

*Love All  
Serve All*

DEDICATED WITH LOVE AND REVERENCE  
AT THE DIVINE LOTUS FEET OF

*Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

# Love All – Serve All



## Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Avatars – Fine Examples of Selfless Service .....</b>                | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Unique Opportunity to Participate in Swami’s Divine Mission.....</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Love All, Serve All .....</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Grace of God.....</b>  | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Law of Karma and Selfless Service .....</b>                          | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Love and Selfless Service.....</b>                                   | <b>18</b> |
| <b>Control of the Mind through Service .....</b>                        | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Removal of Egoism.....</b>   | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Nishkama Karma .....</b>   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Nishkama Karma and Anasakti Yoga .....</b>                           | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Human Birth for Service to Society .....</b>                         | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Atmic Unity through Service .....</b>                                | <b>25</b> |
| <b>Service Opportunity – A Gift from God.....</b>                       | <b>27</b> |
| <b>Promote Love and Compassion .....</b>                                | <b>28</b> |
| <b>Charity and Compassion.....</b>                                      | <b>28</b> |
| <b>Contentment .....</b>  | <b>29</b> |
| <b>Sacrifice .....</b>  | <b>29</b> |
| <b>Pure Mind and Heart.....</b>   | <b>29</b> |
| <b>Pure Motives While Rendering Service.....</b>                        | <b>30</b> |
| <b>Purity of Heart .....</b>  | <b>30</b> |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Sathya Sai Organisation .....</b>                              | <b>30</b> |
| <b>Serve the Daridra Narayana .....</b>                           | <b>32</b> |
| <b>Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa .....</b>             | <b>33</b> |
| <b>Service in Daily Life .....</b>                                | <b>34</b> |
| <b>Service to Man is Service to God .....</b>                     | <b>35</b> |
| <b>Nine Steps in Spiritual Sadhana .....</b>                      | <b>35</b> |
| <b>Selflessness .....</b>   | <b>36</b> |
| <b>Do Not Seek Publicity .....</b>                                | <b>37</b> |
| <b>Attitude while Doing Service.....</b>                          | <b>37</b> |
| <b>Broaden the Heart.....</b>                                     | <b>38</b> |
| <b>Detachment .....</b>   | <b>38</b> |
| <b>Not Selfishness, Rather Selflessness .....</b>                 | <b>39</b> |
| <b>Hands that Serve are Greater than the Lips that Pray .....</b> | <b>39</b> |
| <b>Humility .....</b>   | <b>39</b> |
| <b>Ingratitude Is a Grievous Sin.....</b>                         | <b>39</b> |
| <b>Religion Develops the Human Personality .....</b>              | <b>40</b> |
| <b>Service Is the Only Path to Self-Realisation.....</b>          | <b>40</b> |
| <b>Temples .....</b>  | <b>41</b> |
| <b>The Story of Abou Ben Adhem.....</b>                           | <b>42</b> |
| <b>Transform Work into Worship .....</b>                          | <b>42</b> |
| <b>Conclusion.....</b>  | <b>43</b> |
| <b>References .....</b>   | <b>44</b> |



## *Avatars – Fine Examples of Selfless Service*

### **Service Is the Highest Sadhana**

Avatars (divine incarnations) of God are engaged in *seva* (service); that is why Avatars happen. Hence, when you offer *seva* to mankind, the Avatars will naturally be pleased and you can win Grace.<sup>1</sup>

*Seva* is the highest *sadhana* (spiritual discipline), for God Himself takes human form and comes down to serve mankind and lead it to the ideals it has ignored. Therefore consider how delighted God will be when man serves man!<sup>2</sup>

We are familiar with the concept of an Avatar—when God takes birth in human form to re-establish dharma or put back righteousness in its high place — thus doing *service* to the world. The omnipresent Lord, in the form of Krishna, served Arjuna as a charioteer. Not only this, but after His work as charioteer was over for the day, He used to take the tired horses to the river and wash them. In that manner he was prepared to work even as a cleaner. At that time, Vyasa looked at the Lord and felt that many great persons did not get the fortune which the horses had at the divine hands.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Lord Sets the Example for Devotees to Follow**

When the *Rajasuya yaga* (sacrifice) was being performed, Krishna came and asked Dharmaraja to allot some work to Him. Dharmaraja turned to Krishna and said that there was no work appropriate to Krishna and that if Krishna would himself indicate what work was suitable to Him, that will surely be allotted to Him. Krishna went close to Dharmaraja, patted him on the back, and said that he has a special qualification and that He would like to do work appropriate to His qualification. Dharmaraja could not make anything out of this. So Dharmaraja asked Krishna to tell him what His special qualification was so that he can find suitable work for Krishna.

He said that He was fit for removing the leaves in which people ate their food and which have been once used. Because after people eat their food in the leaves, they become somewhat unclean, and if those leaves are not removed they create some dislike in the minds of people. Krishna therefore took up this work so that He could give pleasure and good feeling to people.<sup>4</sup>

The Lord sets the example for the devotees to follow. He teaches that *service* done to any living being is offered to Him only and is accepted by Him most joyfully.<sup>5</sup>

### **Love Expresses Itself as Service**

Human lives are now passing on and on, filth over filth, bent, broken, diseased, distressed, disheartened. To ennoble these lives and to make the human heritage worthwhile, I have come. I am evincing all this enthusiasm to teach you the proper attitude to *seva*, for, *Love* expresses itself as *seva*; *Love* grows through *seva*; *Love* is born in the womb of *seva*. And God is *Love*. The Avatar (Divine incarnation) is a Child to the children, a Boy to the boys, a Man among men, a Woman among women, so that the Avatar's message might reach each heart and receive

enthusiastic response, as *ananda* (bliss). It is the compassion of the Avatar that prompts His every activity.

Birds, beasts and trees have not deviated from their Nature; they are still holding it valid. Man alone has disfigured it, in his crude attempt to improve upon it. So, the Avatar has to come as man among men, and move as friend, well-wisher, kinsman, guide, teacher, healer, and participant among men. He has come to restore Dharma, so when man follows Dharma, He is pleased and content.<sup>6</sup>

The acts of Sai are all selfless, sacred and beneficial. Sai has never caused harm. He is establishing the path of Truth, the Path of Morality, the Holy path to God-Realisation. So Sai's work will march triumphantly on.<sup>7</sup>

You may believe in it or not. I must tell you that total adherence to truth, absolute selflessness, universality and spontaneous outpouring of **love** are to be seen only in Sai and nowhere else. Sai has not an iota of self-interest.<sup>8</sup>

### **Always Wish Good of Others**

You have to understand the power of good thoughts. Thoughts travel from one person to another. If you are thinking ill of others that can harm the other person, but ten times more harm will come to you. Some of you will be indulging in the thought of harming others and wishing that those people should come to ruin. Such thoughts will harm us tenfold. Never allow them to come near us. Always wish good of others. **Love all**. For this I am an example. I **love** all people. Even the wicked people I **love**. I **love** all the more people who criticize Me. I **love** such people who are making fun of Me. Therefore, I am always happy, extremely happy. That is why I say, "My Life is My Message." I am always full of sacrifice, renunciation, and giving for others. I never have selfishness.<sup>9</sup>

### **My Life Is My Message**

The Principle of **Love** has no trace of ego or blemish. It is fully free from selfish attachments. Whatever Sai does, whatever Sai thinks, whatever Sai says, whatever Sai observes, it is all for your sake, not for Sai's sake. My only desire is your joy, *ananda* (bliss). Your *ananda* is My *ananda*. I have no *ananda* apart from yours.<sup>10</sup>

You should follow Swami, the leader. This is because from morning to night, Swami performs even the smallest task Himself; and all His work is for the good of the world. It is in this context that I often say, "My Life is My Message." God and the voice of God are one and the same. Thus, doing what Swami does, as well as what Swami ordains, forms work that pleases Him. Work done without the thought of self and eschewing the craving for name or power pleases Him most.<sup>11</sup>

————— « » —————

## ***Unique Opportunity to Participate in Swami's Divine Mission***

### **I Will Not Forsake You**

The totality of Divine Energy has come as Sathya Sai unto humanity to wake up the slumbering Divinity of every human being. I will not forsake you. I have come to help, to

accompany, and to carry you. I can never forsake you. I will never fail in My duty to My children; but I shall be very grateful to each child of Mine who helps in My task.<sup>1</sup>

### **Fulfilling My Role as Sathya Sai**

When a devotee seeks with humility and purity to give *seva* and *prema* (**love**) to My creatures who are in need of such selfless **service** and sublime **love**; when he considers all creatures as My children, as his beloved brothers and sisters, as the blessed manifestations of My Immanence, then in fulfillment of My role as Sathya Sai, I descend to help, accompany, and carry that yogi. I am always near such a yogi to guide him and to shower My **love** on his life.<sup>2</sup>

He who selflessly renders *seva*, sweetened with *prema*, to My creatures, he who sees Me in everyone and in everything, he who remembers Me at every moment is the yogi nearest to Me.<sup>3</sup>

« »

### ***Love All, Serve All***

#### **This Body Has Been Engaged in Service Right from Birth**

This body has been engaged in **service** right from birth. You should also spend your life in serving others. This is My message. I practice whatever I preach. I **love all** and **serve all** and exhort you to do the same. You are not able to understand My **love** as your feelings are narrow. That is your mistake, not Mine. Today, conflicts are on the rise as there is no proper understanding and adjustment among people. Adjustment will be possible only when there is proper understanding.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Serve All with Compassion**

In all religions, birthdays of great personalities are celebrated but the ideals for which they lived are not remembered and followed. If you do not care to follow their teachings the celebrations lose their meaning and become artificial observances. It is not doing justice to the good people whose birthdays are being celebrated. Christ taught people to **love all** beings and **serve all** with compassion. It is only by practising these ideals that one can truly celebrate His birthday. The Divinity within should be reflected in every action. The seat of Truth is in your heart. Worship means loving others with your full heart. You must live in **love** and lead a life of selfless **service** based on **love**. This is the only right way of celebrating the birth of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Lead Pure and Sacred Lives**

One should regard **love** for God as the greatest treasure one can have. When you **love** God, you will have **love** towards all because the Divine is in everyone. Therefore bear in mind: **Love all; serve all**. The best way to **serve** God is to **love all** and **serve all**. Your devotion will get diluted if you entertain differences between people. Devotion to Rama or Krishna becomes meaningless if you do not practise their teachings. The worship of the Lord should be accompanied by leading a Godly life. Only then the bliss can be experienced.

Today people carry on routine reading of scriptural texts like the Gita or the Bible. This serves no purpose unless they lead pure and sacred lives. They should fill their hearts with **love** of God and share that **love** with others.<sup>3</sup>

### **Through Love, You Can Achieve Anything**

Today, man visits temples and pilgrimage centres in search of peace, but peace is not found in pilgrimage centres. Peace is not found outside, it is within you. You are the embodiment of peace, truth and **love**. So search within, tread along the path of **love**. Only then you will be peaceful. Through **love**, you can achieve anything. God is **Love**, live in **Love**. Without **love**, you cannot be successful. **Love** helps you to know your Self. In order to experience **love**, you do not need to approach anybody; nor do you need to exert yourself. Turn your vision inward.

Krishna said, “*Mamaivamso jeevaloke jeevabhutha sanathana*” (human beings are the sparks of My Divinity). **Serve** anybody; it amounts to serving God. The best way to **love** God is to **love all** and **serve all**. If you lead such a life, all your actions will be pleasing unto God.

You need food, clothing, shelter, and some money to purchase medicines if you were to fall sick. That is why I said in the beginning, “O man! Never be over-ambitious, lead instead a noble life by making proper use of the intellect.” Happiness lies in contentment. Dissatisfaction will lead to misery. In order to experience peace, keep your desires under control.<sup>4</sup>

### **Have a Pure Heart Filled with Love**

All your *bhajans*, penances and the like are of no avail unless you have a pure heart filled with **love**. It is like preparing food in an untinned vessel. It is bound to get spoiled. It is to develop a loving heart that you have to embark on the spiritual path. This pure **love** is the direct path to God. It is **love** which is unbounded and divine.

The **love** of God should not depend on whether your prayers are fulfilled or not. Remember what ordeals the sages and saints passed through in their devotion to God. They braved all difficulties and earned lasting fame as great devotees. Life is a challenge - Meet it! Life is a game - Play it! Life is **love** - Enjoy it! Life is Awareness! The best way to **love** God is to **love all**, **serve all**.<sup>5</sup>

### **Service Will Lead You to Devotion**

Your life is a long journey, and your desires are the luggage. “Less luggage, more comfort makes travel a pleasure.” So, reduce your desires. Human birth is gifted to **serve** others, not just to eat, drink, sleep, and make merry. The best way to **love** God is to **love all** and **serve all**. Man’s foremost duty is to **serve** his fellowmen and make them happy. Your life will be redeemed only when you involve yourself in the **service** of society. The highest *sadhana* (spiritual practise) is to transform **love** into **service**. **Service** will lead you to devotion.<sup>6</sup>

### **Pray for the Welfare of All**

Give up selfishness and work for the unity of your country. Pray for the welfare of all and lead an ideal life. Human life is not gifted to you to hanker after worldly objects. You have to set an ideal to the world. What is the ideal that you have to set? You must help all to your utmost capacity. The best way to **love** God is to **love all** and **serve all**. Adopting **service** and **love** as

your ideals, you must start a new life from this moment – this is My blessing and benediction to you.<sup>7</sup>

### **Money Comes and Goes, but Morality Comes and Grows**

Do not hate anybody. All are your brothers and sisters. Cultivate the spirit of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. **Serve all** with **love**. “Neither by penance nor by pilgrimage nor by study of scriptures nor by *Japa* can one cross the ocean of life. One can achieve it only by serving the pious.” (Sanskrit Verse) No amount of money can procure the bliss that you attain by serving others. Money comes and goes, but morality comes and grows. There have been many men of affluence in this land, but what happened to them ultimately? They had to leave the world empty-handed. No one can carry even a fistful of dust at the time of departing from the world. Otherwise, there would have been rationing even for dust in the country. When you leave the body, you carry with you only the good and bad that you have done in your life.<sup>8</sup>

### **God Is Interested Only In Love and Service**

You should undertake **service**. In fact, the hands are given to you to **serve** humanity. Hands that **serve** are holier than lips that pray. Therefore, undertake selfless **service** and attain glory. When you undertake good work, you enjoy peace in your life. Today, the boys who sang *bhajans* are former students of the Institute. They have undertaken several services to please Swami. God is not interested in worship and other *sadhanas* (spiritual disciplines). He is interested only in **service**. Hence, undertake **service** and more and more **service**. The best way to **love** God is to **Love all** and **Serve all**. God is interested only in **love** and **service**. If you can recognise the importance of these two *sadhanas* and conduct yourself accordingly, there can be no greater *sadhana*.

