

Follow the Religion of Love Sri Sathya Sai Baba

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A vessel of brass makes much sound, while
one of gold does not do so.

Similarly, only mean-minded persons indulge
in pomp and show.

Where is the need for a real devotee to in-
dulge in showmanship?

(Telugu poem)

Modern students aspire for wealth, friendship,
and high position but not virtues. Students
have no business indulging in ostentation.
Good qualities, good practices, and good
behaviour are the hallmarks of a student.
Pomp and show is not expected.

But, unfortunately, students today are acting
contrary to all that. They waste their time in
bad company, bad thoughts, and bad be-
haviour.

To realise is religion

Brass and gold both look alike. But a vessel
of brass makes much more noise than one
made of gold. Students should not indulge in
showmanship and tall talk. Always talk
sweetly and softly, with humility. You cannot
always oblige, but you can always speak
obligingly. Always talk decently and respect-
fully and conduct yourself befittingly as an
ideal student.

One's mind, destiny, position, and wealth
(*mati*, *gati*, *stithi*, and *sampatti*), are gifts of
God. How is one to make use of them? It is
most important to develop the qualities of
equality, solidarity, integrity, and amity.

But man today has changed his *mati* (mind)
into *durmati* (wicked mind). It is *mati* that
makes man good or bad. Improper use of *mati*
makes a man egoistic. All the *matas* (reli-
gions) have their origin in *mati*. It is the
source of all the religions of the world.

All religions impart only good teachings.
One should understand this truth and act
accordingly.

If *mati* (mind) is good, how can any *mata*
(religion) be bad?

Listen! Oh valiant sons of Bharat.

(Telugu Poem)

All the religions of the world teach the same
fundamental truths and prompt man to follow
dharma (right conduct). All of them teach one
to respect one's mother, father, and preceptor.
One should develop broad-mindedness, res-
pect the elders, and earn a good name.

You find fault with other religions only due to
defects in your own mind. Therefore, make
proper use of your mind.

What is the real meaning of religion? To
realise is religion. Follow the religion of love.
This is the sacred principle that all religions
of the world teach. Even if one is not able to
rise to the level of God, one should at least
lead a life like a true human being.

Only one who leads life with humility and
amity is a true human being. This truth is
propounded by the *Gita*:

One who contemplates on the all-wise, age-
less Being,
The ruler of all,

Subtler than the subtle,
The universal sustainer,
Possessing a form beyond human concep-
tion,
Refulgent like the sun and far beyond the
darkness of ignorance,
—That one reaches verily that Supreme Be-
ing.

*Kavim Puranamanushasitaram
Anoraniyansamanusmaret Ya,
Sarvasya Dhataramachintyarupam
Adityavarnam Tamasa Parastat...*

(Sanskrit Verse)

Who is a *kavi* (poet)? Is *kavi* a human being? No, no. Some people may join a few words, write rhyming lines, and call themselves poets. Unless the words already exist, how can they join them together? Words did exist before man, and God created them.

Then who can be truly called a poet? One who knows the past, present, and future is a true poet (*Trikala darshana kavi*). Therefore, God alone is the true *kavi*.

What does the term *puranam* signify? It does not refer to the *puranas* like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. The *Vedas* refer to the human body as *puram* (city). Therefore, the consciousness that pervades this *puram* is called *puranam*. This divine consciousness shines in every individual.

Puranam therefore refers to divinity in humanity. This divinity is not limited to an individual but is immanent in all (it is not *vyashti swarupa* but *samashti swarupa*). Divinity is uniformly present in all in the form of consciousness. That is why the *Vedas* declare: God is the indweller of all beings (*Easwara sarva bhutanam*).

In this world, various rules and regulations prescribe different types of punishments for mistakes or crimes. That which prescribes the code of conduct for humanity is *Sastra* (the scriptures) (*Sasanam vachanam iti sastram*).

A thief who commits theft is caught by police and put in jail. Only his body is under lock

and key in the jail. Nobody can imprison his mind, which is free to roam wherever it likes. It may go to his home or to the market or to his friend's house. A ruler can exercise control over the body of his subjects, but he has no power to control their mind.

