



Unity is Divinity Purity is Enlightenment

Talk by Dr. Narendranath Reddy
Chairman, Sathya Sai International Organisation

With love and gratitude, I offer my reverential Pranams at the divine lotus feet of our dearest, sweetest, loving, and omnipresent Lord Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Loving Sairam to all of you. I wish all of you good health, happiness, and peace.

We are going to touch upon two of His seminal teachings. First, Unity is Divinity. Second, Purity is Enlightenment. These are also the theme for our World Conference and the Pre-World Conferences. Regarding Unity is Divinity, Swami taught us that we should have clarity about unity at four levels. First, unity at the level of *Vyashti*, which is part of *Samashti*, which is part of *Srishti*, and which is part of *Parameshti*. *Vyashti* is at the individual level. We, the individuals are part of *Samashti* that is society. *Samashti* is part of *Srishti* which is creation, and *Srishti* is part of *Parameshti*, which is the supreme, almighty Lord.

How do you practice unity at the individual level? At the individual level, the practice of unity means practicing unity or harmony of thought, word, and deed. That is to say, we should have pure thoughts, pure speech, and pure actions. This harmony of thought, word, and deed at the level of the individual is very important.

This leads to the next which is family level. Only if everyone practices unity at the individual level, can we then achieve world peace. Swami

beautifully says, when there is righteousness in the heart there is beauty in character; when there is beauty in character, there is harmony at home; when there is harmony at home, then there is order in the nation; when there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world.

Family is the unit of the whole society and therefore harmony at home is very important. We need to adjust, adapt, and accommodate in spite of the differences we have in the family. This comes only after we have good understanding. First, we need to develop mutual respect and understanding among the family members based on love. Swami gives the beautiful example of Lord Shiva's family. This divine family lives in peace and harmony in spite of many differences. Shiva's vehicle is the bull and the vehicle of Mother Parvati is the lion. They are not compatible. Similarly, Lord Shiva has snakes around his neck and waist but the vehicle of Lord Subramanya, His Son, is a peacock, which would attack the snake. Similarly, the vehicle of Lord Ganesha is a mouse which is afraid of snakes as they would like to attack the mouse. Lord Shiva Himself on His forehead has got fire and then on His head He has Ganges, which is water. Water and fire do not go together. In spite of all these differences in Lord Shiva's family, we see the most beautiful example of peace and harmony in the divine family. Swami shows us by this example, that although there may be differences of opinion and approach, we should always see unity in diversity.

Unity is Divinity; Purity is Enlightenment

After family, the next level is society. In society, we are members of the Sathya Sai Organisation. Swami said there are three important requisites for members - First is keeping the heart cool like moon. Second is keeping the mind pure like butter. Third is having speech sweet as honey. These are the requisites needed for members of the Sathya Sai Organisation. Then, there will be unity.

We all belong to different faiths, different beliefs, and different religions - how can we then have unity of faith and religions? Swami says that we have to see the commonality of all religions, which is love and service. Swami summarized it beautifully that there is only one religion which is religion of love; there is only one God and He is Omnipresent; there is only one language, the language of the heart. If we practise this, then there will be harmony of religions and unity of faiths. This is what is being practised by the members of the Sathya Sai Organisation.

We then extend this unity from society level to the community level as our members interact with the community and serve the society. All of this is part of the *Samashti*. In reality, there is only one thing that exists, which is the same divine Atma that pervades all. Swami said jewels are many, gold is one; pots are many, clay is one; nations are many, but earth is one. If we see the oneness in all, then we will be able to realise the one divinity, which is divine bliss itself.

The next level is *Srishti*. *Srishti* is creation or the nature. One must remember that nature is the manifestation of God. Indeed, nature is verily God. Every cell and every atom of the whole creation, whether it is plants or animals or mountains or lakes, everything is permeated by the divine. We need to see and experience that by respecting nature and not by abusing or polluting elements of nature, such as food, water etc.

When we practise unity at all these three levels, we then go to *Parameshti*, which is the Lord Himself. Here, we completely focus on the Lord with one pointed divine love and become one with the Lord.

The best way to practise unity, Swami says, is by practising divine love, which is pure, selfless, unconditional, and eternal. Swami showed us by His own example how to develop divine love. His love was His message. He said that just as you can see the moon only through moonlight, God, who is love, can only be experienced through love. He says that there are two important things to remember about love. We need to have one pointed love for God and for Guru. This means that we should not change from one Guru to another Guru. Just have one-pointed focus on only one Guru. We are fortunate to have Guru and God in one, and that is Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Let us just focus on Him and not deviate. This one pointedness is very important for developing divine love.