You need not have to spend a lot of money in **service**. Sanctify your life by undertaking loving **service**; you attain eternal joy.<sup>9</sup>

### **Where There Is Purity, There Is Divinity**

There must be harmony between one’s thoughts, words, and deeds. When there is unity between these three, there will be purity. Where there is purity, there is Divinity. Whatever others do to you, consider it as good for you. See that you do not lose your humanness under any circumstances. In fact, humanness is your most valuable property.

“**Love all** and **serve all**.” Then only you can lead a healthy and happy life. Do not eat junk food or food that is prohibited. You have to partake good, *sathwic* (pure) food that is offered first to God. You don’t offer all sorts of food to God, do you? *Sathwic* food that is prepared in a clean vessel with pure feelings is offered to God. The food so offered to God has to be partaken as *prasadam* (sanctified food). Good food brings good health, and from good health arises good thoughts. Unfortunately, today there is dichotomy between our thoughts, words, and deeds. We say something and do something else.<sup>10</sup>

### **Love All, Hate None**

**Love** everyone. But do not trust everyone without discrimination. One who puts his trust wholly in others is headed for ruin. **Love all, Serve all**. But put trust in yourself. Develop self-confidence. Give up worldly desires. Develop divine feelings and give up worldly feelings. This



is the *dharma* (righteous path) of humanity. Students! You have been studying in Sai institutions. You have studied well and passed examinations. Take to the right path. Develop good qualities. **Love all**, hate none. **Love** even those who bear hostility towards you. This is the characteristic of Sai. There are many who are hostile towards Me. Many ridicule or criticise Me. If they say it aloud, it is lost in air. If they do it internally, it returns to them. None of it will reach Me. Therefore, one should attach no importance to praise and abuse. See to it that **love** principle is installed firmly in you. This is what Mother Easwamma practised and taught.

Face the vicissitudes of life with confidence. I am never deterred by hardships or obstacles. When there is no defect in you, why should you have fear? **Love** even those who criticise you. This is the ideal that Swami expects when He says, “My life is My message”. If you lead your life strictly according to My ideal, you will rise to the same level. Therefore, develop good qualities and help those who are in distress.<sup>11</sup>

### **Fear of Sin and Love for God**

Every devotee must cultivate **love** and compassion. It is said, *Thyagenaike amruthathwa-manasuh* (only by sacrifice can one attain immortality). Only a person with the quality of sacrifice can experience bliss. Those with the egocentric feeling of “I” and “mine” can never be happy in life. Where there is the feeling of “I” there comes ego. Those who cultivate the feeling of “mine” and “my people” develop attachment.

One should never develop the feeling that only my country should prosper. Develop a broader outlook and pray, *Lokah samasthah sukhino bhavanthu* (May the whole world be happy!).

Those who develop the narrow-minded feeling of “I” and “mine” undergo a lot of suffering. This is due to the secular education that they have acquired. Worldly education does not go beyond one’s own selfish interest. We should **love all** and **serve all**. Today the rich have lost the qualities of *papa bheeti* and *daiva preeti* (fear of sin and **love** for God). If you cultivate only these two qualities, you can achieve anything in life.<sup>12</sup>

### **Use Your Knowledge for the Good of Others**

Every man should recognise that the body has been given to him to render **service** to others. You must use the body for promoting the welfare of society. Of what use is the endless study of books if you do not use your knowledge for the good of others? A mind that is not utilized for imparting joy to others or a body that is not used for the **service** of others is totally useless. The way to **love** God is to **love all** and **serve all**. Students should imbibe this ideal. Man should strive to become good and virtuous. Only when a man is filled with good thoughts and feelings and performs good deeds will his life become meaningful. These good qualities will serve to make a better man of you.<sup>13</sup>

### **Think Only About God**

Today peace is not to be found anywhere in the world. You find only “pieces” (divisions) everywhere. Peace is to be found only here. Carry it with you. This is a place hallowed by the vibrations of numerous good devotees. Many noble souls have spent their lives here. Fill your hearts with their noble thoughts. Do not bother about what others may say. Develop self-confidence and proceed toward self-realization through self-sacrifice. Ignore incidental troubles,

which are passing clouds. Think only about God. There is nothing more vital than that. Try to acquire Divine **Love**. **Love** is God. Live in **Love**. The best way to **love** God is to **love all, serve all**. All are embodiments of God. Foster **love**. Adhere to Truth. Follow Righteousness. Achieve Peace. This is the special benediction of Swami on this day on all. Wherever you may go, speak softly and sweetly. Thereby, you will earn the esteem of society. This is the most valuable reward you have to secure this New Year.<sup>14</sup>

### **Selfless Intellect**

The innumerable worldly affairs you indulge in give you ephemeral pleasures only and cannot give true, everlasting bliss. So, you should develop inner vision. External vision is the vision of the animals. You should not go down to their level. This is not the true nature of man. You should purify your feelings. You should develop pure, unwavering and selfless intellect. Only then will you be able to **love all** and **serve all**.

### **Love Everyone Because God Is in Everyone**

It is needless to search for God. Verily you are the Divine. Strive to realise this truth. There is a simple and easy way. Have the faith that every human being is an embodiment of the Divine. **Love** everyone. **Serve all**. The best way to **love** God is to **love all, serve all**.

You must **love** everyone because God is in everyone. Every human being is a manifestation of God. On the cosmic stage every man identifies himself with the form and name given to him. But he does not realise what is his true form and name.<sup>16</sup>

### **Do Not Hurt Others**

God is in you and in everybody. So hurting others amounts to hurting God. Do not criticize and find fault with others. **Love all, Serve all**. Respect, adore, and worship your parents. They constitute the real wealth of your life. The blessings of your parents will confer health and wealth on you. God comes to you on His own when you **love** and **serve** your parents.<sup>17</sup>

### **You Cannot Always Oblige but You Can Speak Always Obligingly**

You are attributing various names and forms to God for your own satisfaction, but God is essentially one. Be He Rama, Krishna, Allah or Jesus, all their teachings are meant for the emancipation of man. No religion preaches violence or to harm anybody. Some evil-minded people are misinterpreting the sacred teachings and are indulging in wicked deeds. All the noble souls have taught sacred things. They said, "**Love all**". They did not preach hatred. God never tells anybody to kill others. No one has any right to kill the other because the same *Atma* is present in all. In the name of God, people are committing heinous crimes. It is not good for anybody. **Love all, Serve all**. You cannot always oblige but you can speak always obligingly. There is no God greater than **love**. **Love** is God, God is **love**. Live in **love**. Destroy wicked qualities.<sup>18</sup>

### **Love Is the Main Switch**

You are under the mistaken notion that you are rendering **service** to others. You should give up such a feeling. Only then does the **service** you perform become real **service** in the strict sense of the term. **Service** does not merely mean helping others. The best way to **love** God is to

**love all** and **serve all**. Your acts of **service** should be suffused with the spirit of **love**. Without the positive aspect of **love**, all **service** you render becomes negative in nature.

All bodies are like bulbs, and **love** is the main switch. Only when the main switch is pressed will the bodies radiate light and happiness to one and all. You are switching off the main switch and trying to enjoy happiness. It is impossible. *Hrid + daya* (compassion) = *Hridaya* (heart). Your heart should be filled with compassion. All your activities should be suffused with **love**. There is no strength superior to **love**.<sup>19</sup>

### **Do Not Consider Anybody as Other Person**

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.<sup>20</sup>

### **All Are One; Be Alike to Everyone**

When someone asks your name, you mention some name. In fact, that name was given to you by your parents. You were not born with that name. At the time of your birth, you were just a baby. The names were given subsequently. Unfortunately, today, we are indulging in controversies even in the case of God, on the basis of names and forms. Whomever you come across, they are an embodiment of Divinity, verily. For example, you come across a beggar. That beggar is also God. God is in that form. Hence, offer your salutations to them. There is nothing wrong in doing so. All are one; be alike to everyone. **Love all** and **serve all**, be they a beggar or a millionaire.<sup>21</sup>

### **God Illumines the Life of Everyone**

The same *Atma* is present in all. When you take the *Atmic* principle into consideration, all are one. So many individuals are present in this Hall. The *Atma* in all of them is one and the same. There is one sun in the sky. It gives light to the entire world. Similarly, God is like the sun who illumines the life of everyone. We engulf ourselves in darkness when we criticise others. Therefore, **love all** and **serve all**.

If someone abuses us, let him do so. Abuses will merge in thin air. Therefore, always think that nobody can criticise you. Have faith that God will always protect you. Develop unflinching faith in God. Many people deny the existence of God. If there is no God, where have you come from? What is the place of your origin? If you don't have faith in God, all your life becomes a waste.

Therefore, Embodiments of **Love**, develop truth and **love**. When you have both truth and **love**, then you will have peace. When you have peace, you can lead your entire life happily. You will not have hatred for anyone. You have hatred only when you lack **love** and truth. You should unite **love** and truth in your life. When you have **love**, you will **love** everybody; you will make

everybody happy. Therefore, treasure **love** and truth in your heart and never forget them; not even in your dream.<sup>22</sup>

### **Duty Is God; Work Is Worship**

Education should fill one's heart with **love** and compassion. Two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen add up to make water. Greatness lies in sharing water equally, not in making it. Everyone has an equal right to water. Today, everyone is fighting for rights, but what about responsibility?

You need not fight for rights. Discharge your responsibilities, and rights will follow. Do your duty. Duty is God; work is worship. What is your right? To make everybody happy is your right. **Serve** everybody and make everyone happy without expecting anything in return. **Service** is God. The best way to **love** God is to **love all** and **serve all**. Speak softly and sweetly. You cannot always oblige, but you can speak always obligingly.<sup>23</sup>

### **Serve Your Motherland**

Stop hankering after foreign lands after you complete your studies. **Serve** your Motherland. Lord Rama said, *Janani janmabhoomischa swargadapi gareeyasi* (mother and motherland are greater than heaven). So, work for your Motherland and **serve** the poor. The best way to **love** God is to **love all** and **serve all**. **Serve** others when it is necessary. You are born to experience **love**. Your life is full of **love**. But, you are not able to understand this Principle of **Love**. There is nothing greater than **love** in this world. **Love** is God, God is **Love**. So live in **love**.<sup>24</sup>

### **If Only there Is Love, You Can Achieve Anything**

I wish that all of you should lead a life of mutual **love**. "**Love all! Serve all!**" This is My exhortation to you. If only there is **love**, you can achieve anything. **Love** is everything. "**Love** is life; life is **love**."

Life is associated with **love**, not hatred. Today, wherever you see there is hatred, hatred, hatred! This is not a good sign. Being born as human beings, it is not proper to possess animal qualities, throwing to wind the human qualities. Sometimes, animals seem better than human beings in this regard. The animals seem to possess human qualities. Today, the animals are transforming themselves into humans and the humans degenerating into animals. This is not proper. The human beings should lead the life of human beings. They should strengthen their human qualities.<sup>25</sup>

### **There Is Nobody in This World Who Can Give Us More Love than God**

Some people show great **love** for outsiders but do not show the same **love** toward their mother and father in their house. First and foremost, we should **love** our parents; then, other people. But we should not limit our **love** to our friends and relatives alone; we should **love all**. Only then will God shower His **love** on us.

When seeing somebody in trouble or an injured person on the road, do not show indifference toward them. Howsoever urgent work we may be having, try to remove their suffering. Then God will manifest before us and fill us with energy. There is nobody in this world who can give us more **love** than God.

We do *bhajans* and perform **service** activities only to attain the **love** of God. God's **love** fills us with great energy. It is God only who gives us this energy. Therefore, **love** God, and **love** all people who are verily the children of God.

Some children become orphans. You should alleviate their suffering. Then your birth as a human being will become worthwhile. You see a person in trouble and go away without showing any kindness to him. There is no sin greater than this. The next day, when you may be in trouble, your friends will also ignore and deride you. Therefore, you should **love** others and receive their **love**. Charity and kindness are very important part of *dharma* (righteousness).<sup>26</sup>

### **God Has No Hatred toward Anybody**

All are God's children. God is their only father. Hence, we must **love all**. Others may not **love** us, but we must **love all** and **serve all**! People keep distance from us as long as they do not understand the power of **love**. Once they understand and experience **love**, they become one with us. I will be waiting for such a transformation in the hearts of people.<sup>27</sup>

### **Enjoy Everlasting Bliss**

Man is performing various tasks and undergoing many experiences in this world. But what is the use of all that he does if he is unable to enjoy everlasting bliss? Neither by wealth nor by action nor by study of texts nor by *darshan*, *sparshan* and *sambhashan* (vision, touch and conversation) of noble souls can man attain eternal bliss. He can visualise the manifestation of God and experience bliss only when he purifies his heart. **Love all**. Have faith that God is present in all. Make everybody happy. Only then can you attain happiness. It is impossible for you to attain happiness without making others happy.<sup>28</sup>

### **God Is Everywhere**

What the world needs today is **service**. We should **love** everybody. **Love All, Serve All**. This is what we are supposed to do. Whatever work we may do, we should do it with the feeling that we are doing the work of God. There is no place in this world where God is not present. He is all-pervasive. Never doubt that God is here and is not there. He is everywhere. God is in you, with you, above you, below you and around you.<sup>29</sup>

« »

## ***Grace of God***

### **Deserve the Grace of God**

God is the embodiment of compassion. He watches for a grain of goodness or humility so that He can reward it with tons of Grace.<sup>1</sup> Deserve the Grace of God by helping the weak and poor, the diseased and the disabled, the distressed and the downtrodden.<sup>2</sup>

Cultivate the Divine qualities of **love**, compassion, humility and reverence for all living beings, reverence towards the earth and all the other elements. You can thus draw upon yourself

the Grace of God and render your life beneficial and fruitful.<sup>3</sup> More than listening to a hundred lectures or delivering them to others, offering one act of genuine *seva* attracts the Grace of God.<sup>4</sup>

### **Important Lesson from the Ramayana**

Many people complain that their troubles have not ended and God has shown no compassion towards them. They would do well to learn a lesson from an episode in the Ramayana.

