

I

Human Values and Education

*Sadayam Hridayarn Yasya Bhasitham Sathya Bhu-
shitham Kayah Parahithe Yasya Kalisthasya Karo-
thikim*

(Sanskrit verse)

What can the evil effects of *Kali* age do to a man whose heart is filled with compassion, whose every utterance is truth, and whose body is dedicated for the service of others?

Embodiments of love! Man should fill his heart with compassion, always speak the truth and dedicate his body for the welfare of society. The thoughts, words, and deeds of man should always be sacred. The heart unpolluted by desire and anger, the tongue not tainted by untruth, and the body unblemished by the acts of violence —these are the true human values. It is because of the lack of these human values that the

country is facing hardships today. Bharat (India) has been the treasure house of spirituality since ancient times, but, today, it has lost both *sathya* (truth) and *dharma* (righteousness) and is enmeshed in unrighteous falsehood and injustice. It is therefore incumbent upon students to dedicate themselves to the task of restoring the pristine glory of Bharat. Just as the parents are worried and sad if their children lag behind in studies, so also Mother India feels aggrieved on seeing her children lacking moral and ethical values. You have to remember that all those whom you revere as ideal citizens and noble souls were once students themselves. Never forget that students of today are the future citizens and leaders of this country.

Take to righteous actions from an early age

The value of an individual depends on their culture. The real meaning of the word culture lies in giving up bad thoughts and bad actions and cultivating sacred thoughts and performing noble deeds. The country is not a mere piece of land; it is an assemblage of citizens. For the country to progress, the citizens have to cultivate moral, ethical, and spiritual values. It is not possible for the citizens and the leaders to cultivate these values unless they practice them right from childhood. Life becomes meaningless if one does not take to righteous actions from an early age.

Modern students are not able to refine their lives. So, the parents and the teachers should play an active role in shaping the lives of the students. First and foremost, they have to enquire as to how the students can get rid of their evil tendencies. Just as a boulder becomes worthy of adoration and respect when it is carved into a beautiful idol by a sculptor, so also the students will become ideal citizens if they are brought up in the right environment. The teachers and parents are responsible for

the good and bad in students. But, unfortunately, they have not understood their role in shaping the lives of the students.

Spiritual education is for life

No doubt, teachers teach the students in the class. But, what is *vidya*? It is derived from the root word *vid*, meaning, 'to know'. *Vidya* is termed as education in English. The term education has its origin in the Latin word *educare*, which means 'to elicit'. *Educare* has two aspects, the worldly and the spiritual. Worldly education imparts knowledge pertaining to the physical world. Spiritual education is essential, without which human life has little value.

But, in the modern education system, spirituality finds no place. Only worldly education is given prominence. Just as two wings are essential for a bird to soar high in the sky, and two wheels for a cart to move; so also two types of education are needed for man to attain the goal of life. Spiritual education is for life, whereas worldly education is for a living.

Only when man is equipped with these two aspects of education can he be deserving of respect and adoration in society. Possession of these two aspects of education will bring not only respect and adulation but also self-satisfaction.

Worldly education, which relates to the head, is ephemeral. Reading, writing, eking out a livelihood, and attaining name and fame —all these result from worldly education. Worldly education makes man great, whereas the spiritual education makes man good. Spiritual education relates to the heart, which is the origin of sacred qualities like compassion, truth, forbearance and love.

Today parents expect their children to go in for higher studies, amass wealth, and become great, but very few want their children to be good. Goodness is long lasting, whereas

greatness is temporary. Goodness forms the basis for spiritual life.

There are crores and crores of people who have become great by amassing wealth, but what is their contribution to the welfare of society? Absolutely nil. Therefore, strive to be good, not great.

Man should become a composer, not a computer

Modern students are going to various countries for material education without realizing the fact that the heart, the source of true education is within. True education is that which makes man ideal. Parents are the first teachers. They should show their children the way to goodness. Man cannot become good merely by being highly educated. Worldly education confers only *artha* (wealth) and *swartha* (selfishness). Such education is responsible for the downfall of man.

Worldly education is information oriented, while spiritual education is transformation oriented. The information-oriented education makes man a computer, whereas the transformation-oriented education makes man a composer. Man should become a composer, not a computer. Who made the computer? The composer made the computer. Man should therefore understand the meaning of real education.

