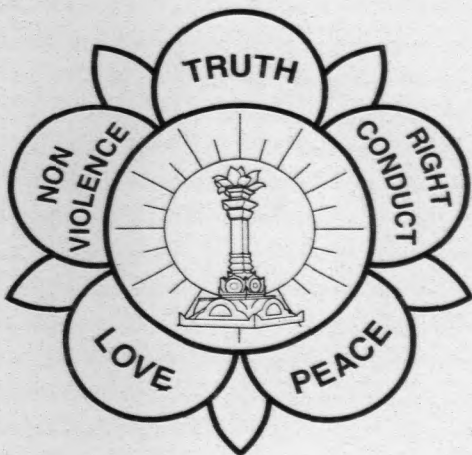




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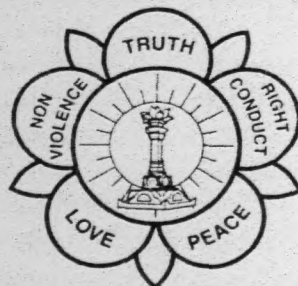
Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

*This publication is dedicated with love and devotion to
Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

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***The Sarva Dharma symbol of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization, depicts
the five qualities from which all human values emanate.***



The *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA* welcomes photographs, drawings and literary contributions. Sorry, but we are unable to return any material which is sent to us, so please keep a copy for your files. We reserve the right of discrimination in selecting and editing material for publication. Kindly send any material to: **Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA, P.O. Box 660908, Arcadia, California 91066-0908** or Fax (909) 337-5270.
—Barbara Bozzani, Editor

Sai's Message



Were it not for the mind change of Sai devotees, the world would have already fallen into complete chaos. The deterioration of the mind of man has been very rapid and abrupt, even precipitous, during the last fifteen years. That the world is not in total destruction is due to the change in the minds of Sai devotees and Sai's grace. You are not aware of it, just as you are not aware of your eyes until they are lost. In the same way, the world is not aware of Sai's grace.

—Sathya Sai Baba
My Baba and I, page 190
by Dr. John S. Hislop

Material World Isn't Real World

If we let go of what we're trying to get more of, which we may not really need, it frees up oceans of energy to make a difference with what we have.

If you make a difference with what you have, you will see that it will expand. I'm talking here about time; I'm talking about relatedness, even about money.

Because most of our wants have become needs, we think we can't survive without more land, more gadgets, more toys for the children, more clothes, more money—because we think money especially—will solve all of our problems. Some people actually feel they can't survive without another cigarette. Just think if there were no tobacco available in the entire world, smokers might be totally miserable (for awhile), but they would survive and the addiction would die a slow death.

The confusion between wants and needs is a function of being unclear about who we are. We have lost our original spiritual base. We have lost our connections with one another and with the earth's needs. We cannot easily see the truth through blurry light. Our advertising community, whose prime job it is to sell products, adds to the confusion.

You and I, and everyone in the world, are bombarded with messages telling us

that we're not whole until we buy this product; that we're not beautiful until we use this on our hair; and there's something wrong with the way we smell until we put on this perfume or use that kind of soap. We're being told we're not whole, not complete, not sufficient. The messages never change; you need to make up your deficiencies by buying something that will make you complete.

Money has no inherent power; it only has the power we give it. We have over-assigned meaning to money. In most cases, it's more important than life. At the heart of this is a real lie that we're telling about money, which has people selling their souls for money. Our societal thinking comes close to portraying—God help us—that we are our house; we are the car we drive; that ownership of things defines who we are.

The wholeness of who we are needs to be expressed by our love—not our greed—by our concern and care for others where we live, and also places where we don't live.

One could say, anyone who is all wrapped up in their desires or needs is completely unaware that the meaning of life is not found in things.

—Winnie Bolton
Mt. Angel, Oregon

Do not get attached to worldly things and pursuits. Be in the world, but do not let the world be in you. Work contentedly, to do your duty as best you can. Have no desires that are more important than God, for whatever he does with you, however he treats you, it is the gift that he gives you.

—Sathya Sai Baba
A Recapitulation of Sathya Sai Baba's Divine Teachings, page 49
Compiled by —Grace J. McMartin

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will play with the heads of enemies like footballs. There are people who can rule this country with efficiency in the field of administration. But what is the use if we do not listen to the cries and the miseries of the forlorn? We have to learn to hear their misery and sorrow.

Fill the Heart

Embodiments of Love! The whole universe is full of love. Love is wealth; it is righteousness; it is truth. The whole universe depends on love. Man is not able to know the nature of love. He is carried away by whims and fancies of the momentary, transient ways of the world and forgets eternal divinity. What is the reason? Selfishness is rampant and ever increasing while spirituality is on the decline. Narrow-mindedness is increasing while broad-mindedness is on the decline. Desires are increasing, but great ideals are on the decline. Human life is

selfishness is given up, the day when we awaken and kindle our latent Divinity, there will be unity in this world. Therefore, everyone must fill their hearts with Divine Love.

