

30. Earn a good name

DEAR Students! Today you have listened to reports about the service activities carried on by the "Messengers of Sathya Sai." As pointed out by their office-bearers (in their speeches earlier at the meeting), women all through their lives labour under many constraints. During their tenure as students they are in the custody of their parents. Then they come under the regime of their husbands and parents-in-law. As they grow older, they get involved in the responsibilities to their children.

In spite of these constraints and obligations, they have been able to adhere to the disciplines acquired in their college and engage themselves in service activities and develop their organization "Messengers of Sathya Sai" continually. Whether one is a student or any other person, one should always remain grateful for the benefits one has received from others. The foremost quality every human being should have is gratitude. Without it, man ceases to be human. It is because today men have ceased to cherish gratitude that they have become a prey to many ills.

Sun-God's penalty for ingratitude

In the worship of the Sun-God, certain *mantras* are used (invoking the different attributes of the deity). Among the names recited in praise of the Sun-God are: "*Himaghnaaya namah*" (prostrations to the dispeller of snow!; "*Tamaghnaaya namah*" (prostrations to the "*Kritaghnaaya namah*" destroyer of darkness), (prostrations to the destroyer of the ungrateful). The Sun is hailed as the melter of snow and the dispeller of darkness in the first two names. The third name describes the Sun-God as one who gives up those who forget the good done to them.

How does the Sun-God give up the ungrateful? The *Vedas* have declared that the Sun emerged from the eyes of *Viraat Purusha* (the Cosmic person). The Sun's radiance illumines the eyes of a human being. When the *mantra* declares that the Sun-God goes away from the one who is ungrateful, its inner meaning is that the Sun-God makes the ungrateful person blind and withdraws from him the power of sight. Today persons guilty of ingratitude go about as blind persons or as ignorant beings devoid of the real power of sight. Every person should therefore cherish the sense of gratitude.

These former students (of the Anantapur College) after the completion of their studies, when they took up some jobs, resolved to offer to Swami their first month's salary as a token of gratitude. There are several thousands of such old students. Many of them, even after marriage, have been coming to Bhagavan regularly and often bringing their husbands and children with them. This kind of devotion stems from their deep sense of gratitude.

During the past year, they engaged themselves in a variety of service activities out of their devotion to Swami. On the occasion of Bhagavan's sixtieth birthday, sixty cottages were built for the poor. The enthusiasm and spirit of sacrifice of these old students were responsible for the construction of these cottages.

Offer not money but love

Last year, with view to offering to Bhagavan their first month's earnings, the old students brought two lakhs of rupees to be given to Swami. Their love is priceless. Wealth has value, but

love is invaluable. Your gratitude is the most precious thing. It is enough if you cherish this feeling. There is no need for you to make this kind of offering of money.

Even now, they have brought cheques for lakhs of rupees (as offering to Swami). But what I desire from you is your love. It is enough for Me if you adhere to the disciplines of the Sathya Sai Institute wherever you may be.

If after you get married, your parents-in-law hold you in high esteem as girls who were educated in the Sathya Sai Institute and if your husbands feel that they have been specially fortunate in marrying girls educated in the Institute, that will be sufficient reward for Me. What you must offer to Me is the good name that you are able to earn. You have to set an example of ideal womanhood. You have to impart right ideals to the children. Only then will Bharat achieve real prosperity. There is nothing greater than being exemplary mothers and women of good repute.

Dear girl students! I desire that you should devote yourselves to social service in the villages, run educational classes for the children and render whatever service the elderly people may require. I am returning your cheques so that you may use the funds for these service activities. I bless you all (Swami returned the cheques to the President of the Organization).

Cherish gratefulness

Do not seek to offer such monetary contributions to Me in the future. Engage yourselves in pure activities with pure hearts and earn a good name. What you have to offer to Me is the good name earned by you. This is the highest expression of your gratitude. You should earn the approbation of the public as students of the Institute.

Do not bring a bad name to the Institute by your conduct in the outside world. It does not matter much if you fail to bring a good name to the Institute, but in no circumstances should you bring it a bad name. Even if you fail to be helpful to others, do not cause harm to others.

Students should bear this in mind. Not students alone, but all spiritual aspirants should cherish in their hearts with gratitude the good done to them by others and always remember whatever form in which help was rendered to them. Only those who lead such grateful lives will be able to find peace and happiness in their lives.

I desire that all of you ("The Messengers of Sathya Sai") should constantly think of God, continue to render social service, lead ideal family lives and enjoy peace and happiness. This is My benediction for all of you.

Discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 25-12-1991 when large contributions were offered to Swami by the former students of the Sri Sathya Sai College for Women at Anantapur.

Students must bear in mind that their life is determined by their actions, whether they are good or bad. The other determining factor is Time. Time is all-powerful. It is not subject to anyone. All are subject to it. It rolls on without beginning or end. Rama's exile, Ravana's death, emperor Bali's descent to the nether world, Sibi's supreme sacrifice, the ordeals of the Pandavas---are all examples of the power of Time over the destinies of men. It is only when

*one's actions are harmonised with the dictates of Time can one
enjoy the bliss called Thrupti.*

BABA