Today, the moral, ethical, and spiritual values are on the decline. Modern students have no trace of these values in them. They have no respect for their parents and society. In that case how can they expect to be respected by their children?

Our ancient culture exhorts: *Mathru Devo bhava*, *pithru Devo bhava*, and *acharya Devo bhava* (revere your mother, father, and teacher as God). Respect and be respected. Practice before you preach. A composer is one who practices what he preaches.

In the *Mahabharata*, there is a story of a king named Dushyantha. Having been born and brought up in a palace, he was inclined toward worldly and material pursuits. On the other hand, his son Bharata, who was born and brought up in Kanvashram (the hermitage of the sage Kanva) was a repository of moral, spiritual, and ethical values. *Ashram* education inculcates all noble values in man.

Bharata became a paragon of all virtues because he received ideal education right from his childhood. This enabled him to lead a life of peace and security. That is why it is said, start early, drive slowly, and reach safely.

Dushyantha had worldly and material wealth. He was a mighty emperor. What was the use of all that he possessed when he could not achieve spiritual growth? This clearly demonstrates the difference between urban education and *ashram* education.

Values are our life principles

The five human values of *sathya*, *dharma*, *santhi*, *prema*, and *ahimsa* (truth, right action, peace, love, and nonviolence) can be compared to the five life principles of man, viz., *prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana*, and *saman*. A true human being is one who practices the five human values. Today man does not speak truth, lest it bring him harm, and does not practice *dharma* because he does not know what it really means.

Under any circumstances should you give up human values. Losing any of the five human values amounts to committing suicide.

If you do not speak the truth, you lose one of your life principles. Truth is your *Atma*. So, till your last breath, uphold truth. The culture of Bharat (India) teaches, *Sathyam vada dharmam chara* (Speak truth and follow righteousness). These

values are the same for one and all.

People all over the world are praying for peace. How can peace be attained? It is only through the practice of *sathya* and *dharma* (truth and right action). Today, man is leading a life bereft of *sathya* and *dharma*, resulting in lack of peace (*santhi*), which in turn has led to the absence of *prema* (love).

How can *ahimsa* (nonviolence) exist in the absence of these four values? Violence is rampant everywhere be it home, bazaar, or factory. Man, bereft of these five principles, has become a living corpse.

Life has to be infused into man today, for which faith in God is very essential. Where there is faith there is love. Where there is love there is peace. Where there is peace there is truth. Where there is truth there is God. Where there is God there is bliss. Human life has to begin with faith and end with bliss.

Ancient acharyas and modern teachers

Today, even the parents and the children, the husband and the wife lack faith in each other. The love they exhibit is only artificial. Under such circumstances how can love prevail? One should have deep faith in order to experience true love. Whatever you do, do it wholeheartedly. Fill your heart with compassion. When the heart is filled with love, all actions will be suffused with love.

Jumsai, in his talk, referred to EHV as 3HV. The first H stands for Heart, the second for Head, and the third for Hand. The harmony of heart, head, and hand symbolizes true human life. *Manasyekam vachasyekam karmanyekam mahatmanam* (he is a noble soul whose thoughts, words, and deeds are in perfect harmony). *Manasyanyath, vachasyanyath, karmanyanyath duratmanam* (he is a wicked one whose thoughts, words, and deeds are at variance).

The very name of *hridaya* (heart) —*hri* + *daya*— indicates compassion (*daya*). So, the heart should be filled with compassion. When there is love in the heart all that you utter will be truth. Love in speech is truth. Love in action is *dharma*. Love in thought is peace. Love in understanding is *ahimsa* (non-violence). So, love is the underlying principle of truth, righteousness, peace, and non-violence.

In olden days the teachers were called *acharyas*, meaning those who practice what they preach. Today teachers cannot be called *acharyas* because they do not practice what they preach. The modern teachers are experts in giving platform speeches, whereas the *acharyas* of ancient times were proficient in practical science.

Education should be free

How can the students heed the advice of the teachers if the teachers themselves do not practice what they preach? If the cow is grazing in the field, can we expect the calf to remain a mere witness? The calf naturally follows the cow. The relationship between the teacher and the student should be like that of cow and calf. It means the teachers should treat the students as their own children. But, today, one does not find such relationship between the teacher and the student. Both the teachers and students have become money-minded. As a result the students do not respect the teachers and the teachers do not have love for the students.