God is Love. Love is God. There should be a connection, love to love. When one strengthens his devotion, he will be eligible to enjoy non-dualism. It is most essential today that everyone should know the spirit and the nature of love and conduct oneself accordingly at all times—in both positive and negative circumstances—in a spirit of love. It is love that is pervasive—whether in a forest, a mansion, or in times of attachment or detachment, in behavior, conduct and word, in the mind and in our dwelling place, also in times of bondage or liberation—this truth is not recognized by everyone. In order to drive out wicked-mindedness and wicked activities, it is the weapon of love which will overcome

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—Sathya Sai Baba

A Recapitulation of Sathya Sai Baba's Divine Teachings, page 49

Compiled by —Grace J. McMartin

The Powerful Weapon of Love

One may be a scholar of all ancient, sacred texts and also of *Vedic* knowledge. One may reside in a mansion or a palace. One may be a king or a ruler. One may have valor and courage and may be unrivaled on the battlefield. One may be down-trodden, a pauper, without having anything for himself. But if anyone is bereft of love, all of those are useless. If a ruler or a king doesn't have devotion and love, then it would be far better for him to be a servant with love. There are people in this sacred land who can make inert, dull stones dance in full awareness. There are people on the battlefield who will play with the heads of enemies like footballs. There are people who can rule this country with efficiency in the field of administration. But what is the use if we do not listen to the cries and the miseries of the forlorn? We have to learn to hear their misery and sorrow.

Fill the Heart

Embodiments of Love! The whole universe is full of love. Love is wealth; it is righteousness; it is truth. The whole universe depends on love. Man is not able to know the nature of love. He is carried away by whims and fancies of the momentary, transient ways of the world and forgets eternal divinity. What is the reason? Selfishness is rampant and ever increasing while spirituality is on the decline. Narrow-mindedness is increasing while broad-mindedness is on the decline. Desires are increasing, but great ideals are on the decline. Human life is

spent throughout in selfishness and self-interest.

The ancient sages have paid homage to the spirit of sacrifice. It is righteousness that is admired. It is sacrifice that wears the crown; the sages welcomed that sacrifice. In this country of Bharath (India), which is Divine, Divinity has been forgotten. It is for this reason that the whole world is full of problems, agitation and tensions. In fact, the heart bereft of love is a barren land. It is love that demonstrates sacred Divinity. It is this love which is all-pervasive. It is this love which unifies mankind. The day that selfishness is given up, the day when we awaken and kindle our latent Divinity, there will be unity in this world. Therefore, everyone must fill their hearts with Divine Love.

God is Love. Love is God. There should be a connection, love to love. When one strengthens his devotion, he will be eligible to enjoy non-dualism. It is most essential today that everyone should know the spirit and the nature of love and conduct oneself accordingly at all times—in both positive and negative circumstances—in a spirit of love. It is love that is pervasive—whether in a forest, a mansion, or in times of attachment or detachment, in behavior, conduct and word, in the mind and in our dwelling place, also in times of bondage or liberation—this truth is not recognized by everyone. In order to drive out wicked-mindedness and wicked activities, it is the weapon of love which will overcome

all of the problems that exist in the world today.

Life's Limitations

In order to experience divine love, we are not proceeding along the right path. Love is the seed, and it continually branches out; it is only that which branches out repeatedly. Love is the flower and the fruit. In order to experience and enjoy the fruit, we have to tread along the path of love. Every person should make an attempt to know what love is; but people today are struggling for money and position. Money and position, no doubt, are needed, but they should be limited. Even if the mighty ocean crosses its limits, it will be put to disrepute and shame. The body and the mind, which are so important, should partake of food under certain limitations or else they will suffer. When once you eat in excess, you will suffer from indigestion and illness. Everything must be used within certain limits.

In the apparent, transient world, everything is under certain limitations. Only love is limitless; it is indefinable. It is the flow of love which is the essence of our lives.

Shut Your Mouth and Open Your Heart!

In order to acquire love, how should you proceed? You cannot possess it through meditation or penance, nor can you get it by going through the sacred texts. God is not present in the *Vedas*, nor in epics, nor in meditation, nor in penance. God dwells in one's own heart. Therefore, you have to direct your mind to your heart. You have to shut your mouth and open your heart, today! Only

then will the state of bliss be enjoyed. When you are already the very embodiment of love, how is it that you want to acquire it? Why do you want to possess what you already have?

In order to earn love, some resort to meditation and penance. They go through many sacred texts; they read continually. That is like the jewelry or decoration which one puts on, but it does not relate to the original creativity. Scholarship is a decoration. Going through the sacred texts is jewelry or an ornament. They give you external beauty, not internal beauty. The internal state of bliss or beauty is possible only through the path of love.

What Should Human Life Be?

Today, love is totally missing. In place of love, there is hatred and aversion. In the place of truth, there is selfishness and greed. In place of compassion, there is useless jealousy and envy. When good qualities and divine noble virtues are present, then human qualities will shine.