God alone can control the mind of individuals. Therefore, the word *Anushasitaram* refers to God.

Man should live like a human being

The *Upanishads* refer to God as: He who shines with great brilliance and who is beyond the darkness of ignorance (*Adityavarnam tamasa parastat*). He shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and illumines the mind and intellect of everyone.

The realized sages of *Vedic* times declared: I have visualised the Supreme Being, who shines with the effulgence of a billion suns and who is beyond the darkness of ignorance (*Vedahametam purusham mahantam adityavarnam tamasa parastat*).

These sages declared that they had seen God. Where did they see Him? They saw Him beyond darkness. What does darkness con-
note? It connotes ignorance. The sages saw Him not in this physical and external world but in the inner world, in the firmament of their inner being. In every human being, God shines beyond the darkness of ignorance with all effulgence.

When one leads one's life like a human being and conducts oneself like a human being, one can become God himself. Then one will become eternal, like gold that does not change with the passage of time.

If you sow a seed, it undergoes change after some time. But if you dig a pit and keep gold in it, it will not undergo any change, no matter how long you keep it. If you put it in fire, it does not get destroyed; rather, it shines with added brilliance. But the same cannot be said

of brass. Likewise, when the human mind is subjected to the process of refinement, its effulgence does not diminish. Rather, it becomes more pure and effulgent.

People should make efforts to understand the nature of their mind. When one looks at both gold and brass, they may look alike. But when you put them on fire, you will know the difference. Likewise, salt and camphor may look alike, but when you put them on your tongue, you will know the difference. Similarly, people cannot be judged by their outward appearance.

People should make efforts to lead their life in a manner befitting their human birth. Today, one sees human beings only in form but not in practice.

One who lives in this world should first behave like a human being.

One is a fool who goes on praising the misdeeds of others.

Acquire the knowledge of the *Atma* and have the vision of the *Atma*.

This is the essence of all knowledge.

This is the teaching of the *Vedas*.

(Telugu Poem)

These are the truths that are propounded by the *Vedas*. These are the goal of all paths. These are the support of all living beings and the root of all creation.

One should make efforts to conduct oneself like a true human being. All thoughts, feelings, and actions should be pure and sacred. One should develop high character and cultivate the qualities of generosity and amity and attain blessedness. Proper education is essential to attain the state of blessedness.

Make God your Charioteer

Vid means illumination. Therefore, that which illumines the intellect of man is *vidya* (education). It makes humanness shine in humanity. But modern education creates agi-

tation in instead of bringing about elevation. Today wherever you look, there is agitation.

Modern students are lazy in studies and active in taking part in agitations. Laziness is rust and dust. Realisation is best and rest. Therefore, never give room to laziness. It is not the quality of a student.

Only those who are not interested in studies develop this bad quality of laziness and waste their time, money, and energy, thereby causing great anxiety to their parents. When students indulge in strikes, their parents suffer from great anxiety about their future.

Students should bring a good name to their parents. They should realise that their blood, food, and head are gifts of their parents. Therefore, they should have gratitude for their parents. They should not cause anxiety to them. You should become such ideal students.

I lovingly call such students *bangaru* (nuggets of gold)! All students should become nuggets of gold. What type of gold? Not rolled gold but pure gold! How can you become pure gold? You can become pure gold only when you develop purity of heart and sacred feelings and lead an ideal life by practising purity of thought, word, and deed (*trikarana suddhi*).

It is said: The proper study of mankind is man. One should cultivate the qualities of kindness and compassion. Only then does one deserve the title of human. You are not only people, but humanity!

Today, people use the word *mankind* or *humanity* without understanding its real meaning. One can rise to the level of divine if one develops virtues.

God is not somewhere else. You yourself are God. You are not different from God if you have a pure heart. God is the eternal charioteer, who is always present in your heart. He is only a charioteer and not the owner; you are the owner.

