

## 8. Seeing Unity In Diversity Is True Spirituality

All names and forms are manifestations of the Supreme Being,  
Who is the embodiment of peace and auspiciousness.  
He is existence, knowledge, bliss Absolute, and non-dual.  
He is truth, goodness, beauty (*sathyam, sivam, sundaram*).  
(Sanskrit verse)

### Embodiments of Divine Atma!

**P**EOPLE today acquire many types of education in this world, but they lack the knowledge of humanness. They see diversity in unity but cannot see unity in diversity. Embodiments of love! It is very easy to see diversity in unity; anyone can do that. But it requires a lot of effort to recognise unity underlying the entire diversity that exists in this world.

### Recognise the divine principle present in all

People today should try to acquire the knowledge of the *Atmic* principle that is uniformly present in all. One who knows the principle of the *Atma* knows everything. Consider all human beings in this world as one, and recognise the oneness of the entire mankind.

Religions are many but goal is one.  
Clothes are many but yarn is one.  
Jewels are many but gold is one.  
Cows are many but milk is one.

There is unity in the entire creation of God, but mankind causes many divisions in it. Unity of the entire mankind is the need of the hour. When you develop unity, there will be purity in your heart. Where there is purity, there is divinity. Unity, purity, and divinity are closely interlinked and interdependent. But people today are drifting away from unity. I have been saying, “Religions are many, but goal is one.”

So many people have gathered in this hall. Though they took different routes to come here, the destination for all of them was the same. In the same way, all have to reach one God. Divinity is immanent in every human being. Human life is not possible without Divinity. “God is in the form of a human being (*Daivam manusha rupena*).” Who is a human being? Without understanding the meaning of this term, people consider someone as a human being who is endowed with human form, with hands, feet, ears, eyes, etc. like a human being. But it is not so.

In fact, a human is not different from God. A human is not a separate entity. One who realises one’s oneness with God is a true human being. There may be differences in physical forms of human beings, but the same divine principle is present in all. However, some people cause differences between person and person by various ways. This is the cause of all types of conflicts, sorrows, and miseries in the world today. When one understands the truth that the same divine principle is present in all, there will be no room for differences and troubles. Therefore, always focus on the Divinity of humanity. All our difficulties arise when we multiply our differences, forgetting our Divinity. Therefore, we should firmly install the divine principle in our heart, which is the same in everyone.

## **You can accomplish everything by chanting the divine name**

I told you a few days ago, how Hanuman crossed the ocean and reached Lanka by the power of the divine name of Rama. Before this, all the monkeys (*vanaras*) gathered on the seashore were asked the question, “Who can cross the ocean in one leap?” Some of them said they could cover a distance of 40 leagues; others said they could go up to 50 or 60 leagues. But when the same question was put to Hanuman, he said, “By the grace of Rama, I can cover any distance.” While others had a limited understanding of Rama’s Divinity, Hanuman alone had total perception of the reality.

It is not spiritual practices like repetition of God’s name, penance, yoga, and rituals that give us direct perception of God. Many people have been undertaking these practices, but what have they experienced and achieved? These are merely physical and external practices.

It is the name of God that is most important. When you know this truth, you will know everything. That is why I keep on telling you from time to time “Hari *bhajan bina sukhas santi nahin ...* (There can be no happiness and peace without chanting the name of God).” You can accomplish everything by chanting the name of God alone. Hanuman crossed the vast ocean by constantly chanting the name of Rama. But other monkeys misunderstood this truth.

At the time of construction of the bridge over the ocean also, Hanuman told the monkeys to write ‘*Ra*’ on one stone and ‘*ma*’ on the other and throw them in the ocean. The stones would then join together to form the bridge. Rama, Lakshmana, and the monkeys crossed the ocean and reached Lanka by walking on this bridge constructed on the principle of unity of the divine name of Rama. We should treasure this truth in our heart.

Instead of observing differences on the basis of names like Rama, Lakshmana, Bhima, etc., we should recognise the *Atmic* principle in them and consider all as embodiments of Divinity. Spiritual practices like repetition of the name, meditation, sacrifices, and yoga have little significance if the divine name is absent in your heart.

