

1. STRIVE FOR UNITY, PURITY, AND DIVINITY

Date: 01 January
2003

Occasion: New Year
2003

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

Intellect, education, prolific scholarship,
Victory in verbal battle,
Vanquishing the adversary in physical strife,
Sovereignty over kingdoms vast,
Charity profuse of cattle and gold,
Piercing vision counting the countless stars,
Numbering each of creatures unnumbered,
Achieving the mystic eightfold powers,
Or even stepping on lunar dust --
All these are easy to the man of strength.
But to restrain the urges of body and its parts,
To turn the senses inward,
Difficult far is it to attain the vision
And still the mind in supreme peace.
(Telugu Poem)

A skilled tongue entices even the goddess of wealth,
A sweet tongue wins family and friends,
Tongue it is that ties your life in knots,
A vicious tongue begets instant death.
(Sanskrit Verse)

Embodiments of Love!

Having been endowed with such a sacred power of speech, man is unable to make proper use of it. No other form of life has the mighty intellect and capacity for inner peace but the human kind. In this world every object has five aspects, namely, sath, chith, ananda, rupa, and nama (being, awareness, bliss, form, and name). Being, awareness, and bliss are the three core attributes of a man. They are true and eternal. Name and form are transitory. The delusion of permanence of name and form leads mankind to waste away its precious life.

In this world, there are two types of intellectuals. The first type is the scientists who are totally materialistic in their outlook. They have in their

mind only the physical and worldly goals and gains. They are fascinated by the external appearance of a gigantic tree with its numerous branches and twigs, but they are not interested in finding its "roots". Vedantins (philosophers) are the second type of intellectuals, who are not fascinated by the external appearance of the tree but evince great delight in finding the "roots". People who are worldly in outlook waste their time in watering the "branches", whereas, the Vedantins water the "roots" and thereby enjoy the "fruits".

Once, the asuras (demons) and devas (demigods) churned the ocean of milk with the hope of acquiring divine ambrosia (amrita). They used the Manthara mountain as the churning rod. But, initially, they had to put up with the emergence of deadly poison. The demons were frustrated and disheartened to see poison emanating instead of (amrita). They wanted to give up the churning process. But the demigods relentlessly continued the churning with courage and determination. Their sustained efforts yielded rich rewards in the form of the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi Devi, Iravatha (divine white elephant), Kamadhenu (wish-fulfilling cow), Kalpatharu (wish-fulfilling tree), and ultimately the divine ambrosia itself. In the same manner, man should churn his mind and try to know his true identity; He should not be deterred or depressed by the initial impediments and obstacles that beset his path.

Sath-chith-ananda (being-awareness-bliss) are the very nature of man. But man has forgotten his very nature and is wasting his time in the vain pursuit of fleeting pleasures. He is not able to realise the value of his innate nature, sath-chith-ananda. Once he realises its value and experiences it, he can reach any exalted state. In fact, he becomes verily God. Man can accomplish any mighty task when he realises his innate divine nature. The power latent in man is not found anywhere else. Every man is endowed with the three chief attributes of sath-chith-ananda. But having been enmeshed in the web of delusion, man considers that the "name and form" are real, ignoring his innate qualities of sath-chith-ananda. First of all, what man has to recognise is his own innate divine nature. But man is not making any effort in this direction. He has become a slave to his senses, and is wasting his time on trivial matters. The primary duty of man therefore is to understand properly his innate human nature and then putting it into practice.

The value and significance of human nature is beyond all estimation. Only when you practise human values will your life be redeemed. Man is but a spark of Divinity. That is why Lord Krishna said in the Bhagavadgita, Mamaivamsho Jeevaloke Jeevabhutah Sanathana (the eternal Atma in all beings is a part of My Being). In fact, the antarvani (inner voice) keeps reminding man of his divine nature day in and day out. But man is not making any effort to listen to his inner voice. He is craving for physical and ephemeral objects, forgetting his own divine nature and thereby

distancing himself from the ultimate goal of life. Names and forms are momentary like water bubbles. He is being deluded by names and forms and is losing the very precious gem of divinity. Man is endowed with infinite divine power. A piece of red-hot iron can be put to better use than the fire itself. The body can be compared to an iron piece and the divinity within to fire. Man should therefore understand this truth and make proper use of his body.

Embodiments of Love!

