

Sathya and Dharma are Natural Attributes of Man

Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Prasanthi Nilayam

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A man bereft of the qualities of charity,
righteousness, truth, compassion, and
morality;
a man without good thoughts and good
character
will ruin himself completely here and here-
after.
(Telugu Poem)

Attain God's love by practicing sathya and dharma

Students are the inheritors of the legacy of *sathya* and *dharma* (truth and righteousness), and it is the responsibility of students to uphold them. They should undertake to establish peace and prosperity in society by promoting *sathya* and *dharma*. For this, students should have broad-mindedness. The value of education does not lie in acquiring merely bookish knowledge. Education, in fact, is the divine lamp that destroys the darkness of ignorance.

Practise sathya and dharma

Truth is verily God. God is the embodiment of *sathya* and *dharma*. God is none other than *sathya* and *dharma*.

Many people think that they are making efforts to spread *sathya* and *dharma*. You can spread something at a place where it does not already exist, but how can you spread *sathya* and *dharma* when they are present everywhere? Hence, there is no need to promote

and publicise *sathya* and *dharma*. What is needed is to practise them.

How is the word *dharma* derived? It comes from the root '*dhrit*', which means to uphold or sustain. *Dharayati iti dharma* (that which sustains is *dharma*). *Dharma* is therefore that which supports everything. The entire world is sustained by *dharma*. *Dharma* binds the entire universe into a unified whole and rules it.

Sathya and *dharma* are not related to merely one person, one period of time, or one country; they are related to all people, all periods of time, and all countries.

Lord Krishna declares in the *Bhagavad Gita*:

Oh Arjuna! Whenever there is a decline in
dharma and rise in *adharma*,
I incarnate on earth.

*Yada Yada Hi Dharmasya Glanir Bhavati
Bharata,
Abhyutthanamadharmasya Tadatmanam
Srujamyaham.*

(Sanskrit Verse)

Dharma can never be destroyed. If it is subject to destruction, then it cannot be called *dharma* at all. At certain periods of time, it may seem to have disappeared due to the decline of its practice by man. When thick clouds cover the shining sun, people may not be able to see it for some time. But nothing can ever stop the sun from shining or stop its light forever. In the same way, the sun of

sathya and sunlight of *dharma* can never be destroyed.

Sathya and *dharma* are interrelated and interdependent, like God and Nature, matter and energy. Therefore, it is not possible to separate *sathya* and *dharma*. *Sathya*, in fact, is the foundation on which the mansion of *dharma* stands. There can be no danger or hazard to the mansion of *dharma*, which is built on the foundation of *sathya*.

Sathya and *dharma* are the natural attributes of human beings. By nourishing and practising *sathya* and *dharma*, one should oneself derive bliss and share it with the world. Some people say that vocation is the attribute of a *purusha* (man). But in modern times, many women are also employed in various vocations. Then, can they be called men? Hence, it is not the vocation that is the real attribute of man. The real attributes are *sathya* and *dharma*. By merely wearing a safari suit or pants and a shirt can one become a *purusha*? No, no. The term '*purusha*' signifies divine consciousness, which permeates the entire '*pura*' (body) from top to toe.

Sathya and dharma are verily God

Dharma is the attribute of all human beings. However, from the worldly point of view, there are many divisions of *dharma*, such as *dharma* of *brahmacharya* (celibate stage), *grihastha* (householder stage), *vanaprastha* (recluse stage), and *sanyasa* (renunciant stage). In this way, one divides *dharma* according to various stages of one's life. But all these are only worldly and empirical divisions of *dharma*. These divisions relate to external forms of *dharma*.

What is the nature of the internal form of one's *dharma*?

Those whose thoughts, words and deeds are in perfect harmony are noble ones; those who lack harmony of these are wicked

Manasyekam vachasyekam, karmanyekam mahatmanam; manasyanyath vachasyanyath, karmanyanyath duratmanam.

This means that one should attain unity of thoughts, words, and deeds. This is the true *dharma* of every human being. This does not relate to various empirical divisions of *dharma*; it relates to the life of all human beings.