After Vibhishana had become friendly with Hanuman, he once asked the latter, “Hanuman! Although you are a monkey, you have been the recipient of the Lord’s grace. Although I have been ceaselessly engaged in the contemplation of Rama, how is it I have not secured His grace?” Hanuman replied: “Vibhishana! It is true that you are ceaselessly chanting the name of Rama. But to what extent are you engaged in the *service* of Rama? By merely contemplating on the name of Rama you cannot get Rama’s grace. When your brother Ravana brought away Sitadevi, what is the help you rendered to her? Did you do anything to relieve even partially Rama’s distress?”

Devotees should realise that by merely uttering “Rama! Rama!” you cannot ensure the Lord’s grace. To what extent are you carrying out the injunctions of Rama, Krishna or Baba? How far are you practising the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita*? Without practising the precepts, no amount of repetition of the name of the Lord is of any use. It is merely like playing a gramophone record. The Lord’s name must get implanted in your heart. Today, on account of the special prerogative of the Kali Age, people think that it is enough to recite the Lord’s name alone for achieving the goal of life. But this is a mistake. Can you have the current merely by having the negative wire? Only when the negative and positive lines are combined will the current flow. Devotion must find expression in dedicated *service* to the Lord.

Embodiments of love! When you recite the name of the Lord with *love*, when you carry out with your limbs the injunctions of the Lord, and look upon the world as a manifestation of the Divine, you are bound to receive the grace of the Lord. Have this firm conviction. Do not labour under the misconception that mere chant of God’s name alone is necessary and adequate. Along with it you have to take part in sacred activities. You must not mind whatever obstacles you may encounter. This is the lesson that Hanuman conveyed when he overcame every one of the obstacles he met with when he set out on the search for Sita. Hanuman stands out as a supreme example of dedicated and determined *service* to the Divine.

Devote everyday at least five minutes for reciting the Lord’s name and a few minutes for rendering some kind of *service* to the needy and the forlorn. Include in your daily prayers a prayer for the welfare of all people in the world. Do not be engrossed in your own well-being and salvation. Try to lead a life free from ill-will and harm to others. Regard this as a type of spiritual discipline and redeem your lives.<sup>5</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Law of Karma and Selfless Service***

#### **Every *Karma* Has a Consequence**

There is a law of cause and effect; every *karma* (action) has a consequence, whether you like it or not, whether you anticipate it or not. A good *karma* produces a good result; a bad one has to

produce a bad result. Birth is the result of the *karma* done before death; if you are asked what happens to man after death, you can point to yourselves and declare, “This is what happens”; they are born again. This is no religion of despair; it is a religion of hope, of assurance, of encouragement to lead an active, useful, beneficent life.<sup>1</sup>

One meaning of *karma* that is popularly accepted is that it is one’s destiny, or fate, the inescapable “writing” on the brow, which has to work itself out. There is no escaping it. But people forget that it is not written by some other hand. It is all written by one’s own hand. And the hand that wrote it can also wipe it off.<sup>2</sup>

The status in the present life is decided on the basis of the activities in previous lives. When the Headmaster gives a character certificate on the basis of which you apply for a job, he frames the sentences with reference to your conduct in previous years when you were in previous classes. You are responsible for the nature of the certificate; if your conduct was good, you get a good certificate and a good job; if it had been bad, you get a bad one and a poor job. It is you who write, you who wipe the writing on the head, or “destiny.”<sup>3</sup>

### **God Only Reflects, Resounds and Reacts**

God is not involved in either rewards or punishments. He only reflects, resounds, and reacts! He is the Eternal Unaffected Witness! You decide your own fate.<sup>4</sup>

God has no will or want. He does not confer or withhold. He is the eternal witness. To put it in the language that you can understand, He is like the postman, who is not concerned with the contents of the letters that He hands over to the addresses; one letter might communicate victory, another, defeat; you receive what you have worked for. Do good and have good in return; be bad and accept the bad that comes back to you. That is the law, and there is really no help or hindrance.<sup>5</sup>

### **You are not thrust in an Iron Cage of Destiny**

To say that God is the prime cause of everything is true to a certain extent; but you are not thrust by Him into an iron cage of destiny from which there is no escape. He has endowed you with *viveka* and *vairagya* (discrimination and detachment) and, with a sense of awe and wonder, you have to use these for attaining Him. Though bound, you are not entirely incapacitated. A cow that is tethered to a post by means of a rope can walk around it and graze on all the area which the rope can traverse; when all the grass therein has been eaten, perhaps the master might loosen the knot and tether it to another post a little farther off. Graze freely as far as the rope allows, but do not stray far from the post and pull at the rope and inflict pain on your neck.

On the land that belongs to you, you can grow the food you need or you can sit idle and allow it to lie fallow. You are the cause of your ruin or uplift. The tools are in your hands; you can learn the skills; you can break the shackles and escape; but if you grovel in slavery and bondage, who can save you? Do not blame fate or *siro-likhitham* (writing on the head), for your condition. The *likhitham* (writing) has been done by you yourself.<sup>6</sup>

### **A Lifetime of Good Deeds Covers a Multitude of Past Sins**

A seed will not germinate when it is covered with too much earth. In the same context, the seeds of wrong behaviour will not germinate and grow into painful events of our life if the seeds are covered deep with loving **service** to those who are in need of sustenance, courage, **love**, and

help. ... A lifetime of good deeds will cover a multitude of past sins. Constant work in loving **service** to others covers the seeds of past sinful and harmful actions, so they die away and do not grow into a new round of misery.<sup>7</sup>

Loving **service** to those who are in need is the form of devotion most pleasing to the Divine. ... If, in truth, we **love** God, then He is directly before us as the inner reality of our fellow human beings. ... Loving **service** to those in distress is the excellent expression of devotion to God.<sup>8</sup>

### **You Need Not Suffer from *Karma***

You might say that the *karma* of the previous birth has to be consumed in this birth and that no amount of grace can save man from that. Evidently, someone has taught you to believe so. But I assure you, you need not suffer from *karma* like that. When a severe pain torments you, the doctor gives you a morphine injection and you do not feel the pain, though it is there in the body. Grace is like the morphine, the pain is not felt though you go through it.<sup>9</sup>

### **Escaping From the Consequences of *Karma***

Students! You may wonder if there is a way to escape from the consequences of *karma*. Yes, it is possible for those who earn the grace of God. Once you become the recipient of God's grace, you will not be affected by *karma phala* (fruits of action). Hence, you should strive to earn divine grace. Scholars say it is impossible to escape *karma*. What they say is true to a certain extent. But once you earn divine grace, even if you have to experience the consequences of *karma*, you will not feel the pain.

Take for instance a bottle containing medicine. You find the expiry date mentioned on the bottle. After the expiry date, the medicine will lose its potency. Likewise, God's grace will make the *karma phala* "expire", i.e. it nullifies the effects of *karma*. Hence, it is possible to escape from the consequences of *karma*. Man should cultivate the necessary strength and will power to deserve divine grace. You will be free from the shackles of *karma* once you attain divine grace.

Lord Easwara had granted only sixteen years of life-span to Markandeya. But Markandeya was unaware of this. One evening, he found his parents full of sorrow. On enquiry, they revealed that his end had approached and that was the cause of their sorrow. They said, "Lord Easwara had ordained that you would live only for sixteen years, and today happens to be the last day of your earthly sojourn. Tomorrow our earthly ties will be snapped."

Markandeya was surprised to hear this. He also felt sorry that he was not made aware of it earlier. He said, "I would have made proper use of my time if I had known that I would live for only sixteen years." He went to the temple of Easwara without wasting even a moment, hugged the Siva Linga and started chanting Om Namah Sivaya wholeheartedly. At the appointed hour, Lord Yama (God of death) cast his noose around the neck of young Markandeya. As he was hugging the *Linga*, the noose fell around the *Siva Linga* also.

Easwara manifested there and remonstrated with Yama, "How dare you cast the noose around Me?" Pleased with the devotion of Markandeya, He blessed him with the boon of immortality. In fact, it was Easwara who had stipulated 16 years of life-span for Markandeya. But on account of Markandeya's intense devotion and total surrender Easwara had to change His decree. Markandeya's episode bears ample testimony to the fact that one can escape even from the God of death if one becomes the recipient of Lord Easwara's grace. Hence, contemplate on God and chant His Name incessantly.



Once when Lord Yama was going round the world, he noticed that everyone was chanting the divine name. Wherever he went, he found devotees contemplating on the Lord. “If everyone starts chanting the divine Name, how am I to discharge my duties? How can I cast my noose around a devotee?” he wondered. He started praying to Lord Easwara thus. Then Easwara appeared before him and said, “You may cast your noose on anyone at the appointed time. But remember that only those who have experienced the fruits of their actions will be ensnared by your noose. It cannot touch those who have no trace of *karma phala* (fruits of action). That is why Markandeya became My property and I showered My grace on him.”

That is why people start chanting the divine names such as “Rama, Krishna, Govinda” as the end approaches. As demonstrated by Markandeya, devotees can alter the Will of God by their sincere prayers. In matters relating to Divinity, the word “impossible” does not exist. God can accomplish anything. If you surrender to Him completely, He can cancel the consequences of your actions and confer His grace on you. One need not feel depressed or dejected thinking that he is bound by *karma phala*. God can cancel your *karma phala* if your prayers are sincere. In this manner, God protected the lives of many devotees and alleviated their suffering in response to their prayers.

Some people out of their ego doubt the power of God and try to test Him. They think, “Let us see, how he will do this.” But God cannot be understood or experienced by such tests. Such tests are futile exercise. Evil qualities like ego, jealousy, and hatred will ruin man’s life. One should make every effort to earn the grace of God. *Sarvada Sarva Kaleshu Sarvatra Hari Chintanam* (everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances contemplate on God).

That is why Swami is exhorting you to undertake spiritual *sadhana*. *Nagar sankirtan* is one of the *sadhanas* that is prescribed for devotees. No one knows when one’s end approaches. Yama has no consideration of what one is doing, good or bad at the time of casting his noose. One may leave his mortal coil even when one is doing *nagar sankirtan*. Hence, one should always be prepared to face Yama by chanting the Divine Name. You should undertake spiritual practice and earn the divine grace so as to be free from *karma phala*. One need not feel depressed and resign to one’s fate. One can easily overcome fate with sincere prayers. The story of Markandeya proves this point beyond doubt. Everything depends on God’s grace.<sup>10</sup>

### **Constantly Think of God**

Everyone has to face the consequences of his actions. None can predict when and how, but you are bound to face them. However, when you constantly think of God, you will never be put to suffering. He will always be with you, in you, around you, safeguarding you. You may worship God by any name — Jesus, Rama, Krishna, etc. But remember that God is one, goal is one, truth is one and **love** is one. **Love** is God. Enshrine this unity principle in your heart and have firm faith in it. Then God will certainly take care of you wherever you are - in a forest, in the sky, in a city, in a village, on a mountain top or in the middle of deep sea.<sup>11</sup>

Whatever you do, let it be pleasing unto God. *Sarva karma Bhagavad preethartham* (do all actions to please God). Then no sin will accrue to you. There is no easier path than this to experience the *Atmic* principle.<sup>12</sup>

## *Love and Selfless Service*

### **Secret of Human Birth**

As a human being, you should desire, seek, and enjoy only one thing – that is, **love** for God. Once you have **love** for God, you will never indulge in bad actions. Once you have tasted nectar, will you have a desire for bitter things? Likewise, only a person who has never tasted **love** for God will seek pleasure in material objects. If one realizes the truth – the purity and everlasting nature of **love** for God – then he will never go after false and transient worldly pleasures.

Man has to realize that human birth is not given merely to enjoy worldly pleasures, but to sacrifice everything and derive pleasure from renunciation and sacrifice. This is the secret of human birth. Undertake activities that will bring about good for all. Do not hate anyone or cause pain to anyone. Develop virtuous qualities, for only then will humanity blossom in you. To indulge in demonic actions while having the human form means degrading human nature.

In the world, there are many persons who are wealthy; there are also persons in high positions with a lot of power. But do they all have peace of mind? No, no! They may pretend to be peaceful, but peace remains only in those persons' hearts who have no desires. This peace alone is man's crown, his highest jewel, and a sharp sword in his hands. This peace is like sweet nectar in the heart. If you want to enjoy such peace, you have to curb your desires, develop **love** for God, and undertake **service** activities.

### **Where There Is Love, There God Is Certainly Evident**

Always consider yourself to be a servant, not a leader. Real joy is found in being a servant. There is no happiness in being a leader. Truly speaking, it is not really leadership; it is slavery. Enter into society, serve the poor, help the forlorn, and consider these acts to be **service** to God. This is a great opportunity. Install God in your heart and be prepared to do **service**.<sup>1</sup>

**Love** is God, God is **Love**. Where there is **Love**, there God is certainly evident. **Love** more and more people, **love** them more and more intensely; transform the **love** into **service**, transform the **service** into worship; that is the highest *sadhana*. There is no living being without the spark of **love**; even a mad man loves something or somebody intensely. But, you must recognise this **love** as but a reflection of the *Premaswarupa* (embodiment of **Love**) that is your reality, to the God who is residing in your heart. Without that spring of **Love** that bubbles in your heart, you will not be prompted to **love** at all. Recognise that spring, rely on it more and more, develop its possibilities, try to irrigate the whole world with it, discard all touch of self from it, do not seek anything in return for it from those to whom you extend it. In your daily affairs, do not create factions, or revel in hatred. See the good in others and the faults in yourselves. Revere others as having God installed in them; revere yourself also as the seat of God. Make your heart pure so He can reside therein.<sup>2</sup>

It is only *prema* (**love**) that can successfully carry out schemes for **service** and uplift. **Love** creates sympathy; **love** will show the way where hatred can only confound.<sup>3</sup>

All are eager to take, none is earnest about giving. The reason is absence of **love**, **love** that transcends caste, creed, colour, and the fences erected by man between man. Fill the heart with

love, and distribute that love to all. Love grows with every gift of love; the heart that pours out love is ever full. God is there as love and you are only drawing on Him, when you are sharing love with others.