You have a name, which was given to you by your parents after your birth; you were not born with this name. What you are born with is the principle of Rama. That is the *Atma*. Call it *Atma*, call it *Omkaara*, call it Rama, all refer to the same divine principle. Even if you come across your enemy, offer your salutations to them. Your salutations do not go to your enemy, they reach God. When you greet your enemy lovingly, saying “hello”, they will also give up hatred and become friendly with you. But people today out of their ego identify themselves with their names. They consider themselves as Ramaiah, Krishnaiah, etc., instead of saying “I am Brahman (*Aham Brahmasmi*). This is the root cause of all our differences.

The name that is universally present in all is the name of Rama. When you offer your salutations to others while contemplating on Rama, your salutations will reach Rama. Therefore, do all actions to please God. All our daily chores like cooking, eating, etc. are suffused with the principle of Rama. People undertake worldly, external, and physical practices because they do not understand this subtle truth.

## **Ego and attachment are the cause of bondage**

All the developments in science are only at the worldly and physical level. Scientists have developed planes that can fly at high speed and cover hundreds of miles in a minute. But they expose people to all sorts of dangers. All worldly things are bound to perish one day or the other. A potter makes many pots, but if they slip from our hand, they break into pieces.

There is no greatness in all that we do for our individual benefit; whatever we do should be beneficial to society and the community. Our welfare lies in the welfare of society, but, today, nobody thinks about society. Wherever we go, we find selfishness and self-interest rampant. That is why there are so many conflicts and differences in the world.

There are divisions even in one family. Due to the increase of differences among people, unity has been shattered. Therefore, strive for unity. You and your neighbour are one. There is difference only in your names, but Divinity immanent in both of you is the same. There is no mistake in calling people by different names when the divine principle of unity is firmly embedded in your heart.

Perform your duty as a householder. But this is your worldly duty, and you must recognise your duty as a divine being (*daiva dharma*), which is universal. That is why I address you as “embodiments of divine *Atma* (*Divyatma Swarupulara*)”. When a man wants to say that what he is saying is absolutely true, he would use the term ‘*Atma sakshi*’ meaning *Atma* is his witness. Therefore, we should conduct ourselves recognising the principle of *Atma*.

Unity of the world today has been destroyed due to the abnormal increase in the differences of people. Therefore, do not observe differences on the basis of names and forms. Develop faith in the *Atmic* principle. *Atma* is only one. It is indivisible and cannot be broken into pieces. Only the body dies, but the *Atma* lives forever. It is said that every human being undergoes the cycle of birth and death. But it is only the human body that takes birth, grows, and dies, not the *Atma*. Therefore, know the oneness of the *Atmic* principle.

Let people say anything, you should recognise that your *Atma* is your witness. Do not give up this divine principle under any circumstances. Whatever you do, do it for the sake of *Atma*. Whatever delicious items of food you eat, consider them as an offering to God. Whatever you do in life, do it with the feeling of offering it to God. “Do all actions to please God (*Sarva karma bhagavad preetyartham*).” When you have such sacred feelings, you can attain liberation easily.

One can attain *moksha* (liberation) only when one gives up *moha* (worldly attachment). The feeling of ‘I’ is the cause of ego and the feeling of ‘mine’ is the basis of attachment. Ego and attachment are the cause of your bondage. Therefore, first and foremost, try to get rid of ego and attachment. As much as you reduce these two, that much closer you will get to liberation. Less luggage more comfort makes travel a pleasure. Reduce the burden of your desires.

But people, on the other hand, keep on adding to the burden of desires as they grow. As their desires increase, humanness in them decreases, and they lose awareness of their Divinity. Therefore, we should develop Divinity in us. Everything else is bound to perish one day or the other. Howsoever safe and secure we may keep our possessions, ultimately we have to lose them. We may deposit all our money in a big bank, put it under lock and key, and arrange proper security for it. In spite of all that, we are bound to lose it some time or other. Do not have temptation for things that are perishable. What remains with us forever at all places is the principle of the *Atma*.

### **Develop the spirit of unity**

Though thousands of years have passed since Rama incarnated as the son of Dasaratha, all people, from a child to an old man, even today chant His name. People say, ‘Rama, Rama’ when they encounter any difficulty. This sacred name is whispered into the ears of a dying man. It is Rama’s name that you should love and nothing

else. Since He attracted everyone, He was given the name 'Rama'.