Embodiments of Love! Human life should be one of love. If you have this, there is nothing that is impossible for you. You can certainly get all forms of wealth through love. You will also attain position; it is love that triumphs.

What sort of love are we talking about? As we pray to God, we should have the spirit of total surrender. Today, that spirit of surrender is lacking. If you want God—if you are really spiritually hungry, if you really thirst for spirituality—see that you travel along the path of love. In fact, you are not hungry; you are not thirsty. You do not have the desire. You simply aspire for the spirit of love, but you don't catch hold of it

strongly. By merely desiring water, your thirst is not quenched. In fact, you should always keep water on hand. When you drink the water, then your thirst will be satisfied.

Truly speaking, if you are spiritually hungry, you should strive hard to earn God's grace; then, your thirst will be quenched; your hunger will be satisfied. On the other hand, if you remain lazy—but still aspire for bliss and to see that your hunger is satisfied—it will be impossible. When filling the heart with selfishness, you cannot pursue spiritual fulfillment. What you should desire today is love. Love has no form; it is indefinable; it is beyond description; you can only experience love. The closer you are to love, the more your hunger will be appeased.

The Foundation of Life Is . . .

Present-day troubles and problems in the world are caused by the absence of love. Yes, there is love! The kind of love that is present today is limited to the body and selfishness. We have only body consciousness; we do not have Divine thought. We are aware of the vesture of the body which we have put on, but we forget the foundation. We are only conscious of the form built on that foundation.

The fundamental, the main foundation, is love. Where does this begin, and where does it end? Love begins from the point of service, and it ends in total identification with the spirit. Without the spirit of service, you cannot experience the Divinity of "I am." In fact, I am that Divine Self. That Self is love; Self is God; Self is truth; Self is righteousness. It is the Self that is the form of love.

There are four primary objectives in life. Man spends a lifetime centering on the four objectives (righteousness, prosperity, fulfillment of desires and liberation), forgetting the fifth. The fifth objective of human life is the supreme state of love by which you can have anything. In love, there is no room for hatred. Where there is love, there is no envy. Wicked acts and bad thinking cannot be entertained, when they are present, love will run away.

One Word, One Path

The human heart is one; it is like a chair that allows only one person to sit down. When love of the Lord is seated there, there is no room for any others. The heart is quite stable, tender, selfless and pure, but if you go on changing allegiance, then the heart is transformed into a game of musical chairs. Repeat only one name. If you have allegiance to one Lord today, another Lord tomorrow, and think of another name the next day, how can you expect to learn to love? There is only one word and one path. Under all circumstances, you should consider the heart as being a single chair. The heart is the center of love.

Love is an Atomic Principle

Why do we suffer from all kinds of diseases? Because of physical attachments that increase day by day, we have meaningless desires. We pray for our own welfare and progress, but we don't pray for the world. Society is very important; country is very important. We have to conduct ourselves, keeping in mind the welfare of the society and the country. Without society, the individual cannot prosper. Who is that individual?

The individual who has the strength of love is the one who will prosper. Love is the Divine power that unifies the whole world.

What is the reason for thousands assembling here [at Prasanthi Nilayam]? It is love that is the main cause. Without love, you would not be here. What sort of love? It is give and take; it is two ways. You receive Divine Love and offer your love in return; however, both are one. Divine love is reflected in your body. The love of the Ancient Eternal Divine shines in everyone as a reflection. Love is a gift. Do not misuse it. You have to make proper use of it. Fill your heart with it, share it and make the country happy, that is the nature of love. You are not able to know true love; you think of love in the narrow sense. Since ancient times, the noble seers and saints welcomed love. They taught that love is beyond all known definitions.

Love is the basis for everything. You may prepare any number of sweets, but sugar is common in all of them. Without sugar you cannot have *Mysore paak*, *jilebi*, or any other sweets. Love should be associated with social, ethical, spiritual, scientific and technological aspects of life. Love is present in your heart. While love flows abundantly like the Ganges River, you are chasing after droplets. It is only this Ganges water that will quench your thirst, not those droplets. It is the flow of love that you find percolating through every cell of the body. It is love that is present in every atom of the universe. It is atoms that become matter throughout the universe. Without atoms, there is no matter. Therefore, Divine Love is present as an atomic principle. God is present in the microcosm and the

macrocosm. Therefore, the love which is inherent in you need not be sought outside.

Invest In Love

Man amasses wealth and property by undertaking employment. In order to grow in the spirit of bliss, you have to improve the property of love. In fact, you have invested in insurance companies and in other businesses. None of these companies are ever permanent. Therefore, invest in Divine Love once and for all. Your investment will last forever. You will get double, and double, and double interest. Your heart is the bank where this love should be deposited. On the other hand, if you make the investment elsewhere, you are bound to be bankrupt. No one can steal the love from your heart; that is impossible. When you pay the premium on insurance, you make certain that the insurance is valid and has surety. What is meant by surety? To IN SURE is surety, so do not put your deposit in banks outside. In which bank should you deposit love? Deposit it in the bank of your heart—which has no doors, or watchman, or key—because it is eternally permanent, so it does not change or waver. Immortal love is beyond that.

