

## **20. Develop social consciousness**

TODAY, in the name of promoting education, all kinds of bizarre developments devoid of morality are taking place in the country. There is no trace of humility and discipline which are the hallmarks of true education. In the place of character and good conduct, which should be prevalent among students, we notice today the spread of materialism, ostentation and arrogance amongst them.

With the rapid advance of science and technology in the world, there is a corresponding decline in peace and security. Developing insatiable desires, the modern student is vitiating his mind. He lacks the capacity for introspection. But his external vision is turned in all directions.

The primary thing students should seek to know is: Who is a man and what are the qualities that distinguish a good human being? "Man" means an individual with faith. One's faith gets developed when one lives upto one's beliefs. The sacredness of the human being should be recognised.

There is no use in attempting to establish a new system of education or a new social system. By these means the current problems cannot be solved. We have to bring up a generation of pure-hearted boys and girls. To rear such a generation, there should be a climate of purity and sincerity. This calls for the development of morality and devotion to truth. Character and truth lead to the emergence of spirituality in the divine human personality. Hence, spirituality is the basic foundation for producing a generation of pure-hearted boys and girls. Only when we have such pure young persons, will the nation experience peace and prosperity. To lead a good life students will have to give up their selfishness. Unfortunately, the spirit of sacrifice is not to be seen among students today.

### **Wealth of spirit is greater than worldly wealth**

Students suffer today from some mental weaknesses. One of them is the feeling that wealth and position are essential for personal happiness and these alone should be sought after. This is wholly wrong. What is the inner significance of the fact that in the past great rulers like Janaka and Shivaji submitted themselves to sages like Yajnavalkya and saints like Samartha Ramadas? They lacked nothing in terms of wealth and power. But they esteemed the wealth of spirit as greater than all worldly wealth and power. Men like the Kauravas, who attached greater value to power and position, than to faith in the divine, came to a miserable end.

It is true that you need material wealth for a living. But wealth should not become the 'be-all and end-all' of life. Human life has come from the divine. When you dedicate your life to God and adhere to the path of righteousness you can sanctify life and achieve peace, happiness and prosperity

### **Self-management is the first requisite**

In the MBA course of studies, different areas of management--finance, marketing, etc., are taught. But more than all these, the most important area of study is 'self-management' or man-management. The individual who cannot manage himself, how is he going to manage anything else?

The first requisite, therefore, is 'self-management.' In this, there is no room for self-interest. No one can be an island unto himself. If a man is asked, for whose sake he is living, he may answer

that he is living for himself. When further questioned about his job, he will say he is working for the sake of his wife and children. When he is plied with further questions he will admit his dependence on society for meeting various needs of himself and his family. No individual or family can exist without depending on society.

Today, there are lakhs of people in authority or engaged in politics, business or other walks of life. Almost all of them are concerned only about themselves and their families and few are imbued with a social consciousness. What is the cause of all the evils plaguing society? It is the lack of sense of social responsibility. Every individual has to recognise his duty to society and understand that without society he cannot lead a family life.

Students, therefore, should develop a social consciousness. They should ask themselves how by each of their actions they can promote the welfare of society rather than the interest of themselves and their families. Everyone should feel: "I am a part of the society. My well-being is bound up with the well-being of others."

It is the decline of spirituality that has led to all the disorders and maladies in the country. In the world today, beginning with the human mind, everything, the air, water, etc., is polluted. All the five elements are contaminated. Man's life is based on these five elements. Hence, he is the embodiment of pollution in these elements. The sacredness of human life has been desecrated. Moral values are going down the slope everyday. The animal instincts in man are rampant. Only by fostering the divine nature in man, can this animality be destroyed and the human can rise to the level of the divine. For this, men must get rid of their selfishness.

### **Inverse relation between salaries and morals**

Education is essential as a preparation for serving society. For instance, the MBA students are hoping, after getting their degrees, to become managers of big companies and lead a comfortable life. Managerial jobs carry high salaries. The reason for the high income is inflation in prices caused by the failure of production to keep pace with the demand. Rise in income has been followed by a decline in morality. With the collapse of morals, the nation has become a prey to violence and disorder. Those receiving large incomes should ask themselves whether the work they do is commensurate with the salaries they get. In many enterprises, the expenses exceed the receipts. The absence of work ethic--the spirit of work--is responsible for this situation. The position in India is worse than in some other countries. Laziness is on the increase. Let the students compare the situation in Japan and Bharat. The Japanese have the 'spirit of work', they work hard. Hence, their productivity is high and they are able to keep the prices low. They do not abstain from work even during 'strikes'. In India, there is a clamour for high wages but there is no willingness to work harder. It is because of this attitude that the Indian economy is in a deplorable state.

### **"Work, work, work!" should be the motto**

Students are not ready to take up any kind of work. "Work, Work, Work"----that should be their motto. With no prospect of getting jobs, educated young men are getting frustrated and mentally upset and are turning into naxalites or terrorists. But students should not develop such perverted tendencies. They must think only of their duties. They should not wait for specific jobs of their choice.

On January 28, 1973, a plastics factory was started in a village called Balliapara near Calcutta. A chemical fluid was being discharged from the factory as an effluent. An oil-monger noticed the flow of this oily substance. He collected this effluent and mixed it with the edible oil he was selling to customers. When an epidemic of paralysis broke out in that village, striking down all men, women and children, an official enquiry revealed that the outbreak of paralysis was sequel to the consumption of the adulterated oil sold by the merchant. In their greed for filthy lucre, some businessmen are endangering sacred and precious human lives. A great deal of business today is of this nature. We cannot get pure milk, pure water or pure air. Every commodity is adulterated. Even a new car develops trouble the very next day. In this manner, all the necessities of life are contaminated.

Selfishness is at the bottom of this evil. It is growing on account of disregard for moral values. Morality means good conduct. Good conduct is based on recognition of right and wrong.

### **Develop the spirit of sacrifice**

Students should develop a spirit of sacrifice so that they are prepared to dedicate all their energies and talents to the service of others. For this purpose, they must cherish those moral values which will enable them to lead ideal lives. Wherever you may work and whomsoever you may meet, you should earn a good name. You should not behave in a conceited manner because of your high MBA degrees.

You must also remember what Prahlada revealed as the essence of all education--the contemplation of God. Once you have filled your heart with thoughts of the Divine, ideas of fraud and chicanery will not enter your minds. Only then will you be able to make the right use of all the varied knowledge you have acquired in your management studies.

The students of our Institute are good boys. They are pure by nature, but are likely to be affected by the environment outside when they go out into the world. To keep your minds pure in such environment, fill your hearts with love and keep your daily actions pure and unsullied. Students should also learn to avoid wasting of food, time, money and energy. When you move in the outside world, your life should be exemplary. Look upon God as your only true friend. Follow the dictates of your conscience.

You should develop into ideal managers. When you bring credit to this Institute by your behaviour, that will be the best way of showing your gratitude to your Alma Mater. We seek nothing else from you. Earn for yourself a good name. Lead an ideal life. Thereby you will be pleasing your parents and the Institute where you have studied.

*Discourse in the Institute's Auditorium, on 22-7-1991, as Chancellor of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, while inaugurating a four-day Management Development Programme.*

*Prema is the weapon; Vichara is the wheel which must be revolved perpetually to get the light of Prema. Until Prema emerges, you have to be in the darkness of hatred, where even the slightest movement creates fear and suspicion.*

*BABA*