People are full of hopes and aspirations on the dawn of a New Year. In fact, you should consider every moment as the beginning of a New Year. Names and forms have no value without the eternal virtues. Man suffers from various ailments, some internal and others external. A doctor can cure the external ailments. The Atmic feeling is the only remedy for all the internal ailments. You should make efforts to know the principle of Atma. The Atma is a synonym for Brahma, which is nothing but the Chaitanya permeating every human being. Man has a name and form, but Chaitanya has no form. The Chaitanya that is present in the human body is called "conscience". The all-pervasive Chaitanya is called "consciousness". When the individual understands the principle of unity in diversity, the "conscience" gets transformed into "consciousness". In spite of being endowed with such a sacred power, man gets deluded by the vagaries of the world. He is giving importance to the New Year, which is fleeting. In fact, he should give importance to the changeless "Time" and sanctify it by proper use.

In this world, only truth and goodness will remain with us for ever. Their value cannot be quantified. So, we should strive to develop truth and goodness in us. We should not hanker after name and fame. For example, we should not be under the delusion that we are providing Telugu Ganga water to Chennai. Water is not something that one gives to another. It is nature's gift to all. Each one gets one's share based on one's prapti (deservedness). Man's activities yield the desired result only when the kala, karma, karana, and kartavya (time, action, cause, and duty) are in harmony with each other. Hence, one should make sincere efforts and wait for the right time. When the action fructifies, he should utilise it in accordance with the time and circumstances.

Boys (former students of Swami) are doing a lot of good work. They are going to various villages and giving happiness to the people there by performing service activities and bhajans. They should undertake all these activities with the spirit of love. There is nothing greater than love. You should lead your life filled with selfless love.

Embodiments of Love!

The service activities and the bhajans that you perform alone are not enough. You should give up the feeling that you are serving others. That is very important. You are serving your own self when you serve others. You should consider all as yours. In fact, others are not others but are the very forms of God. Hence, service rendered to humanity is service rendered to God. All service activities are meant to foster this feeling in you. You should plunge into the field of service with selfless love. That alone is true service. All other service activities are worldly and momentary.

Students!

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.

Our ancient sages and seers used to live in dense forests amidst wild animals. They did not carry any weapons with them, yet they could move about without any sense of fear. What was the source of their courage? They possessed the single weapon of love, which protected them from the wild animals. The ancient culture of Bharat is divine, most precious, wonderful, and blissful. But you are not making any effort to understand its greatness. In fact, you are belittling such a sacred culture. You are deluded by the differences based on caste and culture. In fact, there is only one caste, the caste of humanity. The love that originates in the heart is true religion. The entire humanity is one family. All are brothers and sisters. The whole world is but one mansion. It is impossible to describe in words the happiness you would experience when you develop such broad-mindedness. Hence, make every effort to visualise divinity in humanity.

God's creation is most wonderful and mysterious. There are innumerable stars in the sky. The light emitted by some of them is yet to reach the earth, in spite of the fact that light travels at a speed of thousands of miles per second. Such being the case, you can very well imagine the distance between earth and stars. When the creation itself is such an infinite and indescribable phenomenon, how mighty and powerful must the creator be!

The stories of the Lord are most wonderful and sacred in all the three worlds.

They are like sickles that cut the creepers of worldly bondage.
(Telugu Poem)

The stories of God cannot be described in mere words. Man imagines and describes Him based on his own estimates. Truly speaking, God is beyond all definition.

There are various types of pramanas (experiences) in this world. They are pratyaksha pramana (direct experience), anumana pramana (experience based on inference), dvaita pramana (experience based on duality), and advaita pramana (experience based on non-duality). As God is beyond all these pramanas, He is known as Aprameya (immeasurable and indefinable). God is present in the heart of every man with all His divine powers.

The beauty and grandeur of God cannot be described in words. He is extolled as "Hiranyagarbhaya Namah" (salutations to the one with the golden womb). Hiranya means gold. It is present in His heart. Just as the essence of the food partaken is supplied to all parts of the body, likewise, gold permeates His entire body. Hence, He is the most handsome One. He is the primordial basis of all beings.