You all like nectar, *amrita*, that is part for the mundane world. Certainly, you will relish nectar. So it follows that that which appeals to your heart is the nectar of love. Everyone should be determined to have the nectar of love.

Sacrifice Is Needed

That which is to be honored is sacrifice. When once you have sacrificed, you can welcome love. Then, you will increase your strength and capacity; whatever

you do, you are bound to be successful. Where there is total surrender, there will be no dissatisfaction, there will be no failure at any point. Based on this, the *Vedas* have no position, no authority, no association which can give you as much satisfaction as sacrifice. In these times, sacrifice is needed.

God is love; love is his form. We are not able to explain love, not even a fraction of it. How do you expect to acquire love? Know this, in order to partake of food, you must make the effort. You move your hands to collect food from the plate. Love is your property, it is so close to you. But, you are not making an effort to collect this love. You may repeat a hundred times, "potato *chappathis*," but that will never satisfy your hunger. Pick-up the food from your plate and start to chew and swallow, then your hunger will be appeased. God within will digest and assimilate the food, and he will supply the needed strength to the human body.

Wisdom of Ancient Sages/Saints

Divine love encircles you. You have to experience it through your hands. What does that mean? You have to clap and then repeat God's name. You have to repeat God's name several times. If you really want God, repeat his name like Prahlada did, saying, "*Om Namō Narayana*" (doing obeisance to the Lord). Sing the glories of God like Radha and Meera. Jayadeva, Gowranga and Tukaram, all prayed to God incessantly. You shed tears for mean, low, worldly pursuits, but not for God. Instead, you should cry, pine, and yearn for God like Ramakrishna. Why do you shed tears? There are two types of tears, tears of joy, and tears of sorrow. The tears of joy should always be offered to God.

Rukmini (Krishna's consort) said, "In order to weigh Krishna, Krishna's name and form should balance the scales." If you really respond to the One with devotion, you would be able to balance the scales. But, chanting the name of God does not equal the form of God. You cannot balance the weight or merit consideration by just chanting the name or thinking of the physical form. That is as if the physical body of the Divine is here, and the Eternal Name is over there. These are the characteristics of body consciousness, but the name speaks of the inward path.

Narada was not ordinary; he had spiritual wisdom. Narada said, "Rukmini, you are proceeding along the outward path not the inward path." Meanwhile, Sathyabhama (also Krishna's consort) continued on the outward path by wanting to weigh the Lord through physical means. [Sathyabhama was placing all her jewels on the scale, so that they would balance the weight of Krishna.] But, Krishna would never validate that kind of balance. So, Rukmini began collecting tulsi (sacred basil) leaves while chanting Krishna's name in full devotion to the Lord [and placed them on the scale.] Only then, could the balance be found between the name and the form of Lord Krishna. Therefore, Krishna submitted himself to Rukmini. (for full story see *Chinna Katha*, Volume I, 1988 edition, pages 10-11).

You can never measure the Lord by mere physical means, nor by your position in the world, nor by your scholarship and intelligence. You can only weigh the Lord with love. If you want to weigh the Lord, it will be possible only through love and devotion.

Children's Corner: Keeping Good Company



If someone says something which goes against your moral values or way of thinking, politely walk away from that person.

When you hear something negative that goes against your principles, kindly say, "I'm really not interested," and leave.

If you stay and listen, your mind will have bad thoughts.

Remember, do not listen to anything evil, unkind or untrue about another person.

And, always remember, if you can't say something nice about someone, then don't say anything at all!

Adapted from—*Bal Vikas Magazine*
For Children 1 to 99, Published in Italy

Young Adults

Baba's Treasury of Riches

During Baba's Summer Course in Brindavan, May 1995, one of his college students was among the guest speakers. He told a story about the day that Swami came to school to witness a science fair the college boys had put on. There were many exhibits at the fair, and one in particular caught Baba's attention. It was an optical sensor, which when a beam of light was broken, would trigger a door bell. The student who had assembled the device proudly explained that the apparatus would be quite useful for detecting thieves who might enter a house. To demonstrate, he passed his finger between the sensor and the light, and the bell went off. Each time he interrupted the light beam, the bell would sound.

Then it was Swami's turn to test the alarm. But, when he passed his finger between the sensor and its light source, the bell failed to sound. The perplexed student passed his own finger through the device, to see if it still worked, and sure enough, the bell went off. When Baba again put his finger in the device, it again failed to activate. What was the reason for this "malfunction?"

Swami explained that he was no ordinary thief. Whereas, an ordinary burglar comes to steal your possessions, Baba is a thief of a different variety. He

comes to take away the things that are possessing you such as bad qualities and wrong thoughts.