Expansion is love, is life. Contraction is death, is hate. Pray for the good of all, crave for the prosperity of all, not of one person or party, or nation. The craving for power if it afflicts any one person degenerates into a mania, and it brings in its wake, great confusion and calamity. Be servants, not masters.<sup>4</sup>

### **Love Is God, Live in Love**

Of all the virtues, love is the foremost. If love is fostered, all other qualities flow from it. In every form of *sadhana* love has the first place. Love is the supreme mark of humanness. Love is God. Live in love. Start the day with love. Fill the day with love. End the day with love. You have to engage yourselves in *seva*, eschewing every trace of *ahamkara* (conceit). Our degradation is the result of forgetting God. When we remember God, our life will be filled with peace and happiness.<sup>5</sup>

The day when you resolve to practise My advice, to follow My directives, to translate My message into acts of service, and to engage in *sadhana* – that day is My birthday for you. The 23rd day of November which you now honour as the day on which I was born, is only like any other day if you celebrate it in a routine, ritual fashion. Adore man; the adoration reaches Me. Neglect man; you neglect Me. Of what avail is it to worship the Lord and to suppress man, His counterpart? Love for God must be manifested as love for man, and love must express itself as service.

Through love alone – love acquired through *sadhana*, and shared with all as *sadhana* – can peace be attained, by the individual as well as by the nation. My Life is My Message and My Message is love. That explains why you have gathered hither in hundreds of thousands.<sup>6</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Control of the Mind through Service***

#### **Peace Is in Your Mind**

Every human being wants to have peace. Peace does not exist in a distant place. It is wasting time to search for peace in religion. One who aspires for peace should give up his search in religion and search for it in his mind. Peace is in your mind and not in your religion. Since we are searching for this peace externally, we are only getting chaos. We should develop this peace within ourselves. Such peace should be fostered in the family. From the family, it should be spread into the villages. From the village, it should be extended to the state, from thence to the nation.

If there is no peace in the individual, how can there be peace in the nation? Unfortunately, nowadays in the name of spreading peace in the world, we are giving chaos and sorrow to the family, the village, and the country. We should therefore become messengers of peace and not *yamadutas* (messengers of death) spreading violence and hatred. Everyone should try to foster peace individually. Where do we get this peace from? It is obtained only through service.

## **Increase Love through Dedication and Service**

The mind of a person not engaged in *seva* is a devil's workshop. One who does not have work sits like an inert object. Such a person does not get sleep also. The one who does not get sleep starts thinking of bad things. He gets unnecessary thoughts. He becomes mad afterwards. When we keep doing work, there is no room for such unwanted thoughts. Peace is the state free from thoughts. **Love** develops with this peace. This **love** is innate in us. If we want to nourish a plant, we have to put manure and water. Similarly, we can increase this **love** inherent in us through dedication and **service**.

**Service** fosters the plant of **love**. **Love** is a very sacred thing. **Love** is time (immortality). One who desires such **love** does not seek anything else. Our life is the embodiment of **love**. Such **love**, which is very basic to our lives, we are enjoying it in a different manner. This is truly selfishness. This **love** should be developed in society. Share it with others. **Love** develops through such reciprocation. With this **love**, narrow thoughts give way to broad-mindedness. We should develop broad-mindedness in this vast world.<sup>1</sup>

The root causes of pain and pleasure, **love** and hate, and materialistic desires are the temptations of the mind. "This is mine; that is thine." These dual feelings are the sole reasons for the desires or temptations of the mind. The reason for this dualism is selfishness. Man has become so selfish that he does not care for others or anything other than his own welfare. The main reason for these dual feelings of **love** and hatred is selfishness.

One who constantly thinks of his own body, his own family, his own wealth, and his own comfort is a truly selfish man. The only way to cleanse such a hard-hearted man is through **service** to humanity. It is necessary to recognize that a man's life is meant to be spent in selfless **service** and in the **service** of the Self. Such a life of **service** is not to gain either name or fame, to allow expression of one's ego, or in the furtherance of one's own ends. **Service** that is done for selfish gain is not **service** at all.<sup>2</sup>

————— « » —————

## ***Removal of Egoism***

### **How to Remove the Evil of Egoism**

The fruits of the tree of human life are sweet, but they are encased in the bitter skin of egoism and ignorance and have hard inedible seeds of desire, anger, pride, etc. One has to exercise one's intelligence to peel off the outer skin of ignorance, throw off the seeds of vice and wickedness and partake of the sweet kernel of life.

To remove the evil of egoism, **service** is the most efficient instrument. **Service** will also impress on the person doing **service**, the Unity of all mankind. He who dedicates his time, skill and strength to **service**, can never meet defeat, distress or disappointment, for **service** is its own reward. His word will be ever sweet and soft, his gestures ever revered and humble. He will have no foe, no fatigue, no fear.<sup>1</sup>

Man must get rid of the feeling that he is the doer. As long as the ego is dominating, the *Atma* or God-consciousness, will not be realized. The egoist cannot recognize the *Atma*. Therefore, first crush your ego. It is egoism that is the root cause of all man's troubles.<sup>2</sup>

### **Humility of Hanuman**

Take Hanuman as your example in *seva*. He served Rama, the Prince of Righteousness, regardless of obstacles of all types. Though he was strong, learned and virtuous, he had no trace of pride. When asked who he was by the *rakshasas* (demons) in Lanka into which he had entered so daringly, he described himself, in all humility, as the 'servant of Rama'. That is a fine example of uprooting of the ego which *seva* must bring about in us. No one can serve another while his ego is rampant. The attitudes of mutual help and selfless *service* develop the 'humanness' of man and help the unfoldment of the divinity latent in him.<sup>3</sup>

These little acts of *seva* can confer on you great spiritual benefit. Firstly, it will destroy your egoism. Pride will transform friends into enemies; it will keep even kinsmen afar; it will defeat all good schemes. *Seva* will develop in you the quality of humility. Humility will enable you to work in happy unison with others.<sup>4</sup>

There are many who come forward when there is a call for social *service*; but, most of them crave for publicity, seeking cameramen whenever they help others and very disappointed when they are not mentioned in newspapers! Such men push themselves forward, and climb into positions of authority, just to parade their importance before the public. They forget that *service* is worship, that each act of *service* is a flower placed at the feet of the Lord, and that, if the act is tainted with ego, it is as if the flower is infested with slimy insect pests! Who will contaminate the feet with such foul offering? Have no egotism while you serve the people of your district.<sup>5</sup>

« »

### ***Nishkama Karma***

#### **True Meaning of "Desireless" Actions**

In this world, man, with his body, senses and mind cannot be free from desires. But how is he to become *Anapeksha* (free from expectation)? When he performs actions, regarding himself as the doer, the actions become fetters that bind him. All actions that are performed with the feeling that they are intended as offerings to please the Divine, do not lead to bondage. They become *anapeksha* (desireless actions). One has to recognise that it is the divine principle in all beings which is getting all actions done through human beings as instruments. As long as man regards himself as *karthruthva* (the doer) and *bhokthruthva* (enjoyer) he cannot escape from the consequences of his actions.

When a man regards a certain piece of land as his, the crops grown on it will belong to him. The *Gita* teaches that when actions are done as offerings to God, they become "desireless" actions. Man has taken birth to perform his duties and not to enjoy power or assert his rights. When one's duty is performed, the right comes of its own accord. Men today fight for their "rights" and forget their duties. Hence discharge of duty comes first. It is through duty that man realises God.<sup>1</sup>

## ***Nishkama Karma Promotes the Love Principle***

*Nishkama karma* (desireless action) demonstrates and promotes the **love** principle. There is no greater spiritual *sadhana* than **service**. The tendency to distinguish between the spiritual path, the path of **service** and the path of knowledge and regard them as separate is wrong. The three are not distinct; they are one. *seva* (**service**) is spiritual knowledge. *Seva* is the primary means to acquire Divine Grace. Without being a devoted follower you cannot become a worthy leader. Without being a *kinkara* (one who is ready to do any work) you cannot become a *Sankara* (the Divine). Each one has to realise this truth. **Service** to society is the highest good. It adds to the joy of life and enhances its savour like salt.<sup>2</sup>

## **How to Achieve Spiritual Success?**

The most direct method of achieving spiritual success is *Nishkama karma*, action without any attention or attachment to the fruit therefrom, action as duty, action as dedication, action as worship.<sup>3</sup>

## **Offer All Actions to the Divine**

Man is bound by *karma*. When actions are performed as offerings to the Divine, they get sanctified. All actions that are natural to man should be converted by the spiritual aspirant into *karma yoga*. The distinction between *karma* and *karma yoga* should be clearly understood. Actions performed selfishly with egoism and desire for reward are *karmas* (that bind). Actions done unselfishly, without ego and any expectation of reward, become *karma yoga*. Each one can determine for himself whether he is a *karma yogi* or a *karma-brashta* (a wrong-doer) or a *karmaadhikari* (competent to perform *karmas*). Every man's life is filled with actions. But together with activities associated with self-interest, every man should also take part in **service** activities. Every man's primary aim should be to devote himself to selfless activities. Man has been endowed with the human body for rendering **service** to others. This is an ancient maxim. Through **service** to others, divinity can be experienced.<sup>4</sup>

————— « » —————

## ***Nishkama Karma and Anasakti Yoga***

Whether we are actively working in the world or have withdrawn from it, the most important consideration is not the work that we do or not do, but how effectively we have been able to uproot and destroy the *vasanas* (deep-seated tendencies) which lie hidden in our heart. The removal of these impurities, which have encased themselves so deeply, is the principal objective of all *sadhana* or spiritual practice. This is also the goal of all *Yoga*, namely to cleanse ourselves of all trace of *raga* and *dvesha*, the twin evils of attachment and hatred, which have harboured themselves within us.

The *Gita* has shown that if we can root out the entrenched tendencies that cling to our heart, we are free to perform any action without concern for the results. From that point on we will not be bound by any *karma* we become engaged in; in other words, we will be completely freed from the effects of our actions. People who do not understand this truth and end up renouncing all outside activities, become mired in sloth and idleness. But the *Gita* has repeatedly warned us that

there is no room at all for idleness in the world of the Spirit. What the *Gita* teaches is *anasakti yoga*, the *yoga* of disinterestedness or impersonal action, in which we remain totally indifferent to any personal interest in the work that we do and in the results that accrue from it. It means working with full concentration to the limits of our capacity for excellence, but dedicating all our actions to the **service** of God and remaining established in God-consciousness.

### ***Nishkama Karma and Anasakti Yoga***

*Anasakti yoga* goes even beyond the practice of *nishkama karma*, which has been emphasized in the second chapter of the *Gita*. *Nishkama karma* is the stage in which all our actions are performed without desiring or expecting any fruits from our labours. No person will be able to reach the stage of *nishkama karma* as long as his *vasanas* (impressions), which have arisen from past actions, are impediments to spiritual progress. A person must first remove the bad qualities which are associated with bad actions, by replacing them with good qualities which are associated with good actions. Then when he is firmly established in the stage of selfless **service**, wherein he performs only good actions, he can go to the stage of *nishkama karma* (desire-free actions), where he renounces the fruits of all his actions. From there he will rise to the stage of *anasakti yoga*.

The *Gita* proclaims that only through good deeds, through *sat karma*, the bad tendencies can be removed and our hearts purified. But it goes further. It asserts that the true purity of the heart can be achieved only by dedicating all our actions to the Lord. For example, when food is eaten after having been cooked and prepared in a number of different ways, it is still just ordinary food, and we are subject to the good or the bad effects of eating that food. However, if this food before being consumed is offered to God, then it becomes *prasadam* (blessed food), which becomes the sacred gift of the Lord. By the same token, all the activities performed by us during the day fall into the category of ordinary *karma*. But when we perform these same actions, even if they are simple acts, with the intention of making them an offering to God, devoting their results not to our own pleasure but the pleasure of the Lord, then they become *karma yoga* (communion through selfless action) as well as a *yajna*, a holy sacrifice. It is only through such *karma yoga* that we will be able to rid ourselves of all evil tendencies and make our hearts pure.

### **Offerings to God Should Be Pure and Sacred**

What should be the qualities of the actions we offer at the Lotus Feet of the Lord? Before we offer anything to the Lord we must make sure that it is pure, befitting and sacred. Then it will be a worthy offering to the Lord. For example, if we want to offer a rose to the Lord, we first select a beautiful, fragrant bloom. Then we remove the insects from the flower. Next we remove the thorns or any imperfect leaves from the stem and in a number of other ways we make our offering as beautiful and pure as possible. Every action we perform should be like this. Our actions must be saturated with the fragrance of **love** and sacredness and must be good and pure. This is the true *yoga* of action as laid down in the *Gita*.<sup>1</sup>

## ***Human Birth for Service to Society***

### **Gift from God**

This birth has been undertaken by you, for this very mission: the mission of crucifying the ego on the cross of compassion. An opportunity to be of some **service** to fellowmen comes to you as a gift from God. Serve with that sense of gratitude, for it is God who accepts it from you. Prepare yourselves for serving others, not only by learning the skills of first aid, the rules of the road, the technique of blood donation, the art of handling mikes and loudspeakers, wiring and fitting electric lines, etc., but, at the time when you are not actively engaged in some such activity, be busy with *japam*, *dhyanam* or *nama smaranam*; fill yourselves with God, lest you go dry and cruel.

Keep the mind busy with these, for once it strays into the by-lanes of the world, it will get infected with evil. Guard the tiny flame of sympathy with suffering, from the gusts of cynicism and miserly greed. **Service** to others is the duty you owe to society, which has given you the culture you fed on, the breath you live on, the warmth you crave for, and the security you seek. Man is born helpless, and is laid on the lap of society. Society gives him a name and a form, a personality, an individuality, an armour of beliefs, a playground of doubts and diversions. Man is the only animal that knows it has to die, and that yearns to survive death or bypass the fangs of death. Man alone has the strange thirst after the nectar that confers immortality. That is his special task, his special quest, the quest for the Truth that emancipates.

