

Service to Society is Service to God

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Birthday
Prasanthi Nilayam
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When the child emerges from the womb of its mother, one does not find any garland around its neck.

There are no jewels made of pearls, nor are there glittering gold ornaments.

There are no necklaces studded with precious stones like emeralds and diamonds.

But there is one garland around its neck.

Brahma strings together the consequences of one's past deeds into a heavy garland and puts it around its neck at the time of birth.

(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love

Students — Boys and Girls!

It is not possible to describe how fortunate a human being is. *Jantunam nara janma dur-labham* (of all living beings, human birth is the rarest). Man is not able to realise the value of humanness and is deluded by the sight of ephemeral and transitory objects of the world. The basis of man's life is not the transitory and ephemeral world. His life on earth is a synthesis of moral, ethical, and spiritual values. Man, in fact, is the image of Divinity. *Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana* (the eternal *Atma* in all beings is a part of My Being). All of you are a part of Myself, you are not different from Me.

Unable to realise the value of his humanness, man becomes a victim of his many delusions. All your learning and your strenuous efforts should be directed toward realising this truth. You don't need anything else after realising this fundamental truth. All the material possessions of this world are a cause of bondage

for man, and as long as man is in bondage, he has to suffer. Therefore, one should try to achieve freedom from this bondage. One should get rid of the feeling of attachment. Nothing is “mine” and “thine”; everything is one. Develop the feeling in your heart that all are one. Only then can you experience truth, peace and bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

Your life is full of ambitions and desires. You have to enquire whether you are making appropriate efforts to attain fulfilment in life. First search your heart to know what your thoughts and feelings are —whether they are pure, steady, and selfless or whether they are tainted with desires. Desires are like luggage, which is a heavy burden in the journey of life. Less luggage and more comfort makes travel a pleasure. Therefore, gradually reduce your desires. If you have less luggage, you will be more peaceful. On the contrary, man today is increasing his baggage of desires instead of lightening it.

Thousands of people have assembled here. Heads are many, but the feeling is one. *Ekatma sarva bhutantaratma* (one *Atma* dwells in all beings). Because of your body attachment, you are subjected to too many troubles. Today you are a single person. After completing your studies and securing a good job, you will try to get married. Then you become two. When one wears one bangle, no sound is produced. Only when one wears two bangles sound is produced. After marriage, you are inclined toward worldly acquisitions.

You will have children and your family will expand. With this type of “progress”, how can you have peace? All these worldly attachments are the result of your deluded thinking. There is no reality in them. When your thoughts and feelings are not in the right direction, you are bound to suffer. Instead of getting yourself entangled in worldly life, you should engage in the service of society.

Once you take to the path of service, your problems will gradually decrease. Love All, Serve All. Do not consider anybody as other person. Develop the feeling that they and you are one. The entire humanity is one. What you see in this world is only the reaction, reflection, and resound of the reality that is one. Once you understand this truth, you will be peaceful. Only then will your mind be steady and one-pointed in the pursuit of your study and profession. Therefore, first and foremost, engage yourself in the service of society.

What is society? Society is your own reflection. Therefore, do not distance yourself from society. Keep yourself always engaged in the service of society. Why has God given hands to you? They are not given to scribble something on paper. They should be fully engaged in the service of God. Work is worship. Duty is God. Do your duty.

Embodiments of Love!

You are now young, and all your limbs are healthy and strong. First is the body. Next come the senses. Higher than the senses is the mind, and the intellect is higher than the mind. The Atma is the highest. When you understand and contemplate on the principle of the Atma, you will be free from all suffering and bondage. It is the perversion of the mind that is the cause of all your sufferings and bondages.

Once, the mother of this body, Easwamma, went to a well to fetch water. Suddenly, she felt giddy and heard an ethereal voice, “I am entering your body.” She was fear-stricken

and was at a loss to know what was entering her body, whether it was a ghost, spirit, or angel. She heard the voice again, “I am entering your body for the welfare of the world.”

Easwamma was not the name given to the mother of this body at the time of her birth. This name was given to her by Kondama Raju, the grandfather of this body. He was a noble soul, who had realised My Divinity even when I was a child. Realising that she was the mother of Easwara, he changed her name to Easwamma (mother of God). Easwamma was not an ordinary woman; she was a high-souled person, who was loved and admired by one and all. Wherever she went, people greeted her with great love.