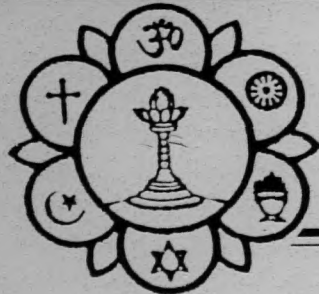
Sathya Sai Baba says *properties are not proper ties*, and that we must not become attached to our material wealth. In Summer Course four years earlier, Sai Baba said, *The wealth which one acquires should be given back to society*. What kind of wealth was he talking about? Money? Land? Actually, it was more than these. Swami said that the wealth he was talking about included knowledge, skills and talents. He explained that it is only when we impart what we have learned to others that our education is enriched and becomes purposeful. Sai concluded, *The more you give, the more you grow*.

Every talent that we are born with is a gift from God. Every bit of knowledge that we have acquired is another of the Lord's blessings. And any other material prosperity that we may have earned was, in truth, bestowed upon us by Swami. All this wealth is really his, and we must spend it wisely. If we don't spend it at all, then we become selfish thieves. It is only when we put into practice what we have learned from our Divine Teacher that we have truly repaid our debt to him.

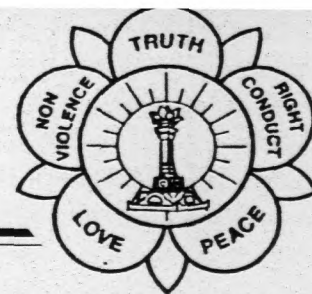
—Pravin Wagh
Cerritos, California

Every individual has a responsibility to society from which one derives so many benefits. Society is based on the principle of mutual give and take. Your primary duty is to show your gratitude to your parents, your kith and kin, teachers and others who have helped you.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sai Student Bulletin, Summer/Fall 1996



A Summary for Transformation: *Sai Era Moves Forward*



When Sai Baba first presented the *Sarva Dharma* symbol (upper left), he placed symbols of the major world religions in each petal to teach us that all is one. Each religion may have its own rituals and ways of worshiping God, but the fundamental message is the message of love. Swami says, *God is Love. Love is God.*

Then Sai Baba changed the logos, and instead, he placed the five human values in the petals (upper right) to teach us that one who lives the five values manifests Divinity itself. If one speaks from truth, then all actions are right actions are based on truth. If one is living in unity of thought, word and deed, then he feels peace within. If one is at peace, then he feels love; feeling love, then there is non-violence. Hence, truth + right action + peace + love + nonviolence = God.

Next, Sai Baba told us, *My life is my message.* We began to look more seriously at how Baba is living his life. He is always giving. There is no ego. He pours love on all who are willing to receive it. He is always in complete equanimity to the point where many believe he is almost floating as he walks. All that he does is for the sake of others, not himself. He is establishing educational institutions with the highest moral standards. He feeds the poor and helpless. He has established a system for bringing pure water to 700 villages (see Water Project page 23) in the Andhra Pradesh region of India, a massive undertaking. He has built a hospital which is a model for the

world. And his greatest miracle is the personal and intimate way in which he touches our hearts, and we are transformed through his love.

Next, Sai Baba taught us, *Your life is my message.* Now the responsibility is placed on us to transform ourselves, so that we reflect this Divine Love in our daily lives. How can we be examples of the living Avatar? When we compare ourselves to Swami, we become aware of how much change and transformation must take place within us.

Swami continues to teach us more. He tells us, *You are not the body.* He asks us, *Where are you from?* Many people answer by giving the name of their country, but we have learned to answer the truth, "We are from you Swami," *What is your name?* Answering, "I am God playing the part of (one's given birth name)." Baba expands our vision and broadens our minds, teaching us who we really are. Unless we know who we are, how can we be aware of the changes we need to make in our lives?

I like to give Swami's example of a man crying as he walks down a street. What would you do? Perhaps, you would approach him and ask what is wrong. But if he were happy, would you ask him what is wrong? No. Because our natural state is that of happiness. That is who we really are. Swami says that there is no need to wish him a happy birthday, he is always happy.

At the 70th birthday, Sai Baba took us to new levels of understanding regard-

ing the meaning of truth. He designated 1996 as the Year of Truth; 1997 is the Year of Right Action; 1998 will be the Year of Peace; 1999 will be the Year of Love. The year 2000 will be ushered in as the Year of Nonviolence. Swami taught us that truth is not just being honest or of inquiry into who we are. He taught us that truth is nonduality, i.e. truth is one. He said that even to say "thank you" denotes two, not one, so in the Sai organization we should not say "thank you." Instead, we could say, "I am very happy."

Before our very eyes, we are being transformed and changed in many ways. Yet, Swami tells us that he has only a small number of true devotees. Why so few? I believe it is because change is not easy. We have a tendency to resist change. Years ago when there was still sand in front of the temple, Swami gave a discourse, and in English he said, *I know, I know, you all want liberation. Well, you can have it like that* [and snapped his fingers]. Then he added, *But you are not willing to become unattached to your homes, cars, families and loved ones.* We all laughed knowing this to be true.

