

Dharma Is Our Real And Permanent Property

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All names and forms are the 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.
(Sanskrit Verse)

All the animate and inanimate forms that we see in this world are embodiments of peace. The physical forms of all living beings are the embodiments of beauty. Divinity, which is the embodiment of *sathyam*, *sivam*, and *sundaram* (truth, goodness and beauty), is present in all elements and all living beings as the principle of Oneness. The same was stated by Plato, the mentor of Aristotle, hundreds of years before Christ. He said that truth, goodness, and beauty formed the basis of the world.

Man's greed ruins his life

Truth is the basis of everything. *Trikalabadyam sathyam* (truth remains unchanged in the three periods of time —past, present, and future). Goodness is the real Divinity. In fact, goodness is godliness.

Though people are endowed with the principle of *sathyam*, *sivam*, and *sundaram*, they are unable to realise their own truth, beauty, and goodness. Only when one realises the principles of truth, goodness, and beauty can one understand the true meaning of humaneness.

People today studies sacred texts like the *Vedas*, the *Puranas* (mythological texts), the *Brahma Sutras* (principles of Brahman), the *Ramayana*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Bible*, and the *Quran*. In spite of reading all this, they lack peace because they do not put their teachings into practice.

Mere reading of sacred texts can be compared to drinking thin buttermilk, but putting them into practice with devotion is like partaking of thick milk. Is there any meaning in preferring thin buttermilk to thick milk? Practice is the real strength. Preaching, propagation, and scholarship without practice amounts to mere ostentation. Practice is important, not mere preaching.

What is the use of having enormous wealth if one cannot derive any comforts and conveniences from it? Even if there is plenty of water in a lake, a dog can only lick the water and not drink from it.

Similar is the fate of a miser.
(Telugu Poem)

People today are endowed with all types of knowledge, wealth, and power, but what is the use? The wicked quality of greed makes all these things useless for them. Greed is limitless today due to the influence of *Kali Yuga* (the age we are in). One neither utilises the wealth for oneself nor shares it with others. It does not matter if one does not share one's wealth with others, but one cannot also see

others being happy. Even animals do not have the foolishness of concealing and the wicked quality of plundering.

But these defects have become rampant in man today. Without getting rid of these defects, spiritual practices like *japa*, *dhyana*, and *puja* (chanting, meditation, and worship) become useless. Worship without love, devotion without faith is useless.

One may not have any type of knowledge, one may not listen to the teachings of the sacred texts, or one may not understand their inner meaning, it is enough if one has love and faith. What do we carry with us when we leave our body? You use your body to perform various tasks and resort to unfair practices to maintain the body and to look after your family.

One with greed will not be successful
in any endeavour.
That person will commit sins and will
be ridiculed by one and all.
One's own people will abandon them.
One will lose all wealth and respect.
Ones greed will ruin one completely.
(Telugu Poem)

Make proper use of wealth

This is the evil influence of *Kali Yuga*. Greed has become a fashion in this age. There is no trace of sacrifice in man today. The ancient culture of Bharat (India) declared, *Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenake amrutatthwamanasu* (immortality is not attained through action, progeny or wealth; it is attained only by sacrifice).

When a sinner is rolling in wealth, he
does not show any regard or reverence
even for God.
He realises the truth when he loses
everything.
(Telugu Poem)

As long as one is enamoured of one's wealth, one does not see the reality of the world. One sees it only when one loses everything.

What is this world? What is this life? How long will it last? What have achieved in this life? Everything is like passing clouds. When you are young, you work hard and acquire various types of knowledge and face many challenges in life. The pleasures of youth are ephemeral. All the worldly relationships are temporary. There is only one thing that is eternal, that is love for God. If you do not acquire love of God, what is the use of acquiring anything else? Howsoever long you may live, ultimately you have to leave the world empty-handed.

The body, which is made up of five elements, is weak and is bound to disintegrate.
Though hundred years of life span is prescribed, one cannot take it for granted.
One may leave one's mortal coil at any time, be it in childhood, youth, or old age.
Death is certain.
Hence, before the body perishes, one should make efforts to know one's true nature.
(Telugu Poem)

Were there not kings who had vast kingdoms and were full of pride and arrogance? But where are they now? However, you have to work hard and earn as much as sustains your life without any shortcoming. We breathe in and breathe out air. We eat food, digest it, and excrete the waste. Similarly, one should not only acquire wealth but should also spend it for the right cause. Do not accumulate and conceal it.