You may chant any name of God, but you should have firm faith that the *Atma* within you is the divine principle. Then you will not have any difficulties.

We accumulate so much money, but for whom? Can we carry even a paisa with us when we depart from this world? No, no. We leave even our body here. The mind may waver and the intellect may be clouded, but the *Atma* remains as the eternal witness. That is the principle of Rama.

The name Rama does not denote any particular form. It denotes the divine principle. Therefore, always chant the divine name, be it Rama, Krishna, or any other name. Siva means auspiciousness. It is only the name of God that imparts auspiciousness to us. We may say Srinivasa, Venkatesa, Rama, etc. All these denote the same divine principle. Install this divine principle in your heart.

People chant 'Ram, Ram, Ram,' performing repetition of the name. When the repetition comes to an end, Rama is also forgotten. But we should never forget Rama. Whatever work we may be doing, we should constantly chant the divine name. In the *Kali Yuga* (the present era), remembrance of the name (*namasmarana*) is prescribed as the means to attain liberation. Realising this truth, Guru Nanak started the practice of community singing. All should come together and sing *bhajans*. The mind of some may go in other directions. But at least a few of them will focus it on God's name. Therefore, when you do *bhajans* in a group, the prayers of at least one or two may reach God, which will benefit all.

Do we eat all the fruits that ripen on a tree? No. We eat only a few and distribute the rest to others. We prepare a desert in our house. All the family members partake of it; one who prepares it does not consume the whole lot.

When Dasaratha performed sacrifice for the birth of a son (*putrakameshti yajna*), an effulgent being emerged from the sacrificial fire and gave him a vessel of sweet pudding (*payasam*) to distribute to his three wives, Kausalya, Sumitra, and Kaikeyi. (Here Swami narrated the story of the birth of Rama, Lakshmana, Bharatha, and Satrughna and revealed the mystery why Lakshmana always followed Rama and Satrughna followed Bharatha.)

There was such a strong bond of love between Rama and Lakshmana as well as between Bharatha and Satrughna that they never left each other's company. See how much power this unity holds! Union is strength. When you don't talk to each other and don't develop unity, you achieve nothing. Even if some feelings of enmity arise in you, try to adjust with each other. Devotees should conduct themselves gracefully with proper understanding and adjustment. Even if someone criticises the deity you worship, do not react to that criticism. Rather, think only that your deity has assumed the form of the critic. Praise and censure make no difference to God.

Always love all. When you love everyone in this manner, all evil qualities like hatred, anger, and greed will leave you. When you become free from these evil qualities, you will attain liberation easily. You claim that you are a devotee, but what is the use when you have hatred, anger, jealousy, hypocrisy, malice, etc. in you? These evil qualities will ruin your life. Talk smilingly to others and develop the spirit of unity.

So many people have come here. All of them have participated in *bhajans*, but how many have true devotion in their heart? Even if there are ten people with true devotion, it is enough.

All of you should imbibe the spirit of unity. Whomsoever you come across, say, "He is my brother, she is my sister." In this way, consider all as your brothers and sisters and conduct yourself with unity. All are children of God. Therefore, if at any time feelings of hatred develop between you and others, remind yourself that you are

not separate from them. Consider that all are one, attain unity, and experience its bliss. Seeing unity in diversity is divinity and true spirituality. Study of scriptures, performing rituals, doing worship, etc. do not signify true spirituality. Recognising the unity of the *Atmic* principle is true spirituality. When you realise this unity, you will earn divine grace.

You are always chanting, “Sai Ram, Sai Ram, Sai Ram,” but this alone will not develop devotion in you. You should imbibe the spirit of unity and chant the divine name to develop true devotion. If you have even a trace of true devotion in you, do good to others and live in harmony with them. Do not hate anyone. Love all. If you have love and faith, you will develop nonviolence. Only then can you experience bliss.