In many educational institutions seats are allotted to those who can pay large sums of money. This quota system has brought about all-round degeneration. Since the government is also encouraging this trend, the educational system has become totally bereft of values. To stop this unholy trend, education should be offered free of cost.

Everyone has an equal right on education. Education is the gift of God. No one has the right to sell it. Education should lead to elevation, not agitation. But, today, we find agitation everywhere.

The real “donation”

Today, money can buy admission, attendance, marks, and even degrees for that matter. The medical seats are readily offered to candidates who pay a sum of twenty to thirty lakhs. In order to earn the money spent by them to secure the medical seat, the doctors charge exorbitant fees from the patients. The same is the case with engineering, too. Even for admission in first standard, some institutions are charging twenty to twenty five thousand rupees.

Modern education has made man a beggar. One should be a bigger not a beggar. I am not saying this out of sense of pride, but Sathya Sai Institute is the only institution offering free education. Jumsai said that more and more institutions should be established. It is a matter of pleasure, but care has to be taken to see that education is offered totally free of cost. Only then can we shape the students into ideal citizens. Teachers should share all their knowledge with the students wholeheartedly. They must practice before they preach. This is what I expect from the teachers.

The education that is acquired by paying large amounts as donation is no education at all. Only people having black money will resort to such illegal means to acquire degrees.

“Do (for the) nation” — that is the real donation. Make use of your education for the welfare of society and the nation. Share your knowledge with others. It is not necessary that you should become a teacher to do so. There may be a few poor students in your locality. Conduct special classes for them in

the evening.

Today people fight for money and property right from dawn to dusk. They take to corrupt ways to earn even a single rupee. One should not live just for the sake of money. It is better to die rather than to lead a life just for the sake of money. If you have money in excess, help others; provide free education and free medical care to the poor.

Sathya Sai School in Zambia

In Zambia, there is a devotee by the name Victor Kanu. He is here right now. He has established a Sathya Sai School in Zambia. Many poor children are studying there. Both he and his wife are teaching the children with all love and care. (At this juncture Bhagavan asked Mr. Victor Kanu, sitting nearby, as to how many children are studying in their school. Mr. Kanu said 520 children were studying there.) They are imparting Swami's teachings and human values to all the children. It is going to become a college very soon.

There are many affluent people in the world. But they do not have the spirit of sacrifice to help such sacred institutions. Some of them do contribute something, but they do it for name and fame. They expect their names to appear in letters of gold. Sathya Sai institutions are not for name and fame.

I would like to narrate a small incident in this regard. At a particular place, when I was about to give discourse, one person switched off the fan. I asked him, "Why did you switch off the fan? We need it now. It is very hot here." That person replied saying it was he who donated the fan, and his name was written on the blades of the fan; unless it was switched off his name would not be visible.

Education leads to immortality

The culture of Bharat declares “*Na karmana na prajaya dhanena thyagenaikena Amrutatthwamanasu* (immortality can be attained only through sacrifice; neither wealth nor progeny nor good deeds can confer it).” All the activities and rituals you undertake must be for the welfare of society. You must inspire children to work for the progress of the country. It is only sacrifice that confers immortality. Participate in every good work according to your capacity. Select a few deserving students and give them free education.

Education is not for worldly progress. It is to set an ideal, experience happiness, and share it with others. All the elders, the educationists, the rich, and the students should come together and strive for progress in the field of education. Just as a thread binds flowers of different hues to make a garland, likewise the feelings of love and sacrifice should bring you all together. The flowers may fade away, but the thread remains changeless. A bud changes to become a flower. Similarly, with the passage of time, the child becomes man, man becomes father, and father becomes grandfather. But the feeling of love is changeless. It is true and eternal.

Man should never lose any of the five values. Leaving the values amounts to committing suicide. But man today is no better than animals. The spirit of sacrifice that is found even in animals is not visible in man today. The cow partakes of grass and yields milk. But man partakes of sacred milk and indulges in wicked deeds.

What is the use of all the education he has acquired
if he cannot give up his evil qualities?
All the worldly education will only lead man to
vain argumentation, but not total wisdom.
It cannot help you to escape from the clutches of
death.
So, acquire that knowledge which will make you
immortal.