What you have to preserve is not wealth but *dharma* (righteousness). *Dharma* is our real and permanent property. This is the truth that you have to realise today.

There lived in a village two brothers who were great misers. Though they had amassed plenty of wealth, they did not spend even a penny. They did not even eat food to their fill. They did not keep the lamp lighted for more than five minutes, lest it should consume more oil.

It so happened that one day a person living in a neighbouring village, which was ten kilometres away, passed away. As was the custom in those days, one of the brothers had to go to that village to console the bereaved family. The elder brother got up early in the morning to start his journey on foot, because if he went by bus he would have to spend some money. He told his younger brother to light the lamp so that he could keep some clothes in his bag. As soon as he left the house, the younger brother put off the lamp to save oil.

After covering a distance of about three kilometres, the elder brother returned home and knocked at the door. The younger brother asked, "Who is knocking at the door?"

"I am your elder brother." The younger brother asked him why he had come back.

"While leaving the house, I did not tell you to put off the lamp, so I have come to see if the lamp is still burning."

The younger brother replied, "Brother, do you think that I don't have this much common sense? I put off the lamp as soon as you left the house. But you have walked such a long distance up and down to remind me about this. You did not think how much your sandals would have got worn out because of this unnecessary walking."

The elder brother said, "Brother, I am not as foolish as you think. I removed my sandals, made them into a bundle, put them under my armpit, and walked the distance."

What is the use of having sandals if one does not use them out of one's miserliness? What is the use of all the wealth and property if one

is not able to draw any comfort and convenience out of it? Lead a comfortable life, and make others' life also comfortable. Otherwise, what is the use of all your wealth?

Use your education to help others

You acquire many types of education, but education is not meant for merely securing a job. Utilise your education for the welfare of society and for the betterment of your village.

There is no use acquiring degrees. Today, students use their degrees like begging bowls. They go to each and every office begging for a job.

Acquire the education that makes you self-reliant. Undertake the activities that are beneficial for the progress of your village. Educate the villagers about health and hygiene so that they are not afflicted by diseases. Teach them the importance of cleanliness and help them to improve the drainage system of the village. Teach them to undertake useful practices, like growing vegetables for their self-sustenance. Share your knowledge with the children of the village. Therein lies the real merit of your education.

Paropakara punyaya, papaya parapeedanam (one attains merit by serving others and commits sin by hurting them). Utilise your education to help others.

As soon as students today get their degree, they go to the employment office to get their name registered for employment. Those who are highly educated apply for jobs in overseas countries. This is not the real purpose of your education. The real purpose of education is to develop villages. You are born, brought up, and educated in your village. All that you have attained in life is acquired by you only from your village.

Society has endowed you with all types of power. You are born and brought up in society, and you lead your life in society. Should

you not have gratitude for society, which has done so much for you?

But, unfortunately, students today lack such broad feelings. They lead a self-centred life and are concerned only about themselves and their family. If you lead such a selfish life, who will take care of the masses?

All are the children of God. All are brothers and sisters. Therefore, strive for the progress of all. Work for the development of society with mutual cooperation and tolerance without giving room to any conflicts. Develop the qualities of forbearance and empathy.

Unity is very essential. You should put the principle of unity into practice. Only then can it grow. Unity does not mean merely greeting each other, "hello, hello;" it should be reflected in practice. You should work unitedly. There is great merit in unity. Therefore, students should develop broad feelings and broad-mindedness.

Develop expansion of *hridaya* (heart). Where does *hridaya* lie in your body? It is not the physical heart, which is on the left side of the chest. This is not what is meant by *hridaya*. *Hridaya*, in fact, is present in the entire body. It has no limit, it is all-pervasive.

Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Srutimalloke Sarvamavruthya Tishthati (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, the Divine Principle permeates the entire universe). So, everybody who comes within the expanse of your *hridaya* is your kith and kin. Lead your life with such feelings of fraternity and unity.

