

Purity of the Heart is True Spiritual Discipline Sathya Sai Baba

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Without any real work, chatting throughout the day, is this spiritual discipline, do you think?
Following a regimen of feeding your belly thrice a day, do you think it is spiritual discipline?
Vigorous activity by day and deep sleep by night, do you think this is spiritual discipline?
Is this for which God created you?
You spend a whole lot of time in this kind of regimen but this is not spiritual discipline.
Do not waste your time in this manner.
From this moment strive to know-recognise-God.
This alone is spiritual discipline.

(Telugu poem)

Embodiments of Love!

The all-pervading consciousness is called as Divinity. It is also said that Divinity is present in all living beings. But no one has seen that omnipresent Divinity.

Only human beings can contemplate on and realise the Cosmic Person. In fact, human life itself is the manifestation of divine power. But some people do not agree with this statement.

Divinity is manifest in every living being. The same *Atmic Principle (Atma Thathwa)* is present not only in human beings but in every living being in the universe. But one has to have a pure and selfless heart to realise this truth. In order to realise this truth, you have to constantly contemplate on God. By doing so, your heart will become pure and peaceful. The moment you attain that stage, God will surely perceptibly manifest in you.

This must be your spiritual discipline (*sadhana*). It is not the practice of meditation alone that can make God manifest to the spiritual aspirant.

God is present as an indweller uniformly in human beings as well as insects, birds, and beasts. Suppose you put a question, "Where is God

now?" The spontaneous answer would be that God is present in you also. Several people undertake spiritual disciplines like meditation to find answers to such questions.

Sage Narada affirmed that God could be realised through the nine forms of devotion, namely, listening, singing, contemplating on Vishnu, serving His lotus feet, salutation, worship, servitude, friendship, and self-surrender (*sravanam, kirtanam, Vishnusmaranam, Padasevanam, vandanam, archanam, dasyam, sneham, Atmanivedanam*).

There is no one in this world in whose heart God does not dwell as the indweller. Therefore, is meditation required to visualise such an all-pervading and omnipresent God?

Many teach different techniques of meditation today. But meditation is meant to acquire purity of the spiritual heart, for, without attaining purity of the heart, the seat of awareness, God, cannot be realised. Hence, one has to strive to attain purity of the spiritual heart.

What kind of spiritual exercises (*sadhana*) did Kamsa do in the *Dwapara Yuga*? In fact, he was constantly abusing Lord Krishna. However, Lord Krishna was so compassionate that He gave His *darshan* (sight of the Lord) to Kamsa.

No spiritual discipline will help in realising God if one is devoid of purity of the heart. The different kinds of disciplines like fasting and meditation, etc., will help to develop faith in the omnipresent God, who, in fact, resides as the indweller in you.

People generally think that God gave *darshan* to such and such person. But the truth is God never gives *darshan* to people who have no purity

of the heart. Hence, if you wish to have *darshan* of God, you must develop purity of the heart.

All kinds of spiritual exercises are meant only to attain purity. The moment you attain purity of the heart, the omnipresent God will manifest right in front of you. Unfortunately, today in the world, there is a dearth of *gurus* who can firmly lead the seeker on the path of purity. They confine themselves to some mechanical techniques of meditation in exchange for money.

In fact, one does not need to undertake any complex system of meditation. One can undertake the simple spiritual exercise of constant contemplation on the omnipresent God. Few teach such simple methods nowadays. People listen to and read about several intriguing kinds of meditation and start the one that catches their interest or imagination.

Embodiments of Love!

If you want to visualise God, you must attain purity of the heart. You refer to a certain individual and say that he is your father. But, the father is embarrassed at such reference since he is, in reality, the same *Atmic* Principle (*Atma Thathwa*) that is present in all human beings.

You marry some girl and refer to her as your wife, but she is, in fact, the embodiment of the divine *Atma*. Similarly, you caress a child affectionately, calling it as your son. But the same child may tell you that he is not your son in reality but the embodiment of divinity. Thus, all relationships in this world are in fact, only *Atmic* relationships.

To speak the truth, real self realisation (*Atma sakshatkara*) is the merging of the individual self (*jiva*) with the Supreme Self (Brahman). Anyone you come across is verily God. How can there be human beings without such omnipresent divinity?

Lord Krishna declared that He incarnates again and again whenever there was decline in the practice of righteousness (*dharma*). He also declared that He was the seed (*beejam*) in all living beings. Though He moved intimately with the cowherd boys and girls (*gopalas* and *gopikas*), He was never bound by their relationship with Him.