Everything happens according to His Will. Since He is the creator of all beings, He is called Prajapati. Since He is the most intelligent One, He is called Dakshinamurthi. In this manner, God has infinite names. Man attributes names and forms to God based on his limited understanding and worships Him: Nirgunam, Niranjanam, Sanathana Niketanam, Nitya, Suddha, Buddha, Mukta, and Nirmala Swarupinam (God is attributeless, pure, final abode, eternal, unsullied, enlightened, liberated, and embodiment of sacredness). When such a divine principle is present within his own self, why does man consider himself to be small and feeble? You should give up such a feeling of inferiority. There is no greater being than the human being. In fact, divinity is immanent in the entire humanity. But, unfortunately, you are considering such a sacred human birth as trivial. As you think, so shall it become. These petty thoughts are the result of your petty mind.

When you see smoke emerging from the hills, it is an indication that there is fire. When you see the fire directly, it is called *pratyaksha pramana* (direct experience). If you see only the smoke and not the fire, you presume that there is fire behind the smoke. It is only a possibility. It is *anumana pramana* (presumptive experience). It is possible that sometimes fog appears as smoke and, actually, there may not be fire in the hills. Therefore, *anumana pramana* gives rise to doubt.

Love is the only *pratyaksha pramana* (direct experience) of divinity in a human being. When a question arises as to where God is, the immediate answer is God is love and love is God. Similarly, truth is God. There is nothing greater than truth. There is no divinity higher than truth. Truth is all-pervading. Countries may be different; but, truth is one and only one. There is nothing like American truth, Japanese truth, German truth, etc. To make such distinction is the nature of petty-minded people.

We are not petty-minded and mean. We are the embodiments of infinity. Man should always remind himself that he is the embodiment of Truth, embodiment of Love, embodiment of Bliss, etc. Man has got infinite capacity for spiritual thoughts and spiritual quest. But, does he realise his true nature?

Take, for instance, a handful of sea-sand in a plate. The scientists determine the sand as belonging to such and such country on the basis of the colour and weight of the sand. But the philosophers do not at all think that way. They say that it is God's creation and God's *maya* (illusion). Thus, there is a gulf of difference between the perceptions of the scientists and the sages. Science is like semi-circle. It starts at some place and ends at some other place. But, spirituality originates and ends at the same point of origin. It is a full-circle. It is verily Divinity. That is why it is said,

Poornamadah poornamidam poornat poornamudachyate
Poornasya poornamadaya poornameva avashishyate.
(That is full, this is full. When the full is taken out of the full,
what remains is again the full).

Such a divinity, which is the embodiment of fullness, is immanent in every human being. But, unfortunately, man is not making any effort to realise the divinity within. Who is protecting his body while he is fast asleep? How does the body function perfectly, even without his knowledge? Nobody knows. For creation, protection and sustenance --for everything-- , God is responsible. Such a divine power is immanent in every human being. In spite of this, man is depressed in times of difficulties and is elated in times of joy. But this is not the goal of his life. His true goal is to maintain a perfect state of equanimity at all times and not to get caught in "sorrows and joys". Pleasure is an interval between two pains.

Therefore, we need not go in search of pleasure. It is very much within us. In fact, you, yourself are the embodiment of bliss.

Embodiments of Love!

Always be happy and cheerful, for your innate nature is bliss. You need not go in search of happiness. Bliss emerges out of Atma. Whenever you wish for it, you will get it. Happiness is union with God. Therefore, always be in the company of God. Once you are in the company of God, happiness will follow you like a slave.

Today, man is in search of happiness, and, in the process, is becoming a slave to happiness. This is not correct. In fact, happiness should become a slave to you, for you are verily the embodiment of Divine Atma. Believe it or not, I am always blissful. You can also experience such a state of bliss. You should not go in search of happiness. Instead, happiness should follow you wherever you go.

Hanuman was a great hero in the episode of Ramayana. He was courageous, mighty and invincible. He possessed good qualities of character and peace. He was always happy and cheerful, chanting the divine name of Rama. You should also develop such noble qualities. First and foremost, you should become a human being in the true sense. You should develop kindness toward all. Only then do you deserve to be identified as belonging to mankind.

Embodiments of Love!

You are acquiring a high level of worldly education. You are reading several great books. You are acquiring great powers. But, all these are ephemeral and evanescent. Therefore, always keep your thoughts steadily fixed on the divine power that fills your heart with bliss. The divine power is infinite. The more you contemplate on the divine, the more and more the bliss gets multiplied. When such an infinite divine power is within your own self, why should you be exposed to difficulties?

Today, our old students have assembled here. They are undertaking several types of service activities in various parts of the country and even abroad. They are deriving great pleasure out of this service activity.