Education is not meant merely for earning your livelihood; it is meant to make you a cultured individual. Education is a process of refinement. When you develop culture, there will not be any dearth even for your livelihood. You chant the prayer, *Dharmo rakshati rakshitah* (If you protect *dharma*, you will be protected by *dharma*) every day. When you

protect *dharma*, *dharma* itself will protect you. Therefore, foster *dharma* in society. When you foster *dharma* in villages, it will develop in towns and cities also.

Human beings should develop humanness

Students

Today we find Indian cultural traditions being practised at least to some extent only in villages. They are nowhere to be seen in towns and cities. Only in villages do you find virtues like adherence to *dharma*, justice, forbearance, and love, which have become extinct in towns and cities. Though there are courts, banks, universities, and many other institutions in towns and cities, there is a prevalence of injustice, unrighteousness, and vices in them.

On the other hand, there are no such institutions in villages, yet people in villages practise morality and ethics. Even the tribals who live away from society in forests are endowed with truth and righteousness. In fact, it is they who uphold our culture.

Having acquired education, what are the people doing today? They are destroying culture, morality, and ethics in society. In fact, they are ruining humanness itself. Where is humanness today? Lakhs of years have passed since humanity took birth on this earth. But humanness is yet to be born in people. You find only humans in form, but not in practice.

Then, when will humanness blossom in humanity? How many births has one taken and how many more does one have to take? In fact, humanness should be born with one's very birth.

We say, we should speak truth, but is there any person who speaks truth? All that one utters today is untruth. All that one does is unrighteous. Then, how can humanness be born in a person?

Even birds and animals follow certain rules and regulations. They have a reason and season for what they do. But people have no reason and no season.

Then, what is the use of all your education? Why should one acquire this useless education? Acquire the education that is beneficial to society, develops brotherly relationship between person and person, and makes humanness blossom in you.

Today, hatred is prevalent between person and person, village and village, state and state. Then, how can there not be hatred between one country and the other? You are developing hatred in your own state and in your own country. Are you not ashamed to say that some other country is attacking us out of hatred?

First of all, set your own house, village, town, and state in order. If you are not able to remove conflicts from your own house, how can you bring about harmony between one country and the other?

Who are you to correct others? What right do you have? First of all, bring harmony in your own house and develop humanness. Consider all as the children of God. This is the education that students should acquire today.

Never leave truth under any circumstances

Today wherever you look, people are craving money. Why do you want so much money? What will you do with it? Do you utilise it for the welfare of the country or to help the needy people? Do you utilise it for the spread of education? Do you at least feed the beggars? If money is not put to any good use, it is as good as dust.

Do not waste your life for the accumulation of money. Dedicate your life to foster compassion and love in society. Utilise money to keep the body fit, so that you can perform righteous actions and uphold your honour.

Be prepared to sacrifice even your life for the sake of God. Hold on to truth and follow *dharma*. These are the two virtues that people should cultivate.

The *Vedas* also teach, *Sathyam vada, dharmam chara* (speak truth, practise righteousness). Never leave truth under any circumstances, even at the cost of your life.

Take Harishchandra as your ideal. In the face of all difficulties, his faith in God and truth never faltered. Ultimately, only truth saved him, and he was able to get back his kingdom and wealth.

What sustains truth? It is love. Therefore, develop love. But do not limit your love to yourself and your family. If you think of only yourself and your family, it is better to live in a forest. What right do you have to live in your village or in society?

When you live in society, you should see to its welfare. Being a member of society, if you always think of yourself and your family, you are no better than a person who is afflicted with an incurable malady.

Develop unity and live in harmony with everyone. Do not become a victim of the disease of selfishness and self-centredness. Aspire for the welfare of all, and consider the sufferings of others as your own. When students develop such broad feelings, they will become the future redeemers of the nation. Become an ideal person and uphold *sathya* and *dharma*, which Bharat has been propagating since ancient times.

Students!

You are the future emancipators of the nation. You are the future leaders and pleaders. Therefore, follow the path of truth. Even pleaders today have taken to wrong path. Do you know what type of pleaders we have today? Even if Harishchandra were to be born today, they would make him utter a hundred lies. This is the influence of *Kali Yuga*. That

is why you do not find any person like Hari-shchandra today. Out of fear for these pleaders, Harishchandras have run away to forests and hills! *Sathya* and *dharma* have run away, and *asathya* (untruth) and *adharm*a (unrighteousness) have established their hold.