### **Let Your Hands Give**

Understand the deep significance of **service**; it will lead to your becoming ideal leaders, who are in great need today, all over the world. You fulfill yourselves, by sharing; you empty yourselves by grabbing. Do not behave in such a way that people are wary of you; be open, without harmful eyes, lascivious ears, false tongue, foul minds and pernicious hands. Your eyes give you away easily; look upon all without the guilt of lust or scandal; speak to all, of all, with **love** blooming out of adoration; let your hands give; never take what is not yours. Treat the distressed, the diseased, the old, the helpless, the child with great respect, and intelligent consideration.<sup>1</sup>

### **Formidable Task**

The years of life allotted to man is very short; the world in which he lives is very wide; time extends far behind and far beyond. What little man has to do here has to be done quickly, at the place that is assigned to him within the time that is allotted to him. And, man has such a formidable task before him; it is to fulfill it that he has come as man, exchanging for this human habitat, all the merit he has acquired during many past lives. The task is no less than the manifestation of the Divinity latent in man. The easiest and the most pleasant means by which this can be accomplished is *seva* – the **service** of man done in a spirit of dedication and devotion.<sup>2</sup>



## **I Am with You**

Whatever you do, wherever you are, remember that I am with you, in you; that will save you from conceit and error. That will make your *seva* worthy of the people you serve.<sup>3</sup>

Dedicate this life to the *service* of others, for the others are only visible representatives of the Lord who resides in you. I have come in order to repair the ancient highway leading man to God. Become sincere, skillful overseers, engineers and workmen and join Me. The *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Sastras* are the road I refer to. I have come to reveal them and revive them.<sup>4</sup>

« »

## ***Atmic Unity through Service***

### **God Exists Within Us**

Every human being is a manifestation of God. Every object manifests the divine. There is nothing in the world that is not a manifestation of God. Do not have any doubt that the cosmos is permeated by Hari (God) and everything is contained in HIM. There is not an atom in the universe that is not permeated by the Divine.<sup>1</sup>

We are trying to discover God searching for Him throughout the Universe, but we omit to investigate His existence within ourselves, as the very core and keystone of our Being. When you discover yourself all wailing ceases and you attain supreme happiness. This is real self-knowledge. You come to know that you are a spark of the divine Flame. Very soon, you realise that others too are sparks from the self-same fire. How then can hate or anger or envy or greed survive in the sunlight of this Vision?<sup>2</sup>

### **Broaden Your Vision**

*Seva* can instill more intensely than any other activity, the sense of the basic ONE.<sup>3</sup> *Service* saves you from the agony you get when another suffers; it broadens your vision, widens your awareness, deepens your compassion. All waves are on the same sea, from the same sea, merge in the same sea. *Seva* teaches you to be firm in this knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

No other *sadhana* can bring you into the incessant contemplation of the Oneness of all living beings. You feel another's pain as your own; you share another's success as your own. To see every one else as yourself and yourself in every one, that is the core of the *sadhana* of *seva*. Again, *seva* makes the ego languish for want of food. It makes you humble before the suffering of others, and when you rush to render help, you do not calculate how high or low his social or economic status is. The hardest heart is slowly softened into the softness of butter by the opportunities that the *seva dhal* offers.<sup>5</sup>

The best way to please Me is to see Me in all beings and serve them just as you would like to serve Me. That is the best form of worship, which will reach Me. The Lord may have two or two hundred vows; that is his Will. But the *bhaktha* (devotee) need have only one vow, to save himself – the vow of total surrender – of *saranagathi*. If you have full faith in the Divinity of every being, the attitude of surrender will automatically be fixed in you. Do not treat them as

*nara* (human); treat them as Narayana, the Lord Himself. You are not alleviating the distress of that other person; you are offering worship to the Lord, in that Form, in that body.<sup>6</sup>

### **Cleansing the Consciousness through Service**

Through activity man attains purity of consciousness. In fact man has to welcome activity with this end in view. And why strive for a pure consciousness? Imagine a well with polluted and muddy water so that the bottom of the well cannot be seen. Similarly within man's heart, deep down in his consciousness, we have the *Atma* (Divine Spirit). But it can be cognised only when the consciousness is clarified. Your imaginings, your inferences, your judgements and prejudices, your passions, emotions, and egoistic desires muddy the consciousness and make it opaque. How, then, can you become aware of the *Atma* that is at the very base? Through *seva* (**service**) rendered without any desire to placate one's ego and with only the well being of others in view is it possible to cleanse the consciousness and have the *Atma* revealed.

So, for whose sake are you performing *seva*? You are doing *seva* for your own sake. You are engaged in *seva* in order that you may become aware of the *Atma* in you, in order that you may discard the allurements of your ego, in order to know yourself and to get the answer to the question that torments you, namely, "Who am I." You do not serve others, you serve yourselves; you do not serve the world, you serve your own best interest.

You may ask: how is it possible to transcend the ego through *seva*? By saturating with **love**, work can be transformed into worship. When the work is offered to God, it gets sanctified into *puja* (sacramental worship). This makes it free from ego. It is also freed from the earthly desire for success and the earthly fear of failure. You feel that when you have done the work as best as you can, your *puja* is accomplished. It is then for Him who has accepted the *puja* to confer on you what He considers best. This attitude will make the work *nish-kama* (unattached). Regular practice of this discipline will render the consciousness clear and pure. It will promote *chitthasuddhi* (pure consciousness). Without this primary equipment how can man ever hope to scale spiritual heights?

Almost all the great sages of the past spent the early years of their lives in *sadhana* that would ensure a pure consciousness. However prospective your career might be, however much you might accumulate the wherewithal of a comfortable life, to whatever heights of authority you might have climbed through the exercise of your intelligence, your gains shall be nil unless your every activity is suffused with the Divine purity inherent in the consciousness.<sup>7</sup>

### **Cultivate Love, Give Up Hatred**

Be a bee, drinking the nectar of every flower; not the mosquito drinking blood and distributing disease in return. First, consider all as children of the Lord, as your own brothers and sisters; develop the quality of **love**, seek always the welfare of humanity. **Love** and you will be **loved** in return; hate will never be your lot if you promote **love** and look upon all with **love**. That is the one lesson I teach always; that is my secret too. If you want to attain Me, cultivate **love**, give up hatred, envy, anger, cynicism and falsehood. I do not ask that you should be a scholar or a recluse or an ascetic skilled in *japa* (recitation of holy Name) and *dhyana* (meditation). "Is your heart full of *prema* (**love**)?" That is all I examine.<sup>8</sup>

## ***Service Opportunity – A Gift from God***

### **Acknowledge God's Gift and Serve Others**

You have no reason to feel proud when you are able to help another, for, your skill or wealth or strength or courage or official position which gave you the chance to serve was the gift of God – whether you recognise it or not. You are only offering this God's gift to another God's gift, namely, the poor, the illiterate, the weak, the diseased, the grieving, the broken-hearted, who seek your help.<sup>1</sup>

He has endowed you with this wonderful body, this sweet tongue, this amazing instrument called mind. He has granted you intelligence, the powers of analysis and synthesis, the capacity to receive and give up, to remember and to forget. Acknowledge these gratefully and use them to the best advantage. Use them to see Him everywhere in all beings, to seek Him through all the ups and downs, the joys and griefs, the doubts and decisions of life.<sup>2</sup>

All are actors on the world stage, in His Play. Every atom is surcharged with His Power, His Might, His Glory. Every being is surcharged with His Bliss, His Beauty, His Goodness. Do not claim that you are using some skill or force which is specially yours; it has come out of His Grace, His Compassion.

### **Placing a Gift of God into the Hands of Another Gift of God**

People retire into solitude and attempt to contact God; but, solitude is best used for discovering and curing defects of character and conduct. To contact God, one has to open his eyes and serve brother man. He is the God Incarnate one can worship and adore to his heart's content. The greatest joy springs from the utmost sacrifice.<sup>3</sup>

When you offer milk to a hungry child, or a blanket to a shivering brother on the pavement, you are but placing a gift of God into the hands of another gift to God! You are reposing the gift of God in a repository of the Divine Principle! God serves; He allows you to claim that you have served! Without His Will, not a single blade of grass can quiver in the breeze. Fill every moment with gratitude to the Giver and the Recipient of all gifts.<sup>4</sup>

### **Offering Gratitude to God**

You are referring to the gift of food as *anna-dana* (the charity of food). But, no one has the authority to give in charity what has been given by God or be proud of it or even to feel that he has given something in charity. God gave the rains, God fostered the sapling and God ripened the grain; what right have you to call it yours and give it in charity? It is not *dana* (charity) that you do; you are only offering gratitude to God; you are sanctifying the grain you have harvested by offering the food prepared out of it to these Narayanas (Gods in human form). Call it Narayana *seva*! That will be more correct.<sup>5</sup>

Every passing minute is a precious gift from God, which you have to use for the best and most lasting benefit. Be happy that you can do so by serving others and catering to their urgent needs. Do not fritter away the minutes in loose talk, retelling scandal, poring over debilitating novels, witnessing films, or mixing with flippant companions. Do not be enslaved by your

senses, but bravely resist their demands for indiscriminate freedom. You have the unfailing spring of *ananda* in the *Atma*, which is your reality; why then ruin your health, your peace of mind, running after senses which drag you through the objective world in pursuit of trivial transient joys? <sup>6</sup>

« »

### ***Promote Love and Compassion***

When money, scholarship, cleverness and intelligence are possessed by persons in whom *Rajas* (passion, emotion, extrovert qualities) predominates, they promote hatred, ambition and lust. When possessed by persons in whom *thamas* (sloth, dullness, conceit) predominates, they promote miserliness, greed and envy. When possessed by persons in whom *sathwa* (equanimity, balance, purity) predominates, they promote **love**, compassion, urge to serve, the unity of all mankind and World Peace. <sup>1</sup>

« »

### ***Charity and Compassion***

#### **God Always Observes Your Feelings**

Even a small act of charity will assume immense significance in the eyes of God, if it is done with purity of heart. One teaspoonful of cow's milk is better than barrels of donkey's milk. God is pleased even if you offer a teaspoonful of milk with **love**. God always observes your feelings. God's valuation is always perfect; none can match Him in this respect. <sup>1</sup>

#### **True Compassion Should Emanate from the Heart**

What is *karuna* (compassion)? Seeing a person in distress and expressing verbally sympathy is not compassion. Compassion must express itself in action to relieve the suffering. Nor should you adopt an attitude of aloofness or indifference on the plea that each one is suffering for his own folly. Though suffering may be due to one's mistakes – mistakes to which everyone is prone – we should seek to remedy such suffering just as we try to get rid of our own suffering. Some people try to show off their sympathy by setting up charitable institutions like hospitals, etc.

True compassion should emanate from the heart. It should not find expression in outward manifestations that only reveal one's vanity. In the Sathya Sai Organisations there is no place for such demonstrations of vanity. Everything that is done to help the poor or the suffering should be based on the feelings coming from the heart and appealing to the hearts of those who are helped. <sup>2</sup>

## *Contentment*

### **Who Is the Richest Man in the World?**

**Serve all** with **love**. Consider **service** to man as **service** to God. When it comes to rendering **service**, do not observe any differences. Do not consider that you are rich and the other man is poor. Who is the richest man in the world? The one who has contentment is the richest man in the world. Who is the poorest man? The one who has many desires is the poorest man. Cut short your desires. It is said, “Less luggage more comfort make travel a pleasure.” You can have a comfortable journey of life only when you reduce the luggage of your desires. The lesser the desires, the greater will be the will power. The body has death but not the mind. The mind is responsible for everything. So, fill your mind with pure and selfless thoughts. Then you will attain the state of Illumination Mind. Gradually, you will cross Illumination Mind and attain Over Mind. In *Vedantic* parlance, this is known as the state of *amanaska* (non-existence of mind). Once the mind is withdrawn, only the principle of the *Atma*, i.e. the Superconsciousness exists.<sup>1</sup>

## *Sacrifice*

### **Renounce Pride**

*Thyaga* (the spirit of sacrifice) is essential for rendering dedicated **service**. Pride is the first evil trait that has to be renounced. Getting rid of bad qualities is real sacrifice; it is also *yoga* (spiritual communion). This is the message of *Bharathiya* (Indian) culture. As this is not being properly conveyed to the people, they tend to go astray and take to wrong paths. They do not realise that to whomsoever they may be doing **service**, they are indeed serving the Divine in various human forms. Those who serve have to cherish this sublime and sacred feeling. They must strive to see God in everyone.<sup>1</sup>

## *Pure Mind and Heart*

When you go into the qualifications needed for **seva**, you will know that a pure heart – uncontaminated by conceit, greed, envy, hatred or competition is essential; also, faith in God, as the spring of vitality, virtue, and justice. **Seva** is the worship you offer to the God in the heart of everyone. Do not ask another which State you belong to, or which caste or creed you profess.

See your favourite Form of God in that other person; as a matter of fact, he is not ‘other’ at all. It is His image, as much as you are. You are not helping some ‘one individual’; you are adoring Me, in him. I am before you in that Form; so, what room is there for the ego in you to raise its hood? Duty is God; Work is worship. Even the tiniest work is a flower placed at the Feet

of God. Approach the pilgrims who come here for the Festival with a heart filled with treasure of **love**.<sup>1</sup>

As a preliminary to **seva** you have to win purity of heart. You must examine your motives and skills, your intentions and qualifications, and discover for yourself what you hope to achieve through the **seva**.<sup>2</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Pure Motives While Rendering Service***

It is not enough to appear to do right actions. Your motives and impulses must also be pure and unselfish. It is only when your motives are pure that the Divine will extend His grace. Whatever **service** you render, it must be unsullied. The motive is all important. The form of the action does not matter. Without pure impulses, actions get tainted at the source. If you are a good man, your actions will necessarily be good.<sup>1</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Purity of Heart***

For the purification of the heart, everyone must undertake selfless **service**. Attachments and aversions, which pollute the mind, should be eschewed by concentrating on **seva**. It is only when the heart is pure that selfless **service** can be performed. Hence both bodily and mental purity are essential for a good devotee.<sup>1</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Sathya Sai Organisation***

#### **You are Born to Serve Society**

**Service** is the life breath of the Sathya Sai Organization. Remember the truth that you are born to serve society. Make no distinction whatsoever in rendering **service**. Serve your parents, brothers, friends, and even beggars alike. Divine grace will flow in abundance only when you serve with the spirit of humility and equality.