However, the *dharma* of birds and beasts is different. Similarly, the elements and objects have their own *dharma*. For example, the *dharma* of fire is to burn; that of water is to flow; and of sugar, sweetness. All objects have been endowed with their specific *dharma* in this way from the time of creation itself. But this relates only to worldly and external *dharma*. The internal *dharma* is true and eternal and comes from the heart of man.

However, human beings have to perform certain other *dharmas* of a worldly nature also with regard to their heart, speech, hands, etc. What is it that endows beauty to your hands, throat, ears, etc.?

Charity is the true ornament of the hand,
truth is the true necklace,
and listening to sacred texts is the true ornament of the ears.

*Hastasya bhushanam danam
Sathyam kanthasya bhushanam
Srotrasya bhushanam sastram
(Sanskrit Verse)*

What better ornaments do you require than these? These are your permanent ornaments, which give you real beauty. Nothing can be more beautiful than these.

One should work hard to develop and practise *sathya* and *dharma* and derive happiness therefrom. Since ancient times, the *Bharatiyas* (Indians) have been protecting *sathya* and *dharma*, considering them like their two eyes.

How should you revere *sathya* and *dharma*? Revere *sathya* and *dharma* as your mother and father. *Matru Devo bhava, pitru Devo*

bhava (revere your mother and father as God), says the *Upanishad*. Hence, *sathya* and *dharma* are verily God.

Since ancient times, our elders have been instructing us to give importance to *dharma* in every field of human endeavour. *Dharma* should be the guiding spirit in your vision, hearing, speech, and conduct. It has been said, *dharma moolam idam jagat* (righteousness is the basis of the entire world). The entire *jagat* (world) is sustained by *dharma*.

What does the word *jagat* signify? *Jagat* has no separate form. It is the assembly of human beings. The word ‘society’ has a name but no form. When many people come together and form a group, it is called society. Though it has no form, it does have attributes.

What are the main attributes of society? *Sathya* and *dharma* are the main attributes of society. Society condemns that which is not accepted by it. We throw away the fruit that does not taste good. Similarly, society disapproves of actions that do not bring happiness to it.

As has already been said, true *dharma* comes from the heart. If you put a seed in a pot and pour water over it, will it grow into a plant? No, no. It cannot grow into a plant. It has to be sown into soil. Only then can it become a plant. Similarly, *dharma* does not develop merely by teaching and propagating. The plant of *dharma* has to be grown in the soil of the heart. Then only can you derive the fruits of peace and prosperity from it.

People of different faiths propagate their faiths. What is it that holds value for you? How can you decide about it? You value something if it satisfies your conscience and your heart approves it. That only is truth that receives the approbation of your conscience. Your conscience is your master. Your teacher is not your master, and your *guru* who whispers a *mantra* into your ears is also not your master. Your conscience is your master. Fol-

low the master. The real *mantra* comes from your heart.

The mantra of cooperation

Your heart is the *tantra* (esoteric doctrine), your body is the *yantra* (instrument), and the feelings of your heart are your *mantra* (incantation). The *mantra* of *Soham* (That I am) emerges from the *yantra* of your body, utilising the *tantra* of your heart. Hence, you yourselves are *yantra*, *tantra*, and *mantra*. What greater *mantra* is there than this? How useful and valuable is this *yantra* of the body!

Here is a small example. A fruit is seen on a tree. What is it that sees the fruit? Your eyes see the fruit. You desire to possess the fruit as soon as your eyes see it, but the fruit does not come into your belly as soon as you desire it. First your feet take you near the tree. Can you possess the fruit merely by going near it? No, no. You bend down your back, pick up a stone, and hit the fruit using your arm. Then only does the fruit fall down on the ground. After this, your fingers pick up the fruit from the ground and put it into your mouth. When it reaches your stomach, your digestive fire helps it to assimilate in the body.

Which limb of your body performs the task of bringing the fruit from the tree to your stomach? All your limbs work equally to perform this task. If even one of these limbs does not perform its task, the fruit from the tree cannot reach your stomach.