What you have to do today is to purify this prevalent environment. How can it be done? This can be done only by practising truth and righteousness. Merely speaking about truth is not enough. You have to put it into practice. What is there in your heart should be expressed in speech, and what is spoken should be put into action. A student will remain a true student as long as the student follows the path of *sathya* and *dharma*. In the absence of *sathya* and *dharma*, a *vidyarthi* (student) will become *vishayarthi* (seeker of pleasures).

(Bhagavan sang the *bhajan* “*Sathyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma*” and continued His Discourse.)

Treat the new students like your brothers and sisters

Here is an important point for your attention. When a new student joins our Institute, you should treat him with all love and affection, more than your own brother, and make him forget his worries and anxieties. It is not tall talk that our Institute is an ideal in this regard, where new students are treated like brothers and sisters by senior students.

Many of the outside institutes give importance to wealthy people who give big donations. But in our Institute, love is the only donation. I give importance to people who are full of love. You have heard the boy who spoke in Sanskrit some time ago. He does not have the support of his parents. He is being looked after by his grandparents. We give admission to such students and help them to come up in life. You can see for yourself how the boy is totally free from all his past worries, so much so that he even learnt Sanskrit and gave a talk.

My *Sankalpa* (Will) is to give happiness to students who lack the love of their parents and make them forget their worries (loud applause). I am doing this and asking you to do the same. If you come across such students, help them to the extent possible to enable them to make progress in life.

You may be aware how the outside institutions function. If a new student joins an outside institute, he has to undergo a virtual hell in the name of ragging. Unable to bear the torture of ragging, some students even leave the institute within a week. They call it ragging; I don't understand what its purpose is. In the name of ragging, they harass and torture the students to no end.

Is this what senior students are supposed to do? They should treat the juniors like their own brothers and sisters and give them all their love and affection. They should make them comfortable and help them get rid of their worries, so that they live in a cordial and peaceful atmosphere. This is what I am doing, and I am asking you to do the same (loud applause).

In this Institute, not only do we provide free education, we also give scholarship to deserving students. We don't charge even a *naya paisa* in the name of games fee, examination fee, library fee, laboratory fee, tuition fee, etc.

When we are providing such ideal and free education to students, how noble and ideal the students should become! They should become ideal boys.

If a beggar comes to you to beg, you should tell him, “My dear, it is not proper to resort to begging. Why do you stoop to such a level? Come, I will show you a way to earn your livelihood.” You should help such people to become self-reliant.

Once when a hungry man approached Jesus, he gave him two fish. But how is it possible to provide food in this manner every day? Therefore, he bought a net and gave it to the

man, saying, “Eke out your livelihood with the use of this net.” Our students should also follow this example. They should help the needy to earn their livelihood with respect.

Humility is the hallmark of a student

All students of our Institute should live like brothers and sisters and treat everybody with love. You should develop such broad-mindedness. This is what our students should learn today. They should not give room to ego and ostentation. Develop love and idealism — this is how students can come up in life.

There are many examples in history where ordinary people rose to exalted positions by dint of their virtues and hard work. There was a person who used to sell newspapers and there was another person who used to polish shoes. After polishing the shoes of his customers, he used to say to them, “God bless you.” There was yet another person who used to write addresses on envelopes and earn his livelihood. Even such a person could rise to an exalted position of Prime Minister of England, because he was endowed with humility and sacred feelings. See how much a person with humility and love can rise in life! Education is not that important. After all, what is there in modern education?

Education confers humility, humility
confers deservedness,
Which in turn gives you wealth.
Wealth will bring you material and
spiritual satisfaction
When you utilise it to perform charity
and righteous deeds.
(Telugu Poem)

Humility is the hallmark of a student. In fact, it is the crest jewel of education. If you come across such humble students, help them in every possible way so that they forget all their worries and experience happiness. How happy was this boy when I materialised a chain for him and put it around his neck! He does not even feel the loss of his parents.

You should also help others like this. Whatever I do is only to demonstrate an ideal to you. There is always perfect harmony between My thoughts, words, and deeds. That is why I have got the right to tell you all this.

The proper study of mankind is man. All of you should live like human beings and not like animals and demons. Don't become stone-hearted. Develop a soft heart that melts with compassion at the suffering of others. Thanks.

– From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 15 July 1996.