

Direct Your Mind Toward God

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Embodiments of Love!

In the modern world, the life of a person is very peculiar. Knowing full well what is good, what is bad, what is noble, what is mean, a person is not able to tread along the right path. One knows what is good, but one does not follow that. One knows what is bad, but one is not able to get away from that. What is the reason for this? It is only weakness that is responsible for it. One indulges in evil acts but wants the merit of good acts. One is not prepared to face the consequences of one's evil deeds.

Put a limit on your desires

Some evils have gone into the heart and have made one go along the wrong path. These are mainly two: one is desire (*kama*) and the other is anger (*krodha*). Desire drives one toward animality; it converts human quality into animal quality. Howsoever highly educated one may be—a great scientist, a person of authority and high position—one is unable to control desires. We can lead a truly human life only when we are able to control our desires. Excessive desires cause delusion in humanity.

In the *Ramayana*, we find the example of Ravana. He was highly educated, very rich, and powerful. Despite all this, he brought about his ruin. Why? He could not control his desires. He lost his discrimination due to his evil desires and could not recognise what was good and what was bad.

Not only should we have control of desires, we should have control over our senses also. Just because we are gifted with eyes, we shouldn't make use of them in any way we like. We have ears. That does not mean that we should hear anything and everything. Similarly, we shouldn't use our tongue in any way we like. Never speak anything that may hurt anybody. Never injure the feelings of others with harsh words.

We are endowed with a powerful mind. It moves about as per its will. There is a limit to wind velocity, but the speed of the mind has no limit. It broods over all unnecessary things. We have hands. We should do no wrong with our hands.

See no evil, see what is good;
Hear no evil, hear what is good;
Talk no evil, talk what is good;
Think no evil, think what is good;
Do no evil, do what is good;
This is the way to God.

We should see that all that enters our senses is good. We should give no scope to anything evil. Bad company (*dussanga*) is responsible for our evil qualities. So, run away from bad company. Otherwise, your life will go along the wrong path due to the effect of bad company.

When dust on earth associates with air, it goes up in the sky. It has no wings to go up. The same dust in association with water will go down. To go down it has no legs either. But one way it goes up, the other way it goes down. What is the reason? The reason is friendship. When it has friendship with the wind, it goes up. When it has friendship with water, it goes down. Air has the nature to fly high, while water goes down. Even if you pour water on the mountain top, it will go down. Because of association, a person acquires good or bad qualities. So, get away from bad company.

Exercise control over your senses

It is not enough to be away from bad company. Suppose you are a diabetic patient. It is not enough to take medicine, you should also control your diet. Along with medicine, control over the diet will give you relief, cure. So, it is not enough if you leave bad company; you should also join good company. Have friendship with good people.

Who are good? Who are bad? Human life has certain limitations. Society has some regulations. Based on the rules of society, who is good? The one with three qualities is good. What are those qualities? Love for God, fear of sin, and morality in society (*daiva preeti*, *papa bheeti*, and *sangha neeti*). These three qualities will take man to noble heights.

When there is fear of sin, one will have love for God. With love for God, one can develop morality in society. The one with these three qualities is a real human being.

These three qualities are related to heart, head, and hand. This is not EHV (education in human values). It is 3HV. The first H stands for heart; the second H, head; and the third H, hand. Have control over these three. Only then will human qualities develop in us.

Today, we have lost human values. What is the reason for this degeneration? Only desire and anger. Ravana did not make proper use of his vision (*drishti*). He looked at Sita in a bad way. Whomsoever you look at, you should have goodness in the mind. Your eyes are sacred. Always make sacred use of them.

Your vision (*drishti*) is equal to creation (*srishti*). The vision can burn down the world to ashes. It can also save and protect it. So, make proper use of your vision. It is only due to your bad vision that bad thoughts develop in you.

Ravana brought about his ruination because of bad vision and bad thoughts. Hanuman felt that such a wicked demon should be punished. In the court of Ravana, Hanuman started accusing him, "You are not a man of character. Although you are rich, powerful, and educated, you have no control of your senses. From the worldly point of view you are in a high position, but your senses have caused your moral downfall. So, you cannot escape punishment."