[Telugu Poem]

The education should enable us to cultivate sacred qualities. Worldly education is negative, and spiritual education is positive. What is the use of having a bulb without electric current? Secular knowledge is like the bulb; spiritual knowledge, like the current. Both are essential for the progress of man and the world at large.

Make proper use of the knowledge you have acquired. Parents should take active interest in the education of their children. Never desire that your son should become a great person, instead pray that he become a good person, like Bharata. That is true human life.

The good and the great

If one goes through the sacred texts of the *Ramayana*, the *Bhagavata*, and the *Mahabharata*, one understands the evil effects of *kama* (desire), *krodha* (anger), and *lobha* (greed). In the *Ramayana*, Rama symbolized goodness, whereas Ravana, greatness. Though Rama and Ravana were equally proficient in all forms of knowledge, Ravana could not make proper use of his knowledge because he had no control over his senses. On the other hand, Rama exercised control over his senses and sacrificed everything for the sake of truth. The *Ramayana* is

known as *Ramacharitra* (the story of Rama) and the story of Ravana is known as *Kamacharitra* (the story of desire).

The *Bhagavata* speaks of the consequences one has to face if one becomes a victim of anger. Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakasipu were air-powerful, but ultimately perished because of their anger toward God. Hiranyakasipu was a great, scientist. Today man has traveled only up to the moon, but Hiranyakasipu could even reach the stars. But his anger ruined him.

In the *Mahabharata*, Duryodhana and Dussasana symbolize greed, which is a negative power. On the other hand, the Pandavas stand for the positive power. They adhered to *dharma* under all circumstances. Similarly, in the *Bhagavata*, Hiranyakasipu symbolises negative power and Prahlada, positive power. Thus, wherever you see, you find positive and negative, good and bad co-exist. Accept the good and give up the bad and earn a good name. Then, you are not merely great, you are also good.

The method and the means

Teachers! You have participated in this conference for the past three days. All of you have noble ideas, but you have to think of a proper way to implement them. Attach more importance to values than money and see that students make all-round progress.

Students! I want you to become ideal leaders. Make use of your education to serve the poor. Conduct free tuition classes for the poor children and share your books with them. Only then will the feeling of brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God develop.

As I have told you earlier, *educare* has two aspects: one is *pravritti* (outward) and the other, which comes from the heart, is *nivritti* (inward). God is the *Hridayavasi* (indweller). So, all

that originates from the heart is essentially divine. Therefore, let all your thoughts, words, and deeds originate from your heart. Do good, be good, and see good. This is the way to God. Accept both pleasure and pain as gifts of God.

In order to get cured of malaria, one has to swallow a bitter mixture. Likewise, one has to face hardships in order to attain happiness. That is why it is said that a pleasure is an interval between two pains. Light has no value if there is no darkness. Likewise, pleasure has no value without pain.

Consider every good work as God's work

Students! To the extent possible, serve society. Of course, you need to take up jobs and earn your livelihood. But do not be avaricious. Be satisfied with what you get. Alexander conquered many kingdoms and seized a lot of wealth. When his end approached, he realised that he could not take even a single penny with him. He requested his minister to keep his two hands raised above the head during the final journey so that the people would understand that even the mighty emperor Alexander had to leave the world empty-handed.

Likewise, everyone has to leave this world empty-handed. Even a millionaire has to partake of only food; he cannot eat gold. So, be satisfied with the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter.

Do your jobs properly and undertake service activities in your leisure time. Develop faith in God. If you do not have faith in God, you will not have fear of sin. Then you will become a demon. So, fear of sin and love for God is very essential. If you have these two, you will be successful in all your endeavors. Consider every good work as God's work.

Work for your Motherland and serve the poor

Embodiments of Love! Stop hankering after foreign lands after you complete your studies. Serve your Motherland. Lord Rama said, *Janani janmabhoomischa swargadapi gareeyasi* (mother and motherland are greater than heaven). So, work for your Motherland and serve the poor.

The best way to love God is to love all and serve all, but serve only when it is necessary. You are born to experience love. Your life is full of love. But you are not able to understand this Principle of Love. There is nothing greater than love in this world. Love is God, God is Love. So live in love.

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Whatever you do, do it as an offering to God. Do not make a distinction between “my work” and “God’s work”. When you make a division, you give rise to enmity, because of differences. When there is enmity, there is no room for divinity, purity, and unity.

—Baba