

32. Closing Address To The Students

At one time we are joyous, and at another time we are sorrowful. The one and the same object which is a source of happiness turns out to be a source of agony with the interval of time. Therefore, joy and grief are only states of mind and the objects which are themselves subject to change cannot give us lasting happiness. Change is not real. Whatever can be changed basically cannot be real. Knowing that the life of placid enjoyment is naturally inimical to serious spiritual effort, the good people consider difficulties as stepping stones to a higher state in life.

Then, there are those who rationally analyse merits and demerits. Such people regard faults as faults and merits as merits.

Then again there are those who are unable to see truth, beauty and goodness anywhere but are always eager to see imperfections everywhere and find faults in everyone. Such people have limited horizons but unlimited ambitions.

Pavitratma Swarupas, students!

We are responsible for the situation in which we are placed today. Yesterday shaped today and today will shape tomorrow. The yardstick of human progress does not depend upon the appearances, that is, wealth, possession and authority. Such appearances can be likened to the passing clouds or external cloaks. Man's real value is based upon his adherence to good conduct and his reliance upon truth. The youth of today must try to protect *Dharma* and pursue truth, acquiring thereby a loveable and good nature. It is only then that you will be able to enjoy happiness and also serve as an example to others. You have to uncover the screen of flesh and bones to intuit the *Atma*, so doing, allow the mind to abide in it and get absorbed in the bliss of *Atma*. It is a contradiction in terms to get attached with the finite and aspire for the infinite. Let the posture of devotion be not a facade to hide the collusion between mind and matter. The tainted ego tarnishes the view of wisdom. Ignorance, the disease of the mind, must be removed by knowledge. Remembering that you are not the body but the *Atma* leads you to knowledge. The mind thus can be harmonised with the spirit within.

It is well known that Viswamitra took recourse to his physical strength and intellectual superiority while challenging Vashishta. In the end, however, his physical strength got depleted and his intellect did not function. It was then that he understood the greater importance of the power of Divinity. He undertook penance at that stage.

The entire universe is permeated by Divinity. The world is an appearance of *Brahman*, and *Brahman* itself is *Nirakara*—formless. Our elders in the ancient times based their lives on the eternal and universal philosophy of *Vedanta*. This traditional way of life of our land has withstood the stress and strain of several invasions during the past centuries. You have been given valuable gems by several teachers and scholars during the past thirty days, and now you will do well for yourselves if you treasure them. Do not convert these gems into pieces of charcoal in course of time. Usually wealth or ornaments are regarded as valuable possessions. These possessions are valuable only so far as life is in you. Our good character should be considered as our real wealth and our good conduct as our prosperity. Our knowledge of the *Brahman* should be our most prized possession.

This land is called Bharath and this signifies that her children enjoy the bliss of God. “*Bha*” stands for “*Icha*” or desire, “*Ra*” stands for “*Kriya*” or work, and “*Tha*” stands for wisdom. These three must be coordinated. In other words, our actions should spring from the desire to attain the view of wisdom. We should not submit ourselves to any temporary excitements or allow our impulses to plunge us into thoughtless actions. The surge of thoughts arise and subside in you. While you indulge in thoughts, do not permit these thoughts to cloud the effulgence of *Atma*.

The summer course was organised in order to acquaint you with Indian culture and spirituality which would help to improve yourselves resulting in the betterment of the future of the country. Therefore, you should not let any weakness dissuade you from treading the right path. If in a big tank there is a small hole, all the water will flow out. In the same manner, even if you have a small sensory desire in you, then all that you have learnt will be of no avail. Attraction for the world distracts you from the reality. Just as you have draped your bodies in white, your mind should also be draped in white, that is, you should become pure. You should surrender to God your pure heart filled with the vibrations of love.

It is believed in our country that if you commit a sin knowingly or unknowingly, and if you have a dip in the Triveni Sangam or the confluence of the three rivers, then you will be saved from the consequences of that sin. It means that if you sincerely repent for your sins from the core of your being, then you will get rid of their consequences. All of you have had a dip in the Triveni during the summer course and therefore, all your earlier faults have been atoned. You should guard yourselves in future by desisting from committing error and resisting evil. Good work and selfless love will help you to tread the path of wisdom.