When Hanuman accused Ravana, Ravana was angry. In his anger, he set Hanuman's tail on fire. With the fire of his tail, Hanuman burnt down the whole of Lanka. The flames spread everywhere. Hanuman sat on a tree and thought that Ravana deserved that punishment. Only then did his anger subside.

After his anger subsided, Hanuman thought, "In the same Lanka, mother Sita is there. I did not exercise my discrimination. I have burnt down Lanka. What is going to happen to mother Sita? I came here thinking of her welfare. I have completely spoiled the purpose for which Rama sent me here. The reason is my anger.

A man with anger will not be successful in any endeavour.

He will commit sins and will be ridiculed by one and all.

His own people will abandon him.

He will lose all wealth and respect.

His anger will ruin him completely.

(Telugu Poem)

That is what Hanuman thought. It is only Ravana's desire that caused his ruin. He harboured an evil desire, which he could not control.

As are the thoughts, so is the result

One may have desires, but one should never have excessive desires. You are thirsty. It is enough if you get a tumbler full of water. In the forest, if you are thirsty and desire a tumbler of water, be satisfied if you get it. Do not desire a cool drink in a forest. How can you get it in a forest? That is excessive desire.

The entire universe is the embodiment of Lord Vishnu. It is the very form of God and a wish-fulfilling tree (*kalpa vriksha*). It will fulfil all your desires. So, there is a scope for fructification of every thought of man.

However, a bad thought will give you bad result and a good thought will give you good result. Here is a small example.

Walking in the scorching heat of the sun in a forest, a man came across a huge tree and stopped under it to take rest. This was a wish-fulfilling tree, but the traveller was not aware of this fact. As soon as he thought how nice it would be to get some drinking water, he saw a pot full of cold water before him.

Getting relief from his fatigue by drinking water, he felt hungry and thought how happy he would be if he could get delicious food also to satiate his hunger! His happiness and surprise became manifold when a sumptuous meal appeared before him.

After eating the delicious food to his fill, he felt sleepy and thought how wonderful it would be if there was a soft bed on which he could sleep happily. At that very moment, a soft bed appeared before him as desired by him. As the wayfarer lay down on the bed, he thought how nice it would have been if his wife was there to press his feet! The very next moment, he found his wife before him.

Extremely surprised to see his wife there, he thought, "My wife lives in the village. It would take her two days to reach here. How could she reach here instantly as I thought of her? Perhaps she is not my wife; rather some goblin has appeared in her form who will now eat me up."

The wish-fulfilling tree would give whatever one desired. Hence, a goblin at once appeared there and swallowed him up.

God is also like a wish-fulfilling tree for those who take refuge in Him. Whatever they ask from God, He grants their request and gives the desired thing. Wise people pray to God only for His grace, which can give them everything. Those who start asking God for this thing and that thing are foolish. They ultimately ask for something that brings about their disaster. That is why it is said, as is the mind (*mathi*), so is the destiny (*gathi*).

The moral of the story is: As is the thought, so is the result. When the traveller desired water, it came. Should he not be satisfied with that? Still he wanted bed. Should he not be satisfied after he got the bed? Excessive desires only put him to danger. So, we should have control over our desires.

Desire and anger are animal qualities

When you have desire in your heart, you are not able to do anything good because the desire becomes an obstacle. It is only your desire that makes you think of doing something bad. We say we have enemies. Who are the enemies? Those who harm you or hurt you are your enemies. Those enemies are within you. Both anger and desire harm and hurt you and cause pain to you.

Your mental restlessness is due to your anger and desire. Anger can be controlled when you put a ceiling on your desires. In human life, there are desires. They should be there; there is no mistake

in it. But they should be limited. If they are excessive, you can never fulfill them.

As is the vessel, so is the water collected. There is plenty of water in the Ganga. In the ocean, there is a lot of water. But you can collect the water depending on the measure of the vessel. You cannot collect the whole lot. If you want more, have a bigger container. So, develop divine power.