In My opinion, they should confine themselves to their own areas and render service to society, within their means. It is neither good nor necessary to associate others in their service activity, which will turn it into business. As far as possible, they should undertake such activities in their respective villages and give them happiness.

In rural areas, there is a vast scope for different service activities. A few decades ago, some people invited Me to shift to bigger cities like Mysore, saying that they would provide a big palace for Me. But, as for Me, I don't need palaces. I must stay in this small village. I have not given up My place of birth. In such place alone, mighty tasks need to be accomplished. So, I refused to move from Puttaparthi, which was then a remote village with no modern facilities.

In those days, if one were to visit Puttaparthi, one had to alight from the train at Penukonda, which was the nearest railhead, and then travel to this place in a bullock-cart. Such were the conveyances in those days. But now, one can straightaway reach Puttaparthi comfortably by air. One had to go to Anantapur by bus in those days for availing oneself of medical services. Now, we have a Super Speciality Hospital right at our doorstep. Thus, all modern conveniences and facilities are now available in this village of Puttaparthi.

Therefore, there is no better place than a village to live in. The villages are the most valuable assets of a nation. If you serve the villagers properly, nothing could be a greater service than that. Grama seva is Rama seva.

There is no satisfaction in service undertaken in towns and cities. The urban people are indifferent and self-centred. Even if thieves break into a neighbouring house, they will not bother. On the other hand, in the villages, even for a small commotion, all the villagers will gather. Such a type of unity and camaraderie still exists in the villages. Where there is unity, there will be divinity. Where there is divinity, there will be bliss. Hence, work sincerely for the development of the village in which you are placed. Thus, all of you should work for the development of your respective villages.

Your activities should not be on the lines of political activities. By associating with various types of people, this turns into a political activity. I am not happy with that. Do come together for bhajans wherever you are. But do not allow separatism. All should be united.

Wherever you are, undertake service activities with a spirit of cooperation and unity. Do not strike discordant notes. For ages, India has been a peaceful country and all Indians were united like a big family. But what is the position now? In the olden days, whenever somebody visited a village, all the villagers used to gather round him and enquire about his welfare lovingly. Now, that spirit of love and oneness is lost, totally. Wherever you go, you will find differences and tensions even on trivial matters. Especially, after Independence, riots and disturbances are taking place in almost every part of the country. The sanctity of human life seems to be totally lost. Human life has no value. People are killed like

ants and mosquitoes. These are inhuman and demonic acts. This is not what is expected of a human being.

We must transform the divine power latent in us into skill, for undertaking service to society. When knowledge is converted into skill, you acquire balance in life. In such a state of equanimity, you will develop insight. With such an insight and divine power when you undertake service activity, it will be most fruitful and beneficial to the society.

Every village in the country has to be developed in all respects. You have come from Hyderabad, Madras, America, etc., to participate in service activity. Where is the need for all this? This is not a fair where different people from different parts gather to sell their commodities. Wherever you are, develop your area with your service. People of one place may even go to another place for developing that place. But this kind of mixing up of people from different areas adulterates the very purpose. It ends up in confusion, turns into pollution. Do not give scope for confusion and pollution of your mind with unnecessary differences.

You should always undertake service activities with a pure mind. Unity brings purity, and purity in turn leads to divinity. Therefore, always remember the inseparable relationship between unity, purity, and divinity and strive to achieve that. You may come together and work together in the spirit of sacrifice. But if people from various places come together this way for Grama Seva, no good accrues to the villages. Each has his own feelings and by mixing they get polluted. Then the place becomes a business centre.

Spirituality is not a business activity. Spirituality is a divine mansion. It is associated with unity. This unity in diversity alone will bring you happiness. I wish that you cultivate that principle of unity. It is only then that the service undertaken by you will acquire value and sanctity. There is no use polluting the sacred service activity with all sorts of differences. A small example. Gold is in the form of deposits in the gold mines. When you take it out and purify it, it becomes pure 24 carat gold. It acquires great value. However, when you add other metals like copper, its value comes down. Not only that. Its brightness also comes down. If you add some more metals, it loses its value altogether. Our heart is like a temple of gold. It is Hiranyagarbha. We should never defile that Hiranyagarbha. It should always be bright and shining.

Embodiments of Love!

Share love with everybody. Always maintain unity and purity. As you have planned earlier, you can commence your musical programme now.

Date: 01 January 2003, Occasion: New Year 2003, Place:

Prasanthi Nilayam