**Service** is the easiest path to attain divine grace. Offer **service** and receive the **love** of God. **Love** and **service** are like two wings by which man can soar to higher levels of consciousness. If you have the spirit of **love** and **service**, divine grace will follow you like a shadow wherever you may be, be it in the forest or in the sky, village or city, river or mountain cliff.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Uniqueness of the Sathya Sai Organisation**

Members of the **seva dhal** should overcome the sense of ‘mine’ and ‘thine’. When they embark on **service** activities, they should regard it as a privilege to serve others and look upon it as a form of worship of the Divine. They should look upon **service** to society as the means of

finding self-fulfillment in life. They should face whatever problems may arise with faith and courage and carry on their **service** activities without fanfare in a spirit of humility and dedication.

### **Bharath Should be Made the Land of *Thyaga***

In the Sai Organisation there is no room for distinctions of race, religion, caste, class, or community. All should regard themselves as the children of one God. When they are united by this sense of divine kinship, they will act with **love** towards all. They should shed all narrow and limited ideas and engage themselves in **service** with a heart full of **love** for all. True *seva* (selfless **service**) can come only out of a pure and loving heart.

There are any number of **service** organisations in the world. The uniqueness of the Sathya Sai *Seva* Organisation consists in the fact that it regards *seva* as a form of **service** to the Divinity that is in each being. The bliss that is derived from such **service** is incomparable. It is a spiritual experience.

You should not be content with what you have accomplished so far. You should do a great deal more to make this great country an exemplar to the world of the great ideals of its seers and sages. Bharath should be made the land of *thyaga* (sacrifice) and not *bhoga* (indulgence in luxury). *Thyaga* is *yoga*. *Bhoga* is *roga* (disease). To live up to the ideal of *thyaga* is your duty today.<sup>2</sup>

### **The First Requisite Is Love and Fellow-Feelings**

In rendering *seva* (selfless **service**), members of the Sai *Seva Dhal* should not think that their services should be confined to the poor and the destitute. There is no need to make any artificial distinction between the rich and the poor in the sphere of **service**. What matters is the **service** done to a person that needs it. There may be servants who attend to the needs of the well-to-do. But when you are out to render **service**, your concern should only be with what kind of **service** is required, when and where, and not the status or position of the person concerned. The first requisite is a genuine spirit of **love** and fellow-feeling. If there is no feeling of kindness and compassion, whatever **service** that is done becomes an artificial exercise, done for getting publicity or recognition. Sai *sevaks* (volunteers) do not need name or position. Ostentation in rendering **service** is totally out of place. It will only inflate the ego. You should render **service** to the limit of your capacity, neither more nor less.

The first quality every member of the Sathya Sai *Seva* Organisation should have is firm faith in God. This faith must be based on the awareness that God is Omnipresent. The Divine pervades everything in the Universe. This may not be understood by everyone. Some may not agree that the Divine is Omnipresent. But whether they accept this fact or not, the truth is, evidence of the presence of God can be found wherever one turns.<sup>3</sup>

### **No Financial Involvement**

Nowadays even avowedly spiritual organisations are involved in business. Sathya Sai organisations should never become such commercial institutions. The only kind of commerce in which they can indulge is from *heart-to-heart*, from *love-to-love*. It is in such a sublime exchange that they should take part. They should have no financial or other material involvement. Organisations that get entangled in money or property do not grow. We should be

concerned with genuine, God-oriented, heart-to-heart association. *Seva* must be done hand in hand in comradeship. This will demonstrate the unity of the Cosmic Being. The heart does not blossom out through the mere study of books or by listening to discourses. It is only the cultivation of **love** that breaks the knots binding the heart. One who does no **service** himself has no right to call upon others to serve. The right to speak has to be earned by doing **service**. *Seva* must be regarded as *sadhana* and **service** rendered to any one must be looked upon as **service** to God. To develop such an attitude of spontaneous **love** towards those whom one serves should be the primary aim of Sai Organisations.<sup>4</sup>

### **Everything Is Free in the Sathya Sai Organisation**

When the leaders are good and competent, the whole world will run smoothly. Unfortunately, today, the world has come to this sad state due to lack of proper leadership. There should be good leaders in all fields – education, politics, religion, spirituality, etc. But, nowadays, you rarely find good leaders in any field. Wherever you see, every human endeavour is polluted with the craze for money. Everything is business.

However, the Sri Sathya Sai Organisations have no such problems. Everything is free in our organisations. Education from 1st standard to the PhD level is totally free. The same is the case with our hospitals. Our general hospitals and super speciality hospitals are providing medical services totally free of cost. The hospitals outside charge three to four lakhs of rupees for performing a heart operation. How can the poor people mobilise such a huge amount? It is beyond their means. The medical services including the specialist services are totally free in our hospitals. The poor people come to our hospitals for treatment, having not even a rupee in their pocket, and return to their places completely cured of their diseases. We should render all services free of cost. I wish that all our *Seva Dal* and college students should render free **service**. Then only they will be able to attain Swami's grace. A word of caution: you may forget anything, but never forget chanting the divine name.<sup>5</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Serve the Daridra Narayana***

#### **Service to Daridra Narayana Is the Highest Sadhana**

God has two forms – Lakshmi-Narayana and Daridra-Narayana. Most people prefer to worship Lakshmi-Narayana for ensuring their personal prosperity and welfare, but few chose to worship Daridra-Narayana (the Lord in the form of the poor and the forlorn). Members of the Sai Organisations should think only of **service** to Daridra-Narayana. If the hungry are fed, they are easily satisfied. **Service** to Daridra-Narayana can never go waste. It is the highest form of *sadhana*. Man is the product of the society and **service** to society is real **service** to God. Such **service** should be rendered without regard to caste, creed, race or nationality. The essence of all religions is one and the same, like the current that serves many different purposes but is the same energy.<sup>1</sup>



## People Should Feel they are Serving the Narayana

When feeding the poor, the rich people think that they are rendering **service** to Daridra Narayana. Who is Daridra Narayana? People think that anyone who is without food, clothing or shelter is a Daridra Narayana. But in rendering **service** to the poor, people should feel that they are serving the Narayana (the Lord) who dwells in the hearts of the poor. To endow this form (of Daridra Narayana) to the formless Divine and serve men in this way is the means of sanctifying one's actions and redeeming one's life. God will dwell in the hearts of those who are filled with thoughts of consideration for the poor and who are eager to serve them.

Time is infinitely precious. Hence the performance of good deeds should not be put off to another day. Time waits for no one. Hence both the body and the time should be utilised for doing sacred actions.

There should be no feeling of condescension in rendering **service**. Regard yourself as a devoted servant ready to do any task. **Service** activities done in this spirit will lead to God realisation by extinguishing the ego.

There is no meaning in preaching spirituality to a starving man. Feed the hungry. Offer solace and encouragement to those in distress and despair. The educated should try to teach the illiterate and open the minds of the ignorant to wider vistas of knowledge. The educated persons may be doctors, lawyers or businessmen. Doctors should be ready to render free medical **service** to the poor. Lawyers should be helpful to those who are in need of legal aid but who cannot afford to pay for their services. Businessmen should be content to keep a reasonable income for their needs and utilize the surplus for charitable purposes. It is rare to find such persons. The wealthy should realise that money should be earned by righteous means and used for right purposes. True happiness can be got only from wealth acquired by fair means. Money got through exploitation of others will lead to suffering in one way or another.<sup>2</sup>

## Never Give Money to Beggars

Today if we find beggars in the streets, it is because we have encouraged them by giving money. Never give money to beggars. If they are in need of food or clothes, you can certainly give them. But do not encourage the practice of begging.<sup>3</sup>

————— « » —————

## *Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa*

### Do Not Be Overwhelmed by Difficulties

In serving society, they should bear in mind the four ideals of *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi* and *prema*. **Service** is like a bulb, which cannot shed light unless there is a wire to convey the current. *Sathyam* is the current. *Dharma* is the wire through which the current flows. When the wire of *dharma* is connected to the bulb of *santhi*, then you have the light of **love**.

You may encounter difficulties in rendering **service**. But do not be overwhelmed by them. The Pandavas became immortal because of the sufferings they underwent for the sake of *dharma*. Jesus sacrificed His life for the sake of those whom he came to serve. Prophet

Mohammed had to face similar troubles in His mission. Do not aspire for comfort. Greater than all other forms of worship is *seva* (**service** to one's fellowmen) done in an unselfish and dedicated spirit. There is an element of selfishness in forms of worship like *japa*, *dhyana*. But when **service** is done spontaneously, it is its own reward. It must be done as an offering to God.<sup>1</sup>

Have firm faith that **service** is the greatest spiritual exercise. There cannot be a greater spiritual exercise than **service**. You should not come forward to criticize and comment about the bad things in others. Criticism of others is a very great sin. Criticism of others is like a great disease. It is an incurable disease. There is no medicine at all for this disease. Criticism of others is like cancer. Do not criticize, comment, or make remarks about others at any time. We get into various difficulties by criticizing others. Be at a distance from criticism of others.<sup>2</sup>

« »

## *Service in Daily Life*

### **Work Conscientiously Every Minute of the Day**

It is mere weakness to give the silly excuse that you have no time for **service** because you are so busy with your duties. Cleaning streets in the villages is not the only **service** available to you. Discharging your duties in a righteous manner is, in itself, a **service**. One should regard **service** as performing one's duties properly and working enough to justify the pay one gets.

If a person works conscientiously every minute of the day, doing the job that he is hired to do, that is **service**. Today, however, you can hardly find anyone, from a labourer to an executive, whose work is worth the pay he gets. Employees are always asking for more money, but they never ask whether or not they are working enough for the pay they are already receiving. This is betrayal of a trust. Whose money is this? This is the people's money. If you cheat people in this manner, it is a sin.

### **Do Not Exploit People**

When a teacher is teaching his students genuinely and properly, that is **service**. A businessman need not sweep the streets. If he conducts his business in a moral way, that itself is **service**. If he does not exploit people for more profits, that is **service**. When a person has such a selfless feeling, he automatically becomes the "servant." One should lead one's life to one's own mental satisfaction. He should contemplate his behavior to determine whether or not it is up to his satisfaction.

You can please Sai only by performing your duties to the fullest, serving society whenever and wherever you get the opportunity. **Service** is not limited to serving individuals. Serving society is also **service**. Any action that benefits the country is **service**. One should experience Divinity in the **service**. For serving, you need not have anybody's shelter, or protection, or advice. Wherever you feel the need, serve. There is no distinction between acts of **service**. It is immaterial whether you are serving the poor or the rich. You should be able to serve anyone, at any place, and under any circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

## *Service to Man is Service to God*

### **Use Body to Perform Right Actions**

The most important thing to be noted today is that the body has been given to man for the performance of right action. Every person has to discharge his duties in life. It is a sin to ignore one's duties.

When everyone performs his duties, the nation will prosper. Perform your duties, without regard to what others say or do. Engage yourselves in **service** activity. Consider social **service** as **service** to God. To earn the **love** of God, this is the easiest way. The best way to **love** God is to **love all** and **serve all**. Your entire life will be sanctified thereby.<sup>1</sup>

### **Transform Life through Service**

You have to transform your life through **service**. You should give no room for arrogance or self-interest to the slightest extent in your **service** activities. Install in your heart the feeling that the **service** you render to anyone is **service** to God. Only then does **service** to man become **service** to *Madhava* (God).<sup>2</sup>

### **I Am In All**

You long for serving Me. Let Me tell you, serving those who serve Me gives Me as much satisfaction as serving Me. Serving anyone is serving Me, for, I am in all. The relief and joy that you give to the sick and the sad, reach Me, for I am in their hearts, and I am the One they call out for. God has no need of your **service**; does he suffer from pain in the legs, or ache in the stomach? Try to serve the godly; be *dasanudasas* – servant of the servants of the Lord. The **service** of man is the only means by which you can serve God.<sup>3</sup>

## *Nine Steps in Spiritual Sadhana*

Of the nine steps in spiritual *sadhana*, as laid down in the *Bhakthi Sutras* (aphorisms on devotion), leading to the realisation of the self, *dhasyam*, or the attitude of a servant to do **seva**, is quite near the final goal; it is the eighth step. The study of texts, the renouncing of wealth in charity, the repetition of the name or the chanting of psalms and hymns may be good exercises to sanctify the mind and to avoid falling into evil ways and ruinous pastimes, but they seldom purify the consciousness of man. Instead they serve mostly to bloat the ego and instill pride and promote a competitive craving for superiority. You may be sitting in the *bhajan* hall and loudly singing in chorus, but your mind may get involved in anxiety about the pair of sandals you left outside the hall. Always at the back of the mind there is fear of the loss of the sandals; this vitiates the *bhajan* and makes it a barren show.

The *sadhana* of **seva** is quite distinct. In **seva** you devote all your energy and attention to the task at hand, for it is a dedicated task. You forget the body and ignore its demands. You set aside

your individuality and its prestige and perquisites. You pluck your ego by its roots and cast it away. You give up your status, conceit, your name and form and keep all *chitha* (thought) pure. Whatever the task you are performing, renounce your personal individuality and share its travails and troubles, its fruits and benefits, with God. You need not bring in God from somewhere outside you; He is in you, all the while. This truth must be your own discovery, your own treasure, your own strength. This is the grand purpose of the *Seva Dhal*. That is the reason why the *Seva Dhal* is assigned a high place in the Sathya Sai Organisation.<sup>1</sup>

« »

## ***Bliss***

### **Selfless Love Is the Source of Real Bliss**

There is no greater quality in man than selfless **love**, which expresses itself in **service** to others. Such **love** can be the source of real bliss. The relationship between *karma* and *karma yoga* should be properly understood. Ordinary *karma* (action) done with attachment or desires causes bondage. But desireless, selfless action becomes *karma yoga*. Our life should become a *yoga* (Divine Communion) rather than a *roga* (disease).