To satisfy all sorts of worldly desires without developing divine power is contrary to human nature. Anger and desire are the qualities of animals. Therefore, keep a distance from animal qualities. That is spirituality.

What do you mean by spirituality? Not merely devotional songs (*bhajans*), penance, or worship. No! You should get rid of the animal qualities within you. Anger and desire are your real enemies. Put them under control. If you allow them liberty, you cannot escape from danger and restlessness.

Control, control, control; everything needs a control. There should be limits. This is what the *Vedas* say. There can be no welfare without discipline. When your body parameters are within limits, you are healthy. When the limit is crossed, it indicates disease.

Our body temperature is 98.4 degrees Fahrenheit. It is perfect normal temperature. If it is 99 degrees, it shows fever. Similarly, blood pressure of 120 by 80, is perfectly normal. If it is 90, heart disease commences. The eyes can see within a limit. If you look at high intensity rays of light, your retina may get burnt.

Our lives are within a limit. Human life is a limited company. Starting in a limited company, if you go beyond the limit, you will be punished, you will be taxed. You should never face any sort of punishment.

If you want to reach divinity, escaping punishment, proceed in a limited way. There should be a limit in talking, seeing, walking, thinking. Everything should be within limits. But today we cross all limits. Our desires are limitless. Reduction of desires in *Vedanta* is called renunciation (*vairagya*). Renunciation means reduction in desires.

Life is a long journey. Reduce the burden of your desires. *Less luggage, more comfort makes travel*

a pleasure. Carrying too heavy luggage on the long journey of life is troublesome.

The luggage is desires. Gradually, reduce your desires. When you reduce worldly desires, spiritual desires will increase. People today aspire for spirituality but go on increasing worldly desires. People develop too much attachment. It is not attachment that is important.

Detachment is the royal path in spirituality. How? You have a family, children, a house. Do your duty. Duty is God. Work is worship. But do not have too much attachment. Educate your children, give them food, take care of them. But do not have too much attachment to them. A small example.

Sacrifice is yoga

There are birds. The mother bird will take care of the young ones and feed them. How long? Until they develop wings. The moment the young ones develop wings, the mother bird will drive them out of the nest to lead their own lives.

But humanity is not like that. Until death one is attached. Is that spirituality? Certainly not! Gradually, reduce attachment. If you have attachment toward your children until death, when will you release yourself? You do all that you are supposed to do. When you have done that, then have attachment with the Divine. It is not worldly attachment.

Worldly attachment is needed to some extent. So, when a person observes limits in their life, they will have bliss supreme (*paramananda*). It is because of attachment that people face a lot of restlessness (*asanthi*).

Leaving your house, parents, relatives —everyone— you have come here from far off places. Then why should you develop new attachments here? Just say, hello, hello. How are you? How are you? Goodbye. But you are developing new relationships. Because of this, your luggage is becoming heavy. Here is a small example.

When you release cotton or a piece of paper in the air, it will go up. What is the reason behind this? Because they are light in weight, they go up. So, if a person also is light, they will go up in spirituality. But today, people have burdened themselves with the heavy weight of desires. So, they ruin themselves. How do you expect them to attain liberation? A person says many things but does not do even one

thing. We should be light. We should reduce the weight. Then we can rise to noble heights.

If you have too much attachment, you are sure to ruin yourself. The one with worldly attachment is no devotee.

In order to cut down attachment, people used to go to the forest in earlier times. But there is no need to go to the forest. Just do your duty. In the house, you have spouse and children. Take care of them. Reduce your worldly desires. If help is solicited, then help. But don't develop attachment.

You are ageing. Still, you have no spirit of sacrifice. People today have no sacrifice (*thyaga*). Sacrifice is yoga. Worldly pleasure (*bhoga*) is disease (*roga*). Observe limit in worldly pleasure. So, it is good to reduce your desires.