What does the stomach do after receiving the fruit with the cooperation of various limbs of the body? It does not keep to itself all that it receives. It supplies the essence of the fruit to all the limbs to nourish them.

The stomach symbolises God. God is called *Angirasa* (Divinity that is present in each part of the body as essence). He is propitiated by reciting the *mantra* “*Angirasaya Namah* (salutations to *Angirasa*)” because God is the quintessence of everything in this world.

Dharma in this way teaches cooperation. Unfortunately, cooperation is not visible anywhere today. Wherever you look, you find division and non-cooperation. This non-cooperation is the cause of lack of unity in the family, country, and world. This has led to increase in dissensions in society.

All should be one and all should be united. Great tasks can be achieved by unity. But people today lack *sathya* and *dharma*. Many people just pretend to perform deeds of *sathya* and *dharma*. They make a show of *sathya* and *dharma*, while actually it is a mere pretension.

Unity of thoughts, words, and deeds is real dharma

Who can awaken a person who just pretends to sleep by closing his eyes? A person who is really asleep can be awakened by tapping them once or twice, but no one can awaken a person who just pretends to sleep. It is mere pretence. In the same way, people today seem to make a pretence of teaching and promoting *sathya* and *dharma*.

What is important is practice. All the sacred books are not meant merely for ceremonial reading or for publicising their teachings. They are meant to be practised. The devotees and spiritual aspirants who do not understand this truth perform ceremonial reading of sacred texts both in the morning and evening in a routine way.

Everyone should try to put *sathya* and *dharma* into practice in their life. The *Vedas* declare, *Sathyam vada, dharmam chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). You just say “*Sathyam vada*” but do not speak truth. You just repeat “*Dharmam chara*” but do not adhere to *dharma* in your day-to-day life. What you say, you do not do; what you do is different from what you say.

What the tongue speaks, the hands should perform. The mind should also be in harmony with speech. Unity of thinking, saying, and

doing is real *dharma*. There should be unity of thoughts, words, and deeds. Where there is unity, there is purity. Where there is purity, there is divinity.

Unfortunately, unity and purity are nowhere to be seen today. Wherever you look, you find enmity. Due to prevalence of enmity, the whole world today is in turmoil. If you cultivate *sathya* and *dharma* in your heart, there will be no scope for enmity in it.

Students!

If you firmly establish *sathya* and *dharma* in your heart, no evil tendencies will be able to find entry into it. On the other hand, if one moment you have *sathya* and *dharma* in your heart and the next moment, *adharma* and *asathya* (unrighteousness and untruth), then how can you call yourself a human being? What is the meaning of human quality? Human quality means unity of thoughts, words, and deeds. This is the real *dharma* of the human being.

At the time of the marriage of Sita with Rama, King Janaka asked Rama to take an oath that He would share *dharmam, artham, and kama* (righteousness, wealth, and desire) with Sita. Rama thought: “What does *dharma* mean? Does it connote worldly *dharma* or inner *dharma*? According to worldly *dharma*, My happiness is her happiness, My wealth is her wealth, and My liking is her liking.”

Rama promised to Janaka and said, “I accept all the principles of worldly *dharma*. But I do not accept to share with her My inner *dharma*. That means, if she becomes an obstacle in the performance of My inner *dharma*, I will prefer to adhere to My inner *dharma* to her.”

Hence, when a washerman of the kingdom expressed doubts about Sita, who spent ten months in the captivity of Ravana in Lanka, Rama immediately exiled Sita from the kingdom. That means, Rama left Sita when He felt

that she was an obstacle in the performance of His inner *dharma*.

Rama strictly adhered to the *Vedic* injunction “*Sathyam vada*” all His life. He not only adhered to the word given by Him but He also fulfilled the promise given by His father, Dasaratha, to Kaikeyi. Rama thought to Himself: “The promise given by My father is not different from My promise.” Hence, He followed the truth that the promise given by His father was His own promise. This is true *dharma*. *Ramo vigrahavan dharma* (Rama is *dharma* personified).