The cowherd maidens who were aware of this truth constantly contemplated on Him, chanting

the divine name, “Krishna! Krishna!” The very name Krishna brought the embodiment of divine *Atma* before their eyes. The maidens were highly realised souls who had the firm conviction that the same *Atmic* Principle was present in every individual, nay, every living being. That is why they could visualise Krishna in every individual and every object of the world.

All that we see in the objective world, say, for example, this hall, the buildings around, etc., are not really objects. People often get deluded into thinking so, seeing their external forms. The universal *Atmic* Principle (*Atma Thathwa*) is present in all these objects. Only the cowherd maidens realised that Supreme Truth naturally and spontaneously. They could visualise Krishna in all individuals and objects.

We often refer to individuals as my son, my brother, my father, my mother, my wife, etc., keeping in view the worldly relationships. But the truth is that the same God is manifesting through all those individuals. Hence, one has to consider every individual as the embodiment of divinity. The entire universe is permeated by the Principle of God (*Brahma Thathwa*). All names and forms attributed to the *Atmic* Principle are our own making.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to perform several methods/modes of worship to Mother Kali throughout the day. One day, the Divine Mother appeared before him and asked, “Ramakrishna! You are getting madder day by day. You worshipped Me in a particular form. Why do you confine Me to this form and that form. In fact, all forms are Mine. Whomsoever you come across, consider them as the embodiments of divinity.

God is pure and attributeless. Such an attributeless and unsullied divinity is present in every human being. All human beings are, in fact, reflections of such an omnipresent Divinity. Hence, every human being has to be considered as the embodiment of Divinity and respected. Though God is omnipresent, He assumes a particular form and serves the human beings in many ways. Right from now, realise this truth that all names and forms are His. Consider any one you come across, as the embodiment of Divinity. When you develop such an attitude, you can see God anywhere and everywhere.

Go to Mathura or Dwaraka and see how people are still worshipping Lord Krishna with the same devotional fervour, though He left His mortal coil in the *Dwapara Yuga* some 5,000 years ago.

When God incarnates in human form, it is natural to consider Him as an ordinary human being. This is not the correct approach. I often reiterate that I am God, but I also remind you that you are verily God. Do not give scope for any confusion and difference of opinion in this regard. Everyone of you are embodiments of Divinity, in reality.

When you develop such a firm conviction, you can visualise God in every human being. It is only in keeping with this concept that the expression, “as is the feeling, so is the result (*yad bhavam tad bhavati*)” is asserted in the scriptures.

Since people are not aware of the real nature of Divinity, they refer to certain individuals as father, mother, uncle, etc., keeping in view their physical forms and the relationships with them. If people are so deluded on the basis of physical relationships, they are bound to get confused about the real nature of Divinity.

Lord Krishna declared once, while revealing His omnipresent Divinity, that there was none other than Him in the entire universe. The same truth is contained in the declaration “Truth is one, but the wise refer to it by various names (*Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti*).” For example, the number 1 is only 1. When you add three numbers to it, it becomes 4. Thus, we go on adding numbers to 1 and arrive at different numbers. However, the first number remains the same, namely, 1. That is Divinity. This is what the profound declaration, “the One willed to become many, (*Ekoham bahusyam*)” states.

People often use two terms God (*Deva*) and individual being (*jiva*). In fact, there is no individual being at all! All are embodiments of Divinity only!

Then the question arises: Why do people die? Since people are not able to realise the immortal nature of the *Atma* residing in the physical body, they make use of the term *death*. *Atma* has no death at all! It is immortal. Those who realise this truth, merge in God. For those who cannot realise the truth, the individual soul remains the soul and

God remains God. The dual feeling persists in them.

What is the underlying meaning in the declaration, “God is one without a second (*Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma*)”? Since there is no entity other than Brahman in this universe, it is declared thus. This is the *Vedic* declaration.

The *Upanishads* explain our true nature in the great aphorism “That Thou Art (*Thath twam asi*).” In another great aphorism, they declare “Brahman is Supreme Consciousness (*Prajnanam Brahma*). To whom shall this declaration refer? Again, it is to that God Absolute. Thus, all the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* proclaim the non-dual concept of individual soul (*jiva*) and God (*Deva*) as one and only one. But no one is making an effort to realise this truth. In the end, they think God is separate from them.

People often ascribe distinctions between different forms of Divinity, for example Krishna, Rama, etc. Since they try to identify themselves with a particular form, they entertain feelings of difference. By doing so, they move away from God and remain as individuals (*jivas*) only. All such differences exist in individuals only. God is only one.

In fact, He is not different from you. He is in you, and you are verily God! If it is not so, why should the *Vedas* declare “That Thou Art”?