Yet, to please Swami, we must change. We must let go. Let go of what? Quarrels, for example. How many of us are still hanging on to old grudges when we felt hurt by a friend or a loved one? Swami teaches us that to be healthy, we must live in the present. We must let go of the past. It is gone. Done.

It is helpful to keep a journal, such as is suggested by General Chibber in his book on leadership (*Sai Baba's Mahavakya on Leadership, A Book for Youth, Parents and Teachers*). The book asks, "Did we only say nice things to-

day?" "Are we making good use of our time, money and energy?" "Are we transforming ourselves to be more loving?"

Change must also happen in the Sathya Sai Baba Centers. Swami says that devotional songs should be sung in the language of the country. Also, how sincerely do we welcome newcomers, and explain our worship service, so they can understand the beauty of Sai's teachings? If a man who speaks only Greek approached me, I might feel his love and sincerity, but I wouldn't be able to communicate with him. This is the feeling that newcomers often have when they visit our Sai Centers.

Moving forward in the Sai era, we must change even more. Swami says, *No hurry, no worry, no curry.* The Western world lives a fast-paced life. We have such advanced technology that we can fit many activities into one day. We can be cooking, doing the wash, and talking on the phone all at the same time. We can take our children to several activities in a day, even after a long day of school. More and more, women are working and are trying to take care of their children at the same time, so we spend our days hurrying from one place to another, worrying that we can't get everything done. Baba says that worrying is one of the primary causes of disease. He asks us to give him our fears and problems, and if we pray sincerely, he will help us.

Many of Swami's discourses teach the importance of thoughts. Thoughts are the basis of our actions. The food we eat helps to determine our thoughts. Baba teaches us to eat in moderation and keep foods as close to the life energy as possible by not overcooking. *Sathwic*

(calming, soothing) foods are best for calming the mind. Spicy, hot foods are *rajasic* (exciting, intoxicating) and can cause irritable thoughts. Other foods that we eat include unhealthful “junk foods” and soft drinks that contain the stimulant, caffeine, which increases blood pressure and brain activity. Even at Sai retreats and meetings—places where we are trying to calm our minds by chanting Om and having peaceful thoughts—people drink stimulating beverages. If we are trying to transform ourselves and to calm our minds, how can we do so by stimulating it with caffeine? Changing our habits can be difficult, especially when we have become addicted to such beverages.

I repeat, we must change if we want to please Swami and make our life his message. We must be so full of love to the extent that we are willing to change even the most difficult aspect of ourselves that is not in tune with his teachings. If feeling Baba’s love is all that matters, then petty quarrels, old traditions and bad habits can just drift away. They aren’t important anymore, because feeling his love is so Divine.

There is a story from the book, *Hope for the Flowers*, that teaches a lesson in transformation: Stripe and Yellow were caterpillars. They saw a huge mountain of caterpillars all climbing on top of each other and became caught up in the excitement to see what was at the top. It must be something very important for so many caterpillars were trying to get there. So, Stripe and Yellow began to climb, too. As they climbed, they began asking the others why they were climbing. “We don’t know, but it must be important because so many others are try-

ing to get there,” they responded. Yellow was suddenly pushed on the head and face as other caterpillars climbed over her, not caring that they were hurting her. She looked at Stripe and said, “I’m not going to the top, I’m going down. They don’t even care if they hurt me.” She went down the mountain of caterpillars and climbed a tree. There she spun a cocoon; and lo and behold, after some time, she emerged as a beautiful butterfly. She happened to be flying near the mountain of caterpillars. Stripe recognized the beautiful butterfly who had the freedom to fly. He too decided to climb down, spun a cocoon and became a butterfly.

At Swami’s 70th birthday, the German women put on a beautiful dance wearing ballerina costumes and flowers in their hair. They danced to a Strauss waltz. They represented *gopis* (milk maids devoted to Krishna) who were happy when Sai Baba (a dancer dressed as Swami) was there and sad when he was gone, and happy again when he returned. I was there during a practice in the Poornachandra Auditorium when Swami walked out on the stage. He looked at them and said, *Butterflies*. At the end of a discourse, Sai Baba mentioned that the Germans had now come full circle—from the hatred of Hitler—to Divine Love. They had been transformed like butterflies. We must all experience this transformation; it is complete transformation. A caterpillar cannot be half a butterfly. We should not be half a devotee.

We must change, or we won’t find out who we really are. How can we experience constant bliss when there is jealousy, greed or anger? Baba tells us

that if we want to be happy, we must See good. Always see good, then we can be happy. We can also live longer, have no worries and be free of disease. Dis-ease is nothing more than unrest in the body when it is not at ease.

