathy, non-violence, and all else. *Kshama* comprehends every quality.

How is *kshama* to be acquired? It is acquired by practicing four kinds of purity:

1. *Dravya Soucham* (purity of materials)
2. *Maanasika Soucham* (purity of mind)
3. *Vaak Soucham* (purity in speech)
4. *Kriya Soucham* (purity in action or purity of body)

Dravya Soucham (purity of materials): This covers all things used by a person—from clothes, food, and cooking utensils to houses—and all the varied things used by a person. Everything that is in daily use should be completely pure.

Maanasika Soucham (purity of the mind): This calls for total elimination of attachments and aversions from the mind. Hatred and envy should have no place. One should cultivate the large-heartedness to return good for evil and not to cause pain to anyone in any circumstance. This is a mark of a pure mind. Today people are filled with hatred and envy. They cannot bear to see others happy or prosperous. This is a sign of a polluted mind. Men with evil minds develop demoniac traits.

To be truly human, one has to have a pure, unsullied mind. He has to recognize that the same Divinity is present in everyone. He should realize that the pure Spirit that dwells in him and the power that animates him are present equally in every human being. One who is conscious of this unity will have an untrammelled mind.

Vaak Soucham (purity of speech): This means that one must speak the truth.

He must be sweet and pleasant in speech and avoid using harsh words. Excessive talking should be avoided. Purity in speech implies avoidance of falsehood, garrulousness, abusive language, slanderous gossip, and speech that causes pain to others. Today there is very little purity of speech. Bad thoughts and bad words are the order of the day. A vile tongue fouls the mind and dehumanizes man.

Sareera Soucham (purity of the body): The body has to be purified by performing *aachamana* with water. (This ritual involves uttering the names of the Lord thrice and drinking three spoonfuls of water from the palm.) When these four kinds of purity are practiced, the quality of *kshama* develops to some extent.¹⁰⁵

105. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 21, Chapter 1: The Crowning Virtue. Divine Discourse on January 7, 1988.



Realize Oneness with the Divine

You have to develop equal-mindedness and face all situations in life with equanimity and fortitude. Anger, hatred, ostentation, and pride are animal qualities. Love, kindness, forbearance, compassion, and sacrifice are natural human qualities. Spirituality does not consist merely in offering worship and singing devotional songs. It calls for the elimination of the animal qualities in man and striving for the realization of oneness with the Divine.

The means to prolong or shorten one's life lie in one's own hands. Your life span is prolonged when you are full of joy, when you are calm and filled with pure thoughts. When you are filled with envy, anger, hatred, and conceit, your life span is shortened. The envious man gets no sleep at all. Sleeplessness ruins the health even more than lack of food. Envy torments a man all the time. These troubles lead to shortening one's life. As for hatred, the man filled with it cannot even bear the sight of his enemy. He suffers from hallucinations that consume his body and spirit.¹⁰⁶

106. Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 26: The Divine and Destiny. Divine Discourse on July 21, 1993.



Glossary

For a comprehensive translation of Sanskrit words into English, please go to the following website: <http://sssbpt.info/vahiniglossary/entries.htm>





Forbearance

Sri Sathya Sai Baba, one of the most revered spiritual leaders in the world and regarded as an incarnation of God in human form by His devotees, delivered more than 2,000 discourses, most of which are compiled in *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks* and *Summer Showers*. He also wrote articles for His devotees in the spiritual monthly *Sanathana Sarathi*, which were later published in 16 books under the *Vahini* series.

This compilation of *Divine Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba*, Volume 4, contains quotations on the topic “Forbearance” selected from the discourses and writings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Sri Sathya Sai says: “The heart is beautified by qualities such as love, forbearance, and compassion. These qualities confer enduring bliss on man. Such a man’s words and actions are sweet. He is worthy of adoration. Every man should aim at becoming such an ideal human being.”