Lord Krishna is called *Parthasarathi* because He became the charioteer of Partha (Arjuna). Krishna was only a charioteer, but the owner was Partha. In the same way, when you develop purity of heart and sacred feelings, God will be your charioteer and take you on the right path. Therefore, choose God as your charioteer and lead an ideal life.

Service to others is service to God

About 90 years ago, a wealthy person named Wadia lived in Nanded, during the time of Shirdi Sai Baba. He wanted to visit Shirdi, and he sought the guidance of Das Ganu. He told him that he was quite well to do but had no children. He said, "What is the use of all my wealth when I have no children? Since I am going to Shirdi for the first time, please tell me how I should go."

In the same village, there lived a kind-hearted Muslim, whom people used to call, Moulisaheb. He worked as a coolie and led a very hard but ideal life. He spoke good and kind words to everyone and advised them to lead an ideal life. He himself first practised whatever he told others to follow.

Once he was not able to find any work for many days and had no food to eat. Consequently, he became very weak. Nobody came to help him.

One day when he was lying on the pavement, this wealthy person, Wadia, saw him in that pitiable condition. After coming to know that he had had no food for many days, Wadia told the owner of a hotel to give him food, for which he would make payment. Moulisaheb thanked Wadia and expressed his gratitude to God. He said, God is great and is the refuge of the forlorn.

God is your sole refuge wherever you may
be,
In a forest, in the sky,
In a city, in a village,
On the top of a mountain, or

In the middle of deep sea.

(Telugu Poem)

After getting guidance from Das Ganu, Wadia visited Shirdi, along with his wife. When he went for Baba's *darshan* (sight of the Lord), Baba asked him to give five rupees as a tip (*dakshina*). Since he was a rich person, Wadia immediately started taking money out of his pocket. He was wearing a long coat, which had big pockets.

Those days there were no five-rupee or two-rupee or one-rupee notes. Only coins were in vogue. When he offered these coins worth five rupees to Baba, Baba said, "Wadia! Now I don't need five rupees from you. Give me only one rupee and two annas, because you have already given me three rupees and fourteen annas."

Wadia could not understand what Baba was saying. He thought, "People speak very highly of Baba, but is he really a great man or only a madcap? When did I come to Shirdi before? This is the first time I am meeting him. Then, how can he say that he has already received three rupees and fourteen annas from me? How is it possible? Anyhow, I had his *darshan*." Thinking thus, he offered one rupee and two annas to Baba and left for Nanded.

The next day, Das Ganu came to meet him and asked, "You went to Shirdi, isn't it? What happened there?"

Wadia was not satisfied after meeting Baba. He told Das Ganu, "Baba didn't appear to me like a great man. Rather, he looked like a madcap. However, there may be some divine power even in a madcap. But I don't hold him in high esteem."

Das Ganu asked him to narrate what had happened. Wadia said, "As soon as I met Baba, he asked for five rupees as *dakshina*. I offered him five rupees, and he said that I had already given him three rupees and fourteen annas, so I should give him only one rupee

and two annas. I had not seen Baba before. Why did he say this?"

Das Ganu was a great devotee of Baba. He thought about the matter and said to himself, "Baba doesn't utter anything without meaning. He is present everywhere and in all beings. If Baba said this, there must be a reason for it." He told Wadia, "You are mistaken. There may be some defect in you, but there can be no defect in Baba."

Das Ganu asked Wadia, "Have you given any money or performed any act of charity during this time?" Wadia said, "While I was going in a *tonga* three days prior to my visit to Shirdi, I happened to meet Moulisaheb, who was lying on a pavement in a pitiable condition because he was without food for many days. I instructed the owner of a hotel to give him food, for which I would make the payment."

"How much did you pay?" asked Das Ganu.

Wadia sent a servant to the hotel and found that the total bill was three rupees and fourteen annas. Then Das Ganu said, "Look here, those three rupees and fourteen annas you paid only to Baba and not to anyone else. Whomever you serve, it amounts to serving Baba. Nothing happens without his Will."

Not even a blade of grass will move without
Divine Will.

Why to say this or that?