Rama rajya (rule of Rama) is actually *Thyaga rajya* (rule of detachment). It establishes the principle of detachment. Help everybody and contemplate on the Name of God constantly. That is what is meant by contemplation on Rama forever at all times. Rama is everywhere. It is a mistake to think that Rama is at one place and not at another.

Practise purity, patience, and perseverance

In Bharat (India), there is hardly any village that does not have a Rama temple. There is no one who is not aware of the Name of Rama. Since ancient times, people of Bharat have been practising charity, adhering to *sathya* and *dharma* in their life and feeling closeness with Rama. It is a common saying about Rama, *Ramayati Iti Rama* (One who pleases is Rama). The Name of Rama delights everyone.

Never consider Rama merely the son of Dasaratha. Rama is present in every heart. People commonly say, “My *Atmarama* knows this,” referring to Rama as their *Atma*. *Atma* is the Name of Rama. The same principle of *Atma* is present in each heart. It is very necessary for you to know this truth and conduct yourself accordingly.

Never break your promise. As far as possible, perform only those actions that satisfy your conscience. This is the true way of living.

Sage Vyasa wrote 18 *Puranas* (mythological texts). When each one of them is so big and voluminous, how can anybody study all the 18 *Puranas* even if one spends one’s whole lifetime? The lifespan of man in the *Kali Yuga* (the age we are in) is very short. In the *Dwapara Yuga*, it was much longer. At the time of the *Mahabharata* war, Krishna was 76 years old, Arjuna was 74 years old, and Bhishma, the commander-in-chief of the Kaurava army, was 112 years old.

See! In the *Dwapara Yuga*, a man of 70 years was considered a young boy. But today even a 17 year old boy is weak like an old man. What is the reason? In those days, the heart of the people was very sacred because they practised three P’s: Purity, Patience, and Perseverance. By practising these three P’s, they remained ever young. Therefore, instead of just teaching and propagating *sathya* and *dharma*, you should put them into practice in your life.

Many changes have occurred in *Kali Yuga*. Many people enter into clashes with others in the name of constructing a temple for God. Why should there be any clash of opinions for constructing a temple of God? Instead of fighting with those who want to construct a temple of God, one should encourage them. Life becomes meaningful if one acts with patience and perseverance.

Therefore, students, treasure sacred thoughts in your heart. Besides contemplating on God, make efforts to put *sathya* and *dharma* into practice in your life. When you earn the love of God, you will have everything in life. How can you attain God’s love? You can attain it only by practising *sathya* and *dharma*.

God is not anybody else. Truth is God. The word God is not different from *dharma*.

Dharma is a Sanskrit word. People interpret it in many ways. The *Vedas*, *Sastras* (philosophical texts), *Itihasas* (epics), and *Puranas* (mythological texts) use the word *dharma* in

its real sense. Some people call it righteousness or right action. But these are not its real meanings; they are only reflections of its real meaning. The real meaning of *dharma* is that which suffuses your heart with bliss. It is said: *Dharmam purushasya lakshanam* (*Dharma* is the attribute of man).

Here, the word *Purusha* does not refer only to men. It includes women also. Man and woman are only adjuncts to differentiate one form from the other; they do not differentiate one *Atma* from the other. These days, even women wear pants and a shirt. Can we call them men only because they wear a male dress? No, no. That is not correct. Why? Dress is an outer covering. Life and death are also like that only. Death is the dress of life, said Jesus.

The body is like a dress. You do not die when the body dies. Do not give importance to *deha* (body); it is *Dehi* (*Atma*) that signifies your reality. Recognise this truth and attain total satisfaction in life.

Remove the restlessness prevalent in society and establish peace and goodness by practising *trikarana suddhi* (unity of thought, word, and deed). Wherever you look in this world, law and order is conspicuous by its absence. To revive and establish law and order in the world, practise *sathya* and *dharma*. Considering *sathya* and *dharma* as their two eyes, students should undertake to promote the welfare of society and nation. This is the main responsibility of students today.

(Bhagavan brought His Discourse to a close with the *bhajan*, “*Govinda Krishna Jai Gopala Krishna Jai...*”)

— From Bhagavan’s Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall on 24 July 1996.