A devotee once said to Baba, "Swami, I tell myself over and over, 'I am God,' and I believe I am God. But when I wave my hand to materialize an object, nothing happens!" Swami responded, *Because, for you, it is still an intellectual exercise.*

To really feel we are God is like meditation. In true meditation, the person doesn't know he is meditating. In the same way, being God happens when we no longer have to think about being God. We are like fish swimming in the sea of

Divinity. Swami says, *Love is in you, around you, through you; it is your very breath.* To feel it more fully, to feel it all the time, we must continue to undergo self-transformation. It is only then that we can find out who we really are. It takes courage, determination and compassion on our part, and it won't be easy. But with Sai here to guide us, anything is possible.

Baba often asks, *What do you want?* "Nothing," we reply. *Nothing?* he responds. Devotees often counter by saying, "You, Swami, only you." *Why that's everything,* he responds. *Everything is nothing, and nothing is everything.*

—Cathy Daub
Tallowood, New Jersey

I have a right to chastise those of you whom I feel are mine. I also know that you value my words, and that you feel sad at my being displeased with you. It is due to your wayward mind that you are easily wafted away from me by some silly person's irresponsible words. I sometimes act as if I keep you at a distance, that is done to reform you quickly. When a stretch of road is being repaired, I go by a detour, and I do not use that bit of road for some time. The purpose is to let the repair work proceed more quickly, so that I may use the road again.

I have come to set the world right, so I have to collect all those who are ill and treat them in my hospital, restore them to sanity, strength and wisdom; and send them back to their stations in life. I must intensify your devotion, reinforce your faith, and rebuild the foundation of your moral nature, so that you can counter temptations with greater confidence.

I have come across people who recite a prayer and believe that they are bringing the world nearer to peace with every occasion on which they pray. But peace can be won only the hard way, by eliminate violence and greed from the hearts of individuals.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. I
Pages 182-183

Sai's Message: A Very Divine Discourse

Physical life is not permanent, it is temporary. Youth and wealth are also fleeting, they pass by like clouds. Spouse, children, relatives and friends, change and vanish like the mist, like lightning. In human life only two qualities are permanent: one is good, truthful conduct, and the other is reputation.

In this world—aiming at human welfare, progress and reconstruction of humanity—many religions are founded. Vaishnavites say Lord Vishnu is the greatest of all, while Shaivites declare that Shiva is the greatest of all. Those who follow the school of Ganapathi claim that Ganapathi is the only Lord. The well-educated claim Sarada to be the highest deity. Muslims claim that Allah is the mightiest God while Christians say Christ is the Lord. Buddhists say it of Lord Buddha, and Jains say Lord Manavir. The Parsis say Zoroaster is great, while the Sikhs say Nanak is great. Baba devotees say that Sai Baba is the Lord, while a few say that all are equal. God is one, acceptable to all religions, that God is truth, that God is righteousness, that God is peace, that God is love.

The Object of All Religions

Embodiments of Love! It is essential to realize that the intention of any religion is to bring a spirit of unity in this world of diversity, so that we may lead an ideal life. The essence of all religions, the summary of all sacred texts, and the goal of all kinds of travail is one and the same. But in the name

of religion, we are heading toward conflict and fighting because of narrow-mindedness, self-interest and selfishness. All religions teach good values; we have to conduct ourselves with intelligence. If our minds are good, then what religion is bad? Oh, valiant people of Bharat, listen to this. The main principles of all religions are morality, integrity, charity, righteousness, truth, tradition, forbearance and nonviolence. These principles of truth are accepted by all religions. Religions, since ancient times, have forgotten these main principles of unity and have always maintained diversity with the result that human value is totally gone. In human life, it is most essential to realize the spirit of oneness in Divinity.

Jews lived many years before Jesus. Their language, Hebrew, was very prominent. The Hebrew language is more or less like our Sanskrit. Many words which well-express the ideals of humanity are contained in Hebrew.

In those days, all believers of God entertained sacred thoughts with their minds concentrated fully on God. They had no other thoughts. They made bells and other items and started worshiping those images. Those deities were of their own imagination; they spent their lives worshiping them with all their hearts and souls. They had absolute faith in God.

They say that God created the whole world in six days: first day, the brilliant light was created; second day, the wind and the clouds; third day, the sun, the

moon and the stars were created; fourth day, the earth and the oceans were created; fifth day, fish and birds were created; and sixth day, animals and humans were created. They are the main creatures in this world. God rested on the seventh day. That is now called Sunday. Sunday was the good day when they prayed to God. Today, Christians still attend churches on Sunday, the Sabbath day, and offer prayers.

The Christian Holy Family

There was a couple called Joseph and Mary. As time passed, God willed that they give birth to a child. The name of the child was Yeshua. What is the meaning of Yeshua? Ye means one; shua means that which is sacred. It is the sanctity which is one. Jews had full faith that God was the only one who was sacred. As the name of Yeshua was spreading far and wide, there were doubts. At a tender age Jesus lost his father. To help his mother in full awareness of the statement, "Mother is God, and Father is God," he started serving his mother. Service unto the parents is really ideal. Why? The blood, food, head and money are the gifts from the parents. We should express our gratitude to our parents. Jesus taught this to the youngsters, that they should be grateful to their parents.