God pervades everything from an ant to
Brahma.

People who do not realise this truth get carried
away by their pride of intelligence
and knowledge.

But no one, however great they may be,
knows what lies ahead for them in
future.

(Telugu Poem)

How can you say what is going to happen in the next moment? Everything is the divine play of God. God is present in all. Whomever you serve, it amounts to serving God. This is the main principle of Indian culture. All religions vouchsafe this truth.

Das Ganu told Wadia, "You paid three rupees and fourteen annas to Moulisaheb, and that amount reached Baba. That is why Baba accepted only one rupee and two annas from you. The stories of God are so wonderful and mysterious! Therefore, do not form wrong notions about Baba."

Wadia was surprised to hear all this. "Baba's calculation is correct and perfect. It is my lack of intelligence that I did not realise his greatness", he thought to himself.

Next day, Wadia and his wife set out for Shirdi again, taking Das Ganu with them. There is always some delay when women accompany you. Before Wadia and his wife reached there, Das Ganu went ahead and met Baba.

Baba asked Das Ganu, "What did Wadia say? How much money did he give to Moulisaheb?"

By this time, Wadia reached there and heard all this conversation between Das Ganu and Baba. Realising the omniscience of Baba, he fell at his feet and sought his forgiveness.

Being a rich man, he had taken a basketful of fruits to offer to Baba, which included some bananas. Baba took out four bananas from the basket, called to Wadia's wife, and gave the bananas to her. When Baba offered these bananas to her, she took them in the loose end of her sari. Baba told her, "Eat all these bananas; do not give them to anyone else. You will have four sons."

Prior to coming to Baba, Wadia had gone to many mendicants (*sadhus*), renunciants (*san-yasis*), and astrologers. The astrologers were happy to find a rich client like Wadia and extracted a lot of money from him. They told him all sorts of things, such as this planet or that planet was not favourable to him. But none of their predictions came true. Ultimately, he came to Baba and received his blessings.

As foretold by Baba, next year Wadia was blessed with a very chubby son. Wadia and his wife brought the child to Shirdi and placed him at the feet of Baba.

Follow the principles of Indian culture

It is not possible for anyone to know the ways of God. Nobody can say when, where, and how anything will happen.

Having attained human birth, you should live like a human being. Then, God Himself will acknowledge your merit. For this, your mind should be clean and pure like a mirror. A brass vessel makes more sound than one of gold. Be like gold. Never resort to ostentation. Aspire for true happiness. Do not become an artificial human being. Be a 'heartful' person. Then you will attain everything in life.

Students!

Due to the effect of your age, you may sometimes make mistakes. Once you correct your mistake, take care not to repeat it. Don't go on repeating the same mistake all your life.

Sometimes, you commit a mistake unknowingly. Once you come to realise your mistake, do not repeat it. Be aware of what you are doing. Watch your steps and worship with proper understanding. See what is in front of you, whether it is a thorn, a stone, or cow dung, before you take the next step. Do not make any mistake out of your ignorance.

Saint Thyagaraja also said, "Oh mind, contemplate on the Name of Rama with proper understanding." He said that one should chant the Name of God with awareness and understanding.

Do not repeat the Name of God mechanically, like a tape recorder or a gramophone. Recite His Name wholeheartedly with total awareness. Chant the divine Name from the bottom

of your heart and not merely from your lips. Then you will become pure gold.

Practise what you preach, and preach only what you practise. This is the fundamental principle of purity. When you develop such purity at a young age, your future path will become a royal road and a bed of roses.

Students!

Do not give scope to differences based on caste and religion. Consider everyone as your own. All are your brothers and sisters. Follow the principle of Brotherhood of Man and Fatherhood of God. Help Ever, Hurt Never. This is the touchstone of Indian culture.

When you lead such a sacred life, you will set an ideal not only to Bharat (India) but also to all other countries of the world. I bless you that you lead a sacred life and be like gold.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan*, "*Hari Bhajan Bina Sukha Santhi Nahi...*")

—From Bhagavan's divine Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam, on 10 July 1996.