Today most of our actions result in *roga* because they are related to sensuous pleasures. Freedom from this disease can be obtained by pursuing the spiritual path. The spiritual path does not consist merely in singing *bhajans* (devotional songs) or reciting hymns. These are good deeds. Only actions performed as a complete offering to the Divine can be regarded as spiritual. The man who is in a state of ignorance about the Self is like the bud of a flower that has not yet blossomed. When the flower blossoms, it sheds its fragrance all round. Likewise, the man who has realised the Divinity within him becomes a source of light and strength.<sup>1</sup>

« »

## ***Selflessness***

The fulfillment of human life consists in the **service** that man renders, without any thought of return, in an attitude of selflessness. **Service** rendered in this spirit sheds light in the dark interior of man, it widens the heart, it purifies the impulses and confers lasting *Anandha*.<sup>1</sup>

True *seva* is the **service** rendered to one's fellowmen with kindness and selflessness. The right royal path to the home of peace is to perform *seva* with a sense of affection and friendliness.<sup>2</sup> If we have filled ourselves with selfishness, jealousy, and such ill feelings, we will not be able to do any good **service**. If there is nothing in a vessel, it is possible to fill it with some good things. Therefore, in the very first instance, empty yourselves of all bad feelings and fill your hearts with **love** and selflessness. A heart soaked in **love** alone is a sacred heart. Whatever **service** we render should be done with a sense of selflessness, and then we may reach the highest stage in life. The **service** done may be a small one, but when it is done with a large heart, it can yield great results.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Do Not Seek Publicity***

Do not think of the fame or praise you win; think of the good that people derive. Do not crave for publicity; crave for the joy that shines in the faces of the people whom you help. **Seva** (selfless **service**) brings you nearer to Me. The flower that is your heart gets fragrance by means of the **seva** you do, and so it becomes more acceptable to Me. **Love** is the essence of that fragrance.<sup>1</sup> While rendering **service**, there should not be any pomposity. Develop a broad heart and foster **love** in it.<sup>2</sup>

Do not serve for the sake of reward, attracting attention, or earning gratitude, or from a sense of pride at your own superiority in skill, wealth, status or authority. Serve because you are urged by **love**. When you succeed, ascribe the success to the Grace of God, who urged you on, as **love** within you. When you fail, ascribe the failure to your own inadequacy, insincerity or ignorance. Examine the springs of action, disinfect them from all trace of ego. Do not throw the blame on the recipients of the **seva**, or on your collaborators and co-workers, or on God.<sup>3</sup>

Do not publish these acts of sympathy; do them spontaneously without fanfare. That is more precious than demonstrating your **service** with the help of headlines and photographs. These reduce the worth of deeds of compassion.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Attitude while Doing Service***

Your **seva** will be judged with reference to the mental attitude accompanying it. So, whatever work is allotted, do it with fervour, understanding and reverence. In **seva** there can be no high or low, for Sai is in all. Sai receives your **seva**, to whomsoever you may offer it. Do not be sad that you have been posted on some duty that keeps you far from Me. Know that I am nearest to him who calls on Me and sees Me in all beings.<sup>1</sup>

It is the attitude that is essential. The particular item of **service** might be small. You may not get a chance to partake in some gigantic scheme of **service** through which millions may be benefitted; you can lift a lame lamb over a stile, or, lead a blind child across a busy road. That too is an act of worship.<sup>2</sup>

A *sevak* must be neither elated nor dejected; he must adhere to the middle path. When Rama asked Hanuman to proceed towards the Southern region and described the dangers of the route, he was not dejected; when He gave him the ring to be handed over to Sita, he was not elated that he had been chosen for the supreme task and given the glorious chance. He just obeyed. Sufficient unto him was the order of his Master, “Go.” Hanuman is the ideal volunteer; efficient, humble, silent, serviceable, intelligent, eager, devoted.<sup>3</sup>

## ***Broaden the Heart***

**Seva** brings out all that is great in man. It broadens the heart and widens one's vision. It fills one with joy. It promotes unity. It proclaims the truth of the Spirit. It drives out all the evil qualities in a man. It must be regarded as a great spiritual discipline. You are born to serve, not to dominate. Everyone in the world is a servant and not a master. All relationships – husband and wife, mother and child, the employer and employee are based on mutual **service**. The world is progressing because of such mutual **service**. If the principle of **service** did not operate, the world would come to a halt. Do you regard an “officer” as a superior? It is not so. Even he is a servant. It is only when man is filled with the spirit of **service** that his divine nature is revealed. He then experiences the peace that passeth understanding.

What is the reason for the lack of peace in the world today? It is because there is no harmony in thought, word and deed in the lives of the people. Peace must begin in the family, in the home. When there is understanding and harmony in the family, peace will spread to the community and from there to the nation and the world. Hence unity is the primary need today. Unity confers joy and peace. Transformation must begin with the individual. When the individual changes, the world will change. This transformation has to take place in the minds of men. Right thoughts will lead to right actions. That is why the scriptures have declared that the mind is the cause of man's bondage or liberation.<sup>1</sup>

## ***Detachment***

### **Secure Divine Love through Detachment**

Dedicate every action to the Divine in a spirit of detachment. Divine **love** can be secured only by dedicated **service** to the Divine. God responds bounteously to what you offer. Kuchela got, in return for a handful of parched rice given to Krishna, limitless prosperity. Draupadi was rewarded likewise. How can you expect God to **love** you if you do not **love** God? God's grace is like a bank. You can draw money from that bank only to the extent to which you have built up deposits through *thyaga* (sacrifice). Earn God's grace through **love** and sacrifice.<sup>1</sup>

### **Follow Their Teachings**

If the name of Jesus is glorified all over the world today, it is because of His boundless **love**. He served the lowly and the lost, and in the end, offered his life itself as a sacrifice. How many of those, who call themselves devotees of Jesus, are following His teachings? Those who claim to worship Rama, how far are they following His example? How many professed devotees of Krishna are living up to His teachings? There are many who claim to be Sai devotees. How many of them are following the message of Sai? If everyone seeks the answer within himself, he will see that it is a zero. Anyone who claims to be a Sai devotee should dedicate his life to Sai ideals. That is true devotion and real penance. That is the hallmark of humanness. It will be reflected in **love**, which will find expression in compassion that generates real *ananda* (bliss).

The greatest quality in every man is **love**. When **love** is absent, evil qualities like hatred and jealousy rear their heads. Make **love** the breath of your life.<sup>2</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Not Selfishness, Rather Selflessness***

A life without **love** is meaningless. The more you **love**, the more it grows. True **love** should be distinguished from attachment either to persons or things. Attachment is based on selfishness. **Love** is based on selflessness. **Love** is the fruit that is born from the flower of your good deeds. Only when we engage ourselves in selfless **service** can we experience the essence of this pure **love**.<sup>1</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Hands that Serve are Greater than the Lips that Pray***

*Embodiments of Love!* Remember that the hands that serve are greater than the lips that pray. Dedicate yourselves to **service** to all. Real humanness consists in the spirit of **service**. Quantity does not matter; it is the quality of **service** that counts.<sup>1</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Humility***

When work is sublimated into worship, defeat and disappointment will not dishearten. Success will not promote pride; it will lead to humility and gratitude for grace. Work performed as duty, as due from us to society brings the reward of joy, for we have utilised the knowledge and skill, endowed by God through society, for serving society itself.<sup>1</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Ingratitude Is a Grievous Sin***

If you desire a safe and peaceful future, you have to mould your actions properly in the present. In this, **service** has a great role. Whether you perform any kind of worship or not, when you render selfless **service**, you will be able to experience the bliss of Divine **love**. **Service** demonstrates the unity that underlies the apparent diversity. To realise your own inherent divinity, **service** to the people is the best kind of *sadhana*. What is so great about living for one's own sake? Only the man who lives for others can be said to live truly.

Man is a creature of society and owes everything to society. Hence he should be grateful to it for what all he has received from it. Gratitude is a supreme virtue. Ingratitude is a grievous sin. It will deprive a man of his God-given sight. There is no means of atonement for the ungrateful person. If you wish to safeguard your future, you have to be grateful to those who have helped you in your difficulties and needs in the present.<sup>1</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Religion Develops the Human Personality***

Unity, fellow-feeling and devotion are essential for every human being. To promote these sacred qualities in mankind, some great souls sought to establish different religions. Religion is not a restrictive concept. Religion is intended to develop the human personality and indicate the basic guidelines for right living. Religion brings out the humanness in man and enables him to live in harmony with his fellowmen. It provides the link between the individual and the Divine. It demonstrates the unity that underlies the diversity in the world.

**Love**, sacrifice, **service**, and righteousness are the four limbs of Religion. Religion brings out the divine and sublime feelings in man and makes him serve society. It evokes all that is great, blissful and good in men and demonstrates the unity of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

————— « » —————

### ***Service Is the Only Path to Self-Realisation***

Man justifies himself and proves his claim to be a worthy individual only through **seva** (**service**), undertaken sincerely, selflessly, and with no thought of worldly reward. **Seva** is the only path to self-realization. It is the highest expression of **love** and of the sacrifice **love** involves. You have to expend yourselves in **seva** unto the very last breath. You cannot retire after a certain years of **seva** or when you reach a certain age. When you have such a Lord and Master, there should be no dearth of *sevaks* (servants). The servants are the glory of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>



## *Temples*

### **Real Temple Is One's Own Body**

It is no doubt, good to build temples. But the real temple is one's own body. Without purifying one's self, what use is there in building temples? Temples built at the cost of crores of rupees are not properly maintained. Swarms of beggars ruin the surroundings of the temples.

### **Service to Society Is Everyone's Primary Duty**

How much better would it be if the crores of rupees spent on erecting temples are used for improving the condition of the poor, the destitute and the helpless? Institutions for helping the indigent unfortunates are more useful than edifices for worshipping some deities. To give a helping hand to the helpless is real **service**. **Love** towards one's fellow beings is the best spiritual discipline. Misuse of money is a great evil. Wealth must be used only for good purposes. Money is capable of leading man to any place, good or bad. Hence he should take care to see that wealth does not lead him to bad ways, or bring a bad name to this great country.

By limiting their desires and reducing the amenities required for comfortable living, the wealthy should devote themselves to the **service** of the poor and the forlorn. Seek to derive happiness from **service** to your fellowmen. Happiness is union with God. The Sathya Sai Organisations should not be content with conducting *bhajans* (group singing of devotional songs). Their motto should be *seva* (selfless **service**) all the time. They should take up every form of activity and give it a spiritual meaning. It is only those who are imbued with the spirit of selfless **service** that are fit to become leaders of the nation.<sup>1</sup>

### **Temples are Useful Only as Reminders**

Why should you build temples? The ideal is to make your hearts the temples for the Divine to dwell. But this is not possible for everybody. Temples in stone are reminders of the existence of God. When you see a lawyer you are reminded of your legal troubles. When you see a doctor you think of your illness. Likewise, when you see a temple, you are reminded of God.

Temples are useful only as reminders. But true worship consists in heartfelt devotion to the God within each one. Purifying this temple of your heart, you must dedicate your life to **service**. It is such dedicated **service**, done in the spirit of *sadhana*, which distinguishes the Sathya Sai Organisations from other spiritual organisations. Innumerable Sai devotees – men and women, young and old – are rendering **service** in various forms out of their **love** of Sai. People talk about Swami's *vibhuthi* (sacred ash) and Swami's miracles. But the real miracle is Swami's boundless **love**. It is this **love** that is inspiring countless devotees to engage themselves in selfless **service**.<sup>2</sup>

### ***The Story of Abou Ben Adhem***

Students might have heard the story of Abou Ben Adhem who always offered *sarva bhuta daya pushpam* (compassion on all beings) to the Lord. Everyday he used to go round the streets to serve the destitute and the handicapped and return home late in the night. One night when he returned home, he found in his bedroom an angel writing something. When he asked her as to what she was writing, she replied that she was making a list of those who loved God. She replied in the negative when he asked her if his name was there in that list. The following night, when he returned home, he again found the angel writing something. He queried, “Mother, what is it that you are writing now?” She said, “Son, I am writing the names of those who are dear to God.” He again wanted to know if his name figured in the list. She replied that his name was on the top of this list.

The sum and substance of this story is that God is pleased when you serve your fellow human beings. The scriptures have prescribed nine paths of devotion, namely, *sravanam* (listening to the Lord’s stories), *kirtanam* (singing His glories), *vishnusmaranam* (remembrance of the Lord’s name), *pada sevanam* (**service** to the Lord’s Lotus Feet), *archanam* (worship), *vandanam* (salutation), *dasyam* (servitude), *sneham* (friendship), *atmanivedanam* (offering oneself to the Lord) i.e., complete self-surrender. But the path of **service** is the greatest of all.

*Neither by penance nor by pilgrimages  
Nor by going through the sacred texts  
Can one cross the ocean of worldly life;  
One can redeem one’s life only through **service**.  
(Sanskrit Verse).*

Abou Ben Adhem became the recipient of God’s **love** because he spent all his time in the **service** of his fellowmen. God loves all, for He is the embodiment of **love**. But He will give Himself to those who show compassion to all beings.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Transform Work into Worship***

#### **Do Service With Divine Feelings**

Work, worship, and wisdom all begin with **service**. No matter what **service** it is, if it is done with **love** and divine feelings, it becomes *upasana* (worship).<sup>1</sup>

#### **Only Service Can Confer Bliss**

Embodiments of Love! People worship God with devotion and sincerity, but God is not satisfied with external worship. You should serve society. Only **service** can confer bliss on you.