Karanam Subbamma was one of great virtues. She had a highly respected position in the village. As time passed, there was great transformation in her. She prepared food for all the devotees who came for My *darshan*. Whatever she made, she made it for the sake of Swami.

Those days, I did not stay at home most of the time. I moved about in the adjoining hills and valleys. Subbamma made many preparations, put them in a tiffin box, and went searching for Me wherever I was. Her love for Swami was great. In the *Dwapara Yuga*, it was Devaki who gave birth to Krishna, but Yashoda had the great good fortune of being called the mother of Krishna. Similarly, Subbamma had such great good fortune in this age.

Once, Karanam Subbamma performed *Sathyanarayana Vrata*. She invited Easwamma also to participate in it. Since I was born after Easwamma partook of the prasadam (sanctified food) of *Sathyanarayana Vrata*, I was given the name Sathyanarayana. Right from My birth, people did not consider Me as an ordinary person; they always considered Me as a Transcendental Being endowed with great divine powers.

When I was a child, all the children in the village used to surround Me. I used to ask everyone of them what he wanted. Each one wanted to have something or other, like a pencil, a pen, a sweet, or a peppermint. Whatever they asked, I used to take it out of My empty bag. I did not have even a single paisa with Me. On receiving the items they asked for, they used to wonder how I was able to give them all those things. There was no possibility of My mother giving them because she too had no money.

One day, I left My bag and went inside. Finding this as an opportune moment, the boys searched the bag all over. They were not ordinary boys. They wanted to make sure if there was anything hidden in the bag. After making a thorough search, they could not find even a single pin. Then they realised that all these things were coming from some unknown source. They were wonderstruck. In this manner, I was always surrounded by boys right from My childhood.

Gradually, My name spread far and wide. This created jealousy in some people. In spite of the jealousy of people, My name and fame spread to all corners of the world. People from many countries of the world representing various faiths started coming to Prasanthi Nilayam in large numbers and started celebrating their festivals here. Now, December is coming and Christmas is approaching. Christians from all parts of the world will assemble here and celebrate this festival. Likewise, Mohammedans also came to Prasanthi Nilayam and prayed for My permission to celebrate their festivals. People belonging to all faiths have been coming to Prasanthi Nilayam to celebrate their festivals here. As I have always been telling you, "All are one."

Religions are many, but the goal is one.
Clothes are many but yarn is one.
Jewels are many but gold is one.
(Telugu poem)

Likewise, there are many beings, but the indwelling Atma in them is the same. However, there are certain people who are creating differences. As the name and fame of Swami is spreading, many people have developed jealousy and are making false propaganda.

Recently, a meeting was held in London in which Air Chief Marshal (retd.) Suri repudiated all such false propaganda. There, he told the critics that they should go to Sathya Sai Baba, observe, and experience the truth personally and then only make comments. He further asked them not to listen to all sorts of gossip and start talking about it. What do you gain by listening to others? Those who spread rumours have themselves not seen or experienced anything. But they started false propaganda and it spread to many countries; it reached India also. Without ascertaining the facts, some Indian newspapers also published these false articles, imitating the foreign newspapers. In fact, these critics don't have faith in what they themselves speak. Then, why should they believe what others say? Their only intention is to defame Swami by foul means. But it is not possible for anyone to defame Swami.

Not only now, but for all times to come, nobody can tarnish Swami's name. Everybody has to surrender to Swami's love one day or the other (loud applause). The Name of Sai is eternal and changeless. One can speak whatever one likes. Boneless tongue can be twisted in any way. Stones are hurled only on a fruit-laden tree. Like a fruit-bearing tree, all noble people are subjected to many ordeals and difficulties. But when one firmly adheres to truth, nothing can shake one. Let any number of people fight against truth; they can never win. Therefore, hold on to truth firmly, come what may. One who stands by truth is bound to be victorious. Therefore, never give up truth.

Who is God? Truth is God. Truth is unshakable. *Sathyannasti paro Dharma* (There is no

dharma greater than adherence to truth). It is *dharma* that leads man to peace. Without peace, man cannot live. Saint Thyagaraja said, “One cannot have happiness without peace.” When you attain peace, you will experience love and bliss.

Truth is the origin of bliss. Nonviolence also emerges from truth. A man of love will not entertain even a thought of violence. *Sathya* (truth), *dharma* (righteousness), *santhi* (peace), *prema* (love), and *ahimsa* (nonviolence) are like the five life-breaths of man. These are the prime qualities of a human being. The need of the hour is to develop these human values. Only when these values are developed can there be peace in the country. Wherever you see today, you find limitless desires in people.