It is also important to love for love's sake alone. This love should not be a bargain. Let us love the Lord for love's sake. There was a great Sufi saint by the name of Rabia of Basra. She prayed to the Lord, "Lord, if I worship You because of fear of hell, then burn me in hell. If I worship You because I desire paradise, then exclude me from paradise. But if I worship You for Yourself alone, then deny me not Your eternal beauty." Passion and intense love for God is very important to realize unity with God.

Next, I will touch about purity. Swami says purity is enlightenment. The minute we are pure, it means that we are enlightened. Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Swami says that the purpose of all the spiritual practices that we do, such as Bhajans, selfless service, study circles, is to purify our hearts. Then we will see the reflection of the divine.

Swami mentions two kinds of purity: external and internal purity. The first aspect of external purity refers to the purity of the environment where we live, such as our home and workplace. They should be clean with no dirt. The place where we live should be surrounded by divine pictures of Gods and saints to inspire us. We should have books which are sacred, as these will have good vibrations. We should have nice plants which are uplifting to make us easily be in tune with God.

Unity is Divinity; Purity is Enlightenment

The second aspect of external purity is purity of the body. Swami says we should keep our body clean because cleanliness is next to godliness. Purity of food is very important because the essence of food contributes to our mind. Having *Sathwic* food is very important for a spiritual seeker. Swami has particularly talked about vegetarian food. How the food is obtained is also very important. Swami says whenever you are not sure how the food is obtained or cooked, then it is important to offer the food prayer "*Brahmarpanam*". We say the prayer and identify that food is God, the one who is eating is God and the essence of food is also God. Then that becomes *Sathwic* food because all the impurities are gone when we offer the food prayer.

The third aspect of external purity is purity of speech. When we speak, we must think: are we speaking truthfully? Is the speech soft? Is it sweet? Is it going to help somebody? Only if the answer to all these are "yes", we should speak, because speech is very powerful. If we are not able to say "Yes" to all these, then Swami says that silence is best. Silence is the language of the spiritual seeker and only in the depth of silence, the voice of God can be heard. These are the things we can watch for purity at the external level - environment, body, speech, and food.

At the internal level, when you want to realize our true divine nature, it is important to have purity of the senses, the mind, and the heart. What are the great obstacles to this? We call the obstacles the six enemies, and we need to get rid of these six enemies which are, selfish desires, greed, anger, pride, attachment, and jealousy. All these are impurities we need to get rid of, in order to see God. Swami says, there are two best practices to get these impurities out. First is Japa, the repetition of His name. The repetition of any divine name and meditation or contemplation will cleanse the heart of impurities. The technique of Jyothi meditation is an important type of meditation where we focus on light in our minds and spread it to all people: family, friends, and the whole of creation. The second type of meditation is *So-Hum* meditation, which is to see our Oneness with God with each ingo-

ing and outgoing breath. Then, we realize "I am that".

Another mechanism to purify our heart is to do selfless service. Swami has extensively talked about selfless service. There are two important points to note when we serve: First is the attitude with which we serve. We should see God in the person we are serving. Jesus said, "When you serve the least of your brethren, you are serving me". With that attitude when we serve anybody, we are serving God. Second is the quality of service. Swami does not want to know how many people we served. It is not the quantity but the quality that matters. In the temple in Jerusalem, when a poor lady gave a few coins, Jesus said, "She gave more than the large amounts people have put in the coffers". On one occasion, one of Swami's students gave a hundred rupees. Swami was more thrilled than when people gave millions of dollars for the hospital project. So, Swami looks at the heart, the quality of our work and how much sacrifice we do for the sake of God.

Whenever we are doing service, there are two obstacles: our ego and our attachment - the feeling that I am doing this work and that I want the results. We should have complete conviction that in reality, God is using us as an instrument of His love to do His work. When we continue to do this, we will finally realize and come to a stage where the person serving, the person being served and the process of service, all become one. There are no two. That is the goal. That is the stage when we reach purity.

I want to conclude by saying that Swami has shown us unity is divinity, and how that can be realized by the practice of divine love. He has also shown us that purity is enlightenment, and how we can get rid of both the external impurities and internal impurities by practising external cleanliness, *Japa*, meditation, and selfless service.

I pray to our Lord Sai to shower His choicest blessings on all of us.

Jai Sai Ram