By rendering **service** to society, not only can you alleviate the sufferings of the people, but you can also bring about transformation in their lives. *Yad bhavam tad bhavati* (as is the feeling, so is the result). If you serve with sacred feelings, it is bound to yield sacred results. Serve society to your utmost capacity.<sup>2</sup>

### **My Life Is Love**

Promote **love** in your hearts and share it with others. That is the best form of worship. **Love** is the only property of Sai. My life is **love**. That is what I offer to one and all. I go on giving, giving. But to what extent are you putting into practice Swami's teachings? Practise silence for at least ten minutes in a day. Meditate on Swami's teachings at that time. Realise that in this transient world the Eternal is immanent. Hold fast to God. Experience the bliss of union with the Divine. Make **love** your life-breath. With **love** of God in their hearts the ancient sages could transform even the wild animals in the forests.<sup>3</sup>

### **Transform Daily Chores into Acts of Worship**

One can transform every act in daily life as worship of the Divine. Daily chores like making *chappatis* can be transformed into acts of worship of the Divine. Since the body is an instrument, you can make God happy through this instrument and enjoy happiness yourself in the process. In this way you practise meditation in your daily duties.<sup>4</sup>

— « » —

## **Conclusion**

### **The Path of Disinterested Action**

The *Bhagavad Gita* advises that **service** to the *sanga* (society) is the highest *seva* (**service**), as well as the most beneficial *sadhana* (spiritual discipline). You cannot run away from this obligation; you have to use the community of men wherein you are born for sublimating your egoism and saving yourself.<sup>1</sup>

The *Bhagavad Gita* has proclaimed the path of disinterested action the royal road to perfection. It exhorts man not to crave for the fruits of action and merely perform one's duties in a detached manner, leaving the results thereof to the Lord. God does not enjoin man to do any work in particular. He is only the dispenser of the results of the deeds done by humans. He gives the fruits of actions according to the kind of work performed by man. If, without performing good deeds, you pray for personal gain, God merely listens to your entreaties, but does not favour you with His benediction.<sup>2</sup>

### **Reach the Goal Faster**

What are the reasons for the treacherous, cruel acts in this world? They are the decline of selfless **service**, the increase of meaningless feelings, and the multiplication of senseless desires. Follow the path of the birds that fly in the sky with the help of their wings. Make **love** and **service** your two wings, and fly in the sky like the bird. That will enable you to reach the goal faster.<sup>3</sup>

Serve people with no thought of high or low; no **service** is high, no **service** is low, each act of **service** is equal in the eye of the Lord; it is the readiness, the joy, the efficiency, the skill with which you rush to do it that matters.<sup>4</sup> Selfless, sincere **service** is therefore to be welcomed and practised. Each act of **service** is a step toward the Goal of Liberation.<sup>5</sup>

### **Earn the Compassion and Love of Swami through Service**

Embodiments of the Divine *Atma*, you may not be able to see it, but it is clear before My eyes. As days pass, even those who are now not able to recognise the truth of Swami will have to approach with tears of repentance and experience Me. Very soon, this will be worldwide. Swami is now restraining this development. When once it is allowed to manifest, the whole world will be transformed into Prasanthi Nilayam. So, come forward, all of you, determined to practise in daily living the ideals laid before you. In the coming years, you may not get the chances you are having now. You will not have the opportunity to be so near. Millions will rush to this place and gather here. This will happen soon and so, earn the compassion of Swami and his **Love** through **seva** activities and fill your lives with meaning.<sup>6</sup>

« »

### **References**

#### **Chapter: Avatars – Fine Examples of Selfless Service**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII; Chapter 29: Quenching the Thirst
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VII; Chapter 5: Not Loka but a Lokesa
3. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1973; Chapter: Service to Man Is Service to the Lord
4. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1973; Chapter: Service to Man Is Service to the Lord
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV; Chapter 31: Lessons on Seva Sadhana
6. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X; Chapter 23: The Crucial Years
7. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII; Chapter 21: Expand the Heart
8. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 30: Secure God's Love
9. Advaita through Seva; Volume 2: Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, November 19-24, 1987
10. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV: Chapter 55: Your Birthday Gift
11. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1979; Chapter: Nishkama Karma

#### **Chapter: Unique Opportunity to Participate in Swami's Divine Mission**

1. My Baba and I (by Dr. John Hislop), Page 170
2. My Baba and I (by Dr. John Hislop), Page 170
3. My Baba and I (by Dr. John Hislop), Page 170

#### **Chapter: Love All – Serve All**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2; Chapter 12: Youth Should Transform the World
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 25; Chapter 39: Unity Based on Divinity
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 27; Chapter 22: Devotion is Pure Love for God
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31; Chapter 34: Entire Universe Is Within You
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30; Chapter 9: The Saints of Tamilnaad
6. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2; Chapter 12: Youth Should Transform the World

7. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33; Chapter 1: Unity and Divinity in the New Year
8. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34; Chapter 14: Love Can Unite the Entire World
9. Service to Man is Service to God (Divine Discourse on January 1, 2004 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: New Year)
10. "Cultivate Good Thoughts and Noble Feelings in your Heart" (Divine Discourse on March 7, 2008 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: Sivarathri)
11. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35; Chapter 9: Mother is Your First God
12. "Develop Educare and Be United" (Divine Discourse on July 20, 2008 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference)
13. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 30; Chapter 2: Be Prepared for a Life of Sacrifice
14. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31; Chapter 3: Buddha's Gospel of Good Life
15. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33; Chapter 6: Sanctify Your Life with Sacred Feelings
16. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 28; Chapter 2: Prema and the Triple Purity
17. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31; Chapter 41: Serve Parents, Serve God
18. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 34; Chapter 24: God Never Forsakes His Devotees
19. "Strive for unity, purity, and divinity" (Divine Discourse on January 1, 2003 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: New Year 2003)
20. "Service to Society is Service to God" (Divine Discourse on November 23, 2006 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: Sai Baba's Birthday)
21. "All are One; Be alike to Everyone" (Divine Discourse on January 1, 2008 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: New Year's Day)
22. "Man without morality is verily a demon" (Divine Discourse on May 1, 2008 in Brindavan)
23. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 31; Chapter 43: Fuse Spirituality with Education
24. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2; Chapter 1: Human Values and Education
25. "Earn Eternal Peace with Eternal Truth" (Divine Discourse on December 25, 2006 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: Christmas)
26. "God helps those who help Others" (Divine Discourse on January 27, 2007 in Thiruvannamiyur, Chennai. Occasion: Ati Rudra Maha Yajna)
27. "All Are One -- Be Alike to Everyone" (Divine Discourse on October 9, 2008 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: Dasara)
28. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 35; Chapter 6: Celebrate Ugadi by Purifying Your Heart
29. "Bhagavan Blesses the Book Trust Office" (Divine Discourse on August 24, 2007 in Prasanthi Nilayam. Occasion: Visit to SSSBPT)

### **Chapter: Grace of God**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XII: Chapter 16: The Garden of God
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII: Chapter 4: Narayana Seva
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIV: Chapter 13: He Too Is He
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV; Chapter 31: Lessons on Seva Sadhana
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 2: Devotion in Action

### **Chapter: Law of Karma and Selfless Service**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VII: Chapter 39: The Wet Wick
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume III: Chapter 29: Loka Kalyanam
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume II: Chapter 26: Destiny is no Iron Cage
4. Sadhana the Inward Path, Quote Number 68
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IX: Chapter 17: The Spider in the Same Web
6. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume II: Chapter 26: Destiny is no Iron Cage

7. My Baba and I (by Dr. John Hislop), Page 83
8. My Baba and I (by Dr. John Hislop), Page 148
9. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 29, Chapter 50: The Glory of Bharath's Women
10. Divine Discourse on July 21, 2005: Everything Depends on God's Grace
11. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 23: Overcome Jealousy with Love
12. Divine Discourse on March 1, 2003: Experience of Unity is Real Satsang

**Chapter: Love and Selfless Service**

1. Sathya Sai Newsletter (USA), Volume 12, Number 4, Page 33-34
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume V: Chapter 17: This Joy and That
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VI: Chapter 32: Poorna Minus Poorna is Poorna
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XI: Chapter 7: Love and Serve
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22: Chapter 6: Live up to Your Role
6. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII: Chapter 19: The Message of Love

**Chapter: Control of the Mind through Service**

1. Advaitha through Seva; Volume 3: Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, November 19-24, 1987
2. Sathya Sai Newsletter (USA), Volume 13, Number 3, Page 2

**Chapter: Removal of Egoism**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII: Chapter 22: Hospitals and Health
2. Sathya Sai Newsletter (USA), Volume 12, Number 4, Page 30-31
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV; Chapter 31: Lessons on Seva Sadhana
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV: Chapter 32: The Fingers Five
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XI: Chapter 16: 'Mind'irs, Not Mandirs

**Chapter: Nishkama Karma**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 1: Purity – The Path to Divinity
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 22: Practise What You Preach
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 29, Chapter 13: Heroic Mothers and Noble Sons
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 30: Service as Duty

**Chapter: Nishkama Karma and Anaasakti Yoga**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 20, Chapter 11: Developing the Inner Vision

**Chapter: Human Birth for Service to Society**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XI: Chapter 5: Thirst and Quest
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII: Chapter 4: Narayana Seva
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IX: Chapter 12: Mirror and Comb
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume II: Chapter 36: Proceed Beyond Thriputi

**Chapter: Atmic Unity through Service**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22: Chapter 37: The Cosmic Indweller
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X: Chapter 10: Beside, Behind, Before
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XI: Chapter 28: Radiate Rays of Love
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X: Chapter 16: Labels are Libels
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII: Chapter 18: No bumps, No Jumps
6. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VIII: Chapter 33: The Creeper and the Tree
7. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII; Chapter 29: Quenching the Thirst

8. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume I: Chapter 11: Nara and Narayana

**Chapter: Service Opportunity – A Gift from God**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X: Chapter 35: Truth of Truth
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X: Chapter 35: Truth of Truth
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XI: Chapter 28: Radiate Rays of Love
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IX: Chapter 10: The Will to Will Not
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII: Chapter 4: Narayana Seva
6. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IX: Chapter 19: Counsel for the Chosen

**Chapter: Promote Love and Compassion**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 25: I Will Be Closer to Devotees

**Chapter: Charity and Compassion**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 13: Ganapathi Confers Buddhi and Siddhi
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 16: Ceiling on Desires

**Chapter: Contentment**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 19: God Incarnates To Serve Mankind

**Chapter: Sacrifice**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 21, Chapter 31: The Spirit of Service`

**Chapter: Pure Mind and Heart**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X: Chapter 6: A Flower at His Feet
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIV: Chapter 13: He Too Is He

**Chapter: Pure Motives While Rendering Service**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 13: Make Adoption Meaningful to Villagers

**Chapter: Purity of Heart**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 31: The Devotee Dear to the Lord

**Chapter: Sathya Sai Organisation**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 2, Chapter 9: Human Values and Service
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 27: Service without Distinctions
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 13: Make Adoption Meaningful to Villagers
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 22: Practise What You Preach
5. Divine Discourse on August 9, 2006: Athi Rudra Maha Yajna Fosters the Divine Nature of Humans

**Chapter: Serve the Daridra Narayana**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 2: Seva Is the Highest Sadhana
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 30: Service as Duty
3. Divine Discourse on October 22, 2004: Uphold the Dignity and Honour of Bharat Matha (Mother India)

**Chapter: Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, Prema and Ahimsa**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 2, Seva Is the Highest Sadhana
2. Advaitha through Seva; Volume 2: Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, November 19-24, 1987

**Chapter: Service in Daily Life**

1. Sathya Sai Newsletter (USA), Volume 13, Number 3, Page 4-5

**Chapter: Service to Man is Service to God**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22: Chapter 23: Love All, Serve All
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 22: Chapter 6: Live up to Your Role
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X: Chapter 6: A Flower at His Feet

**Chapter: Nine Steps in Spiritual Sadhana**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII; Chapter 29: Quenching the Thirst

**Chapter: Bliss**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 16, Chapter 8: “Build Temple in Your Hearts”

**Chapter: Selflessness**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X: Chapter 39: Bring Me the Pain
2. Advaitha through Seva; Volume 1: Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, November 19-24, 1987
3. Advaitha through Seva; Volume 1: Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, November 19-24, 1987

**Chapter: Do Not Seek Publicity**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII: Chapter 18: No Bumps, No Jumps
2. Advaitha through Seva; Volume 1: Divine Discourse of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, November 19-24, 1987
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume IX: Chapter 10: The Will to Will Not
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VII: Chapter 47: Spontaneous Service

**Chapter: Attitude While Doing Service**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XIII: Chapter 18: No Bumps, No Jumps
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume X: Chapter 6: A Flower at His Feet
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VII: Chapter 14: Limbs of the Divine Body

**Chapter: Broaden the Heart**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 31: The Devotee Dear to the Lord

**Chapter: Detachment**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 7: Give Up Selfishness: Cultivate Unity
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 37: Let Love Prevail

**Chapter: Not Selfishness, Rather Selflessness**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 28: Equality through Love

**Chapter: Hands that Serve are Greater than the Lips that Pray**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 7: Give Up Selfishness: Cultivate Unity

**Chapter: Humility**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 19: The Yoga of Samathvam

**Chapter: Ingratitude Is a Grievous Sin**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 30: Service as Duty

**Chapter: Religion Develops the Human Personality**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 23, Chapter 36: Love: Sacrifice: Unity



**Chapter: Service Is the Only Path to Self-Realisation**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 18, Chapter 25: I Will Be Closer to Devotees

**Chapter: Temples**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 17, Chapter 12: Combine Morals with Business
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 16, Chapter 8: Build Temple in Your Hearts

**Chapter: The Story of Abou Ben Adhem**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 12: Flowers That Never Fade

**Chapter: Transform Work into Worship**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 32, Part 1, Chapter 6: Put Ceiling on Your Desires
2. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 33, Chapter 12: Flowers That Never Fade
3. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 29, Chapter 11: The Triple Transformation
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume 26, Chapter 13: Sparks from the Divine Anvil

**Chapter: Conclusion**

1. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VIII: Chapter 1: Ask the Right Questions
2. Summer Showers in Brindavan 1979; Chapter: *Nishkama Karma*
3. Sathya Sai Newsletter (USA), Volume 13, Number 3, Page 1
4. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume VII: Chapter 31: Moving Temples
5. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XII: Chapter 23: Nearer and Nearer
6. Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV: Chapter 55: Your Birthday Gift

————— « » —————