Take any area of human endeavour, man's desires have no limit. There is no limit even in reading of books. People keep reading books all the time. This reading of all sorts of books is a mere waste of time. What is the use of reading if it does not give you self-satisfaction? Your bookish knowledge can help you only in earning a living. Bharatiya (Indian) culture emphasises the inculcation of morality, ethics, and spirituality. But our modern authors are ignoring these three principles. That is why in spite of widespread academic learning, there is no real progress.

Oh man!
Do not feel proud of your education.
If you do not offer your salutations to God and
Do not think of Him with devotion,
All your education becomes useless.
(Telugu poem)

Therefore, man should develop love for God. If you have love for God, you will have everything. Without love for God, everything will come to nothing. Love for God is like the main switch. If the main switch is put off, no other switch can function, and there will be no light. Once the main switch is on, you will get light by pressing any switch.

Humanness is the main quality of a human being. Mother Easwaramma was fully endowed with humanness. All her thoughts were always focused on Swami. The Summer Course was going on at Brindavan. Easwaramma had her breakfast and coffee. After that, she was chewing betel. Suddenly she shouted, “Swami, Swami, Swami,” three times.

I said, “I am coming, I am coming, I am coming.” I came down immediately, and she breathed her last. She had an easy death without any suffering at all.

The body has value so long as there is life in it. Once the life goes out of it, it is just like a log of wood. The body of Easwaramma was taken to Puttaparthi according to My instructions, and the final rites were performed.

Many people said that I should also go. But I did not go. I do not have any body attachment. Body attachment is a big bondage. Once you surrender your body to God, your wayward senses will also lose their power and you will be free from bondage. There may be some ups and downs in life, but once you have surrendered to God, nothing will disturb you.

Embodiments of Love!

Study whatever you are expected to study. Earn a good name in society. Your parents have high expectations from you. You should satisfy their aspirations. *Matru devo bhava*, *pitru devo bhava*, *acharya devo bhava*, *atithi devo bhava* (revere your mother, father, preceptor, and guest as God). When you make your mother, father, preceptor and guest happy, then God will give you more happiness.

All your learning is useless without love for God. You are all young. You should study well and earn a good name in society. This is what I expect from you. I do not want you to merely acquire high academic qualifications. There are many highly educated people in the

world. But what good have they done for the world? You should work hard and make others happy. You will have fulfilment in life only when you make the society happy. Kalam is highly educated and is devoted to the service of society. Render all possible service to society. That alone will make Swami happy.

Yesterday, Ram Setty said that he did not want to go back to America. He wants to spend the rest of his life here in the service of Swami. His son is as worthy as his father. He is also a doctor. He told his father that he did want to come in the way of his father's wish. This stadium is built by the munificence of Ram Setty, his wife, son, and daughter. He sold all his property and donated the entire amount for the construction of this stadium. He is a man of great sacrifice. He donated 40 crore rupees for the construction of this stadium.

How many will have the spirit of sacrifice of such a high order? In this age, when people turn away even a beggar without giving him anything, this family has made such a great sacrifice. He has a son and a daughter. Even then he donated such a huge amount. Both his son and daughter are not interested in worldly enjoyments. Their only objective is to obey Swami.

Peace and happiness lie in spirituality and in nothing else. You may study, get married, have children, and lead a happy life. There is nothing wrong in it. But never forget God. Without forgetting God, you may follow any path. This is My blessing to you. Spread the divine Name of Sai in every nook and corner of the world. That will lead to manifestation of divinity within everyone. The closer you come to Swami, the Divinity within you should become more pronounced. Then, your life will be sanctified.

The worldly pleasures are no pleasures in the real sense of the term. Today you may enjoy pleasure, tomorrow you may experience diffi-

culties. You may be happy when a son is born, but you will be grief-stricken when some mishap occurs to the son and he dies. One day you smile, another day you cry. There is only a little gap between happiness and sorrow. Everything in man's life is transient and temporary. *Ma kuru dhana jana yauvana garvam, Harathi nimeshath kalah sarvam* (do not be proud of your wealth, progeny, and youth; the tide of time may destroy them in a moment).

Students!

May you live long and lead a happy life! Serve society. Consider service to society as service to God. Service to society alone can confer peace on you.

(Bhagawan concluded His discourse with the bhajan, "Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahin".)