Realise the value of human birth

In spite of reading sacred texts, in spite of listening to *Vedanta*, if one does not practise, one just makes one's brain a book. A library has a big building. There are lakhs of books in it, but each book has one subject. If one questions the library room, it does not respond. There are plenty of books in the library room, but the room does not give reply to one's questions. In the same manner, we are collecting all worldly matter in our head. We make our head a library room. All information is dumped in it, but there is no reply even to one question. What is the reason? The reason is lack of practice.

So, never make your head a library room. Enter the practical field. This is true spirituality. In spite of going to noble souls, in spite of listening to *Vedanta*, if you don't practise, then everything is useless. Having come from far off places, do not develop unnecessary connections, which will make you restless. Sit in solitude and contemplate on the Lord. Truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names (*Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadhanti*).

We should broaden our vision; we should consider the universe as the very form of God.

When you look at jewels, you think of their name and form, e.g. necklace, bangle, earrings, etc. You don't think of the matter, the gold of which they are all made. Similarly, the entire matter and objects in the universe are the manifestation of the

same Divinity. All are one, everything is Divinity.

Offer all your acts to please the Lord. Never think that God is at a separate place and you are distant from Him. Realise oneness. Only then will divine feelings start manifesting in you.

Gradually practise less talking, less hearing, and less seeing. It is very essential to see less. If you don't find anybody, you look through binoculars. Why? What is the harm if you don't see? See only that which has to be seen. Why should you see unnecessary things? That is not good. That is bondage. You are bound by senses and mind also.

You preach Vedanta but do not practise even its one teaching. You are heroes in speeches but zeros in practice. You should be heroes in practice. Only then can you have fulfillment in life.

Human life is very sacred, noble, and fragrant with virtues. We are just bartering away such a valuable human life for the charcoal of wordly possessions. Human life is highly valuable. In this world, nothing is more valuable than this.

We think the diamond is valuable. But who attaches value to the diamond? Only people! We say gold is valuable. Who attaches value to gold? Humanity! Bungalow and land have value. Who attaches value to them? Humanity!

People have the highest value. People are more valuable than all the wealth of the world. Wealth is not important. But human value is more important than anything in this world.

As human beings, we should develop human values. When there are no values, what is the fun of having everything else? Dhritarashtra had everything in plenty. He had progeny, he had companions. But what was the use? Because of his bad thoughts, he was highly restless.

We may be rich. We may have costly silk beds and sofas. We may install air-conditioners in our house. When we sit there, the body is cool, but the head is hot. What is the reason? There is no mental peace. When there is no mental peace, there is no use of an air-conditioned room. This is not proper condition. Make your condition proper. Control your mind.

The mind is very important. The mind is the cause of bondage and liberation (*Manah eva manushya-*

nam karanam bandhamokshayo). It is the mind that binds or liberates.

Mind is key to attachment and detachment

Here is a door. You have put a lock on the door. Put the key in the lock. When you turn the key right, the lock opens. When you turn the key left, it closes. The same key, the same lock. The idifference is only in turning.

Your heart is the lock, the mind is the key. Turn the mind toward the world, there is attachment. Turn the mind toward God to get detachment. For attachment and detachment, the mind is responsible. So, direct your mind toward God.

Look at your mother. See God in your mother. Look at your son, see God in him. See your husband. Because he is 'husband', don't 'bend' him! See God in your husband also. See God in everyone. Whomsoever you salute, it reaches God ultimately. But do not have excessive connections.

Swami is watching. Many old people are here. They have been listening to Swami's discourses over many years, but when once they go out from here, they develop attachment. Atheism is increasing in people on seeing such persons. The reason is absence of devotion.

People have no faith in these people because they don't do what they say. So, do what you say! Only then will you earn respect. Fill your life with divine love and experience bliss. You don't get it out of sacred texts. It cannot be taught by others. It comes out of the Self. That is Self-realisation. That Self is God. That is real bliss.

Don't project your vision outward. Turn the vision inward. Enquire what you are doing is right or wrong. Question yourself, "Is it right or wrong? Is it yes or no?" Then your conscience will give you a clear reply. Your conscience will lead to the right path. As you do that, chant the Lord's Name.

—Bhagavan's discourse in Sai Sruthi, Kodai-kanal, on 6 April 1993.