### **Unity of the human race is imminent**

What is the real purpose of telling you to develop truth, righteousness, peace, and love? Righteousness emerges from truth. “There is no *dharma* greater than adherence to truth (*Sathyannasti paro dharma*).” Without truth, there can be no righteousness. Similarly, love cannot exist without righteousness. If you have love, you will not hate or disrespect anybody. Truth, righteousness, peace, and love (*sathya, dharma, santhi, and prema*) are the primary human qualities. Anger, jealousy, malice, hypocrisy, lust, hatred, and greed are not human qualities. If you have love and peace, all other virtues will develop in you automatically.

People keep on repeating, “I want peace, I want peace.” Can anybody get peace by this type of constant repetition? No, not at all. You can have peace only when you develop love. Peace is not a commodity that you can buy in the market. It comes from a heart that is filled with love.

Where does love come from? Love comes from righteousness, and righteousness comes from truth. Hence, truth is the source of righteousness, righteousness is the source of love, and love is the source of peace. Where there are both peace and love, nonviolence comes there on its own. Therefore, truth, righteousness, peace, love, and nonviolence are the qualities of a true human being. Consider them as your five life-breaths (*pancha pranas*).

Today, people have forgotten these five life-breaths of human qualities. Instead they harbour evil qualities like lust, anger, etc., considering them as their life-breaths. That is why people are enmeshed in so many difficulties. When you develop human qualities, you will surely attain peace. Therefore, preserve your innate human qualities like the five life-breaths. Keep away from evil qualities like lust, anger, etc.

Believe it or not, in the next 25 to 30 years, the entire human race will become one. People of all religions like Hindu, Muslim, Christian, etc. will be united. There will be complete unity in the world. It is from Bharat (India) that the spirit of devotion for God will spread to all other parts of the world. Treasure this truth in your heart.

People consider culture as a way of life. No, no, it is not so. Unity of all is culture; purity is culture. You will realise Divinity when you burn all your impurities. When you develop love, all your evil qualities like hatred, etc., will wither away.

People develop hatred and jealousy against those who excel them, saying, “Look how much money he accumulated! What a high position he attained!” They hate those who have greater achievements. This is not good. If someone has achieved more than you, consider your own incapability as the cause of your lesser achievement. Expand your love and broaden your heart. Then you will succeed in achieving more.

Victory and defeat depend on the feelings of your heart. It is with reference to this that the *Vedas* declare,

“The mind is the cause of bondage and liberation of man (*Manah eva manushyanam karanam bandhamokshayo*).” Our mind is the root cause of our feelings of love or hatred. Whatever work we do, we should do it with the spirit of unity. Perform all your actions to please God. That will surely lead to universal good.

After *bhajan*, we all chant, “May all the beings of all the worlds be happy (*Samasta lokah sukhino bhavantu*)! What is the great achievement if you alone are happy? All should be happy. Your happiness lies in the happiness of all, your well-being lies in the well-being of all. You cannot be happy when others are not happy. Therefore, pray for the welfare of all, including small creatures and insects. This is the real meaning of unity. Only the heart that desires the well-being of all is dear to God.

All that I have said today is profound truth. This is the essence of devotion. What does devotion mean? It is not a big ocean. It is an ocean of bliss. That is what is described as:

God is the embodiment of eternal bliss,  
Wisdom absolute,  
Beyond the pair of opposites,  
Expansive and pervasive like the sky,  
The goal indicated by the aphorism “That Thou Art,”  
One without a second,  
Eternal, pure, unchanging,  
Witness of all functions of the intellect,  
Beyond all mental conditions and the three attributes of purity (*sathwa*), passion (*rajas*),  
and inertia (*thamas*).

*Nityanandam,*  
*Parama Sukhadam,*  
*Kevalam Jnanamurtim,*  
*Dwandwateetam,*  
*Gagana Sadrisham,*  
*Tattwamasyadi Lakshyam,*  
*Ekam, Nityam, Vimalam,*  
*Achalam,*  
*Sarvadhee Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam, Trigunarahitam.*

We should attain this eternal bliss.

Brindavan, 2008-05-31

**D**o not postpone the cultivation of devotion to God. Start serving God through service to fellow beings. Every act of service, however small, is service to the Divine. Demonstrate, by reverential behaviour, selfless service, truthfulness, and integrity. Demonstrate that you are pursuing the ideals for which the Sathya Sai Educational institutions stand.

**Sri Sathya Sai Baba**