Develop the firm conviction that you and God are only one. When you attain such a firm conviction, you become one with God.

For example, you keep a number of photos of Sai Baba in your worship room, but in all the photos, you find that the same God is photographed in different poses.

When you realise the underlying unity of Divinity, there can be no room for any confusion. You will be able to realise the truth. Whatever I speak is only Truth. Since you are not aware of this truth, you are unable to develop faith in it.

Several people nowadays claim to be god-men, who lecture upon this concept endlessly. Believe Me, they are all meant to confuse the devotees. In fact, when you develop firm faith in the declaration that God is only one, you will be able to real-

ise the truth. One who is able to realise this truth will have no confusion and doubt.

Do not use harsh words about anyone. In fact, there are no enemies in the world. Do not consider anyone as an enemy and abuse them. One day, they may be an enemy to you, but you may become friends on another. Don't consider someone as separate from you. All are friends.

Embodiments of Love!

You are worshipping and praying to God with great love. Continue to love God and develop faith in Him. Only then all your doubts will be cleared and you will be able to understand the nature of divinity in full.

Doubt implies duality, that is, a feeling of separation between you and God. In fact, there are no two entities —God and you. Everything is “I”, “I”, “I”. Hold on to the truth: “God is one without a second (*Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma*)”.

For example, how many hours does the clock show? Twelve hours. When the hour hand crosses twelve, it again moves to one in the clock. When it crosses one, it moves to the next hour. Thus, only when the hour hand crosses one does it move to two. Similarly, there is nothing that can be called the second. God is only one.

However, when you wish to entangle yourself in worldly matters, duality comes. In fact, there is no duality with regard to Divinity. Sometimes I wake up the children sleeping in My room and ask them, “What is the time now?”

They reply, “Swami! It is 12 o'clock.

I ask, “Is it 12 o'clock in the day or night?

They reply, “It is 12 o'clock in the night.”

Thus, when 12 hours of the day are added to 12 hours of night, it becomes 24 hours.

Strictly speaking, there are no 24 hours. It is only because the day is followed by night and so on that you find 24 hours. Hence, do not make a distinction between day and night.

The railway people make such distinction for their operational convenience. For us, night follows day and again day starts after night. Both day and night are one for us.

Therefore, develop firm faith in the principle of unity in all that you come across in the world. God is one and only one. If you do not develop firm faith in this principle, it is possible that you will worship one form of God and hate another. Always hold on to the principle of oneness of God. That is the truth.

If you are not able to develop such faith, ignore it and do not make it a matter of dispute and strife. Do not ever attribute duality to God. God is always one and only one. When you are able to understand and develop firm faith in the oneness of God, your life will go on smoothly.

(Holding a bunch of flowers in front of the audience Swami enquired) What is this? It is a bunch of flowers. A number of flowers are strung together with the help of a thread, with the result that it assumes the form of a bunch. Though the flowers are of different varieties, the thread that holds them together is only one. The same principle has been explained in the *Veda* as God is one without a second (*Ekameva adviteeyam Brahma*)”. The above example demonstrates unity in diversity.

You refer to a single person as a man or woman. You refer to a number of persons grouped together as a group. Though there is a vast difference in the terms used to refer to a single person and a group of persons, there is a fundamental unity in the classification. That unity is Divinity, which shall never be forgotten.

Unfortunately, in the present times, people tend to look at the apparent diversity in this objective world, ignoring the underlying principle of unity. Take for example, the Pandavas. Who were they? The five Pandava brothers were the sons of Kunthi. One mother, but five sons. In the ordinary worldly sense, they are five in number.

You may not be able to understand this principle of oneness of Divinity, but in due course, when you are able to recognise the principle with a mature mind, you will understand that truth is one, not two.

This is a handkerchief! (Showing a handkerchief to the audience.) Several threads woven together in it. Since the threads are woven into warp and woof, it assumed the form of a handkerchief. The cloth is one and the threads are many.

One has to recognise that principle of unity in diversity. We find several students gathered in this hall. Each one appears to be different, but they are all students of Sri Sathya Sai University. Thus, one has to strive to develop that unity.

Dear students!

I am extremely happy to see you all. I attend to a number of tasks and participate in a number of programmes right from early morning till I go to bed. I feel very happy and energetic. There is no one else who enjoys bliss as Myself. I am always happy and cheerful.

I do not at all pay attention to praise or scorn from any quarter. They are only the outward manifestation in words of one's feelings. I have nothing to do with them. I do not entertain any feelings of difference at all. "All are one, be alike to everyone."

(Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan*, "Govinda Krishna Jai ...").