At the age of 11, he went to Jerusalem. His mother was very worried at the thought of that. In the temple there were many violent acts taking place. He prevented violence and taught that God dwells in everyone. Oh people! If it is not possible to help, keep quiet, never harm anybody. This was his message. "Help ever, hurt never." This is the essence of all religions; it is the integra-

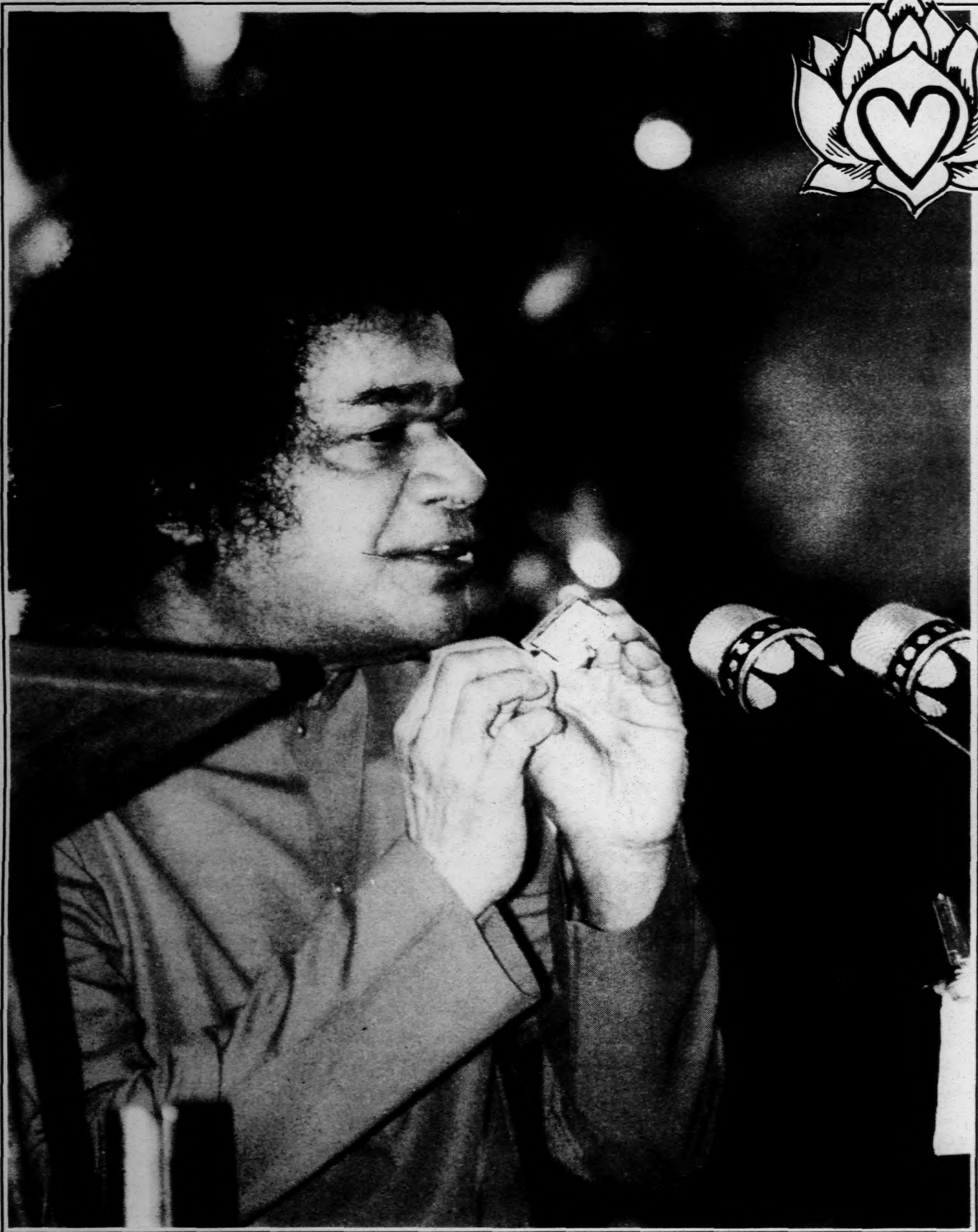
tion of all religions. This teaching is meant for all of humanity. He gave relief to those who were sick and diseased. Jesus supplied food to those who were hungry. Watching all these good deeds, some called him, "Son of God." Later, Son of God became his name. It also shows clear proof that the Father is God above.

Jesus Became Well-Known

The name and fame of Jesus had spread far and wide. The differences of religious opinion had increased. All those differences led to Jesus whose life was in danger. Jews in Jerusalem did not want Jesus to be there. Because of the religious conflict, fighting was ever on the rise. Because of so many different groups, they even attempted to harm Jesus. All those differences were based on violence, and that led to more violence. Because of attachment to group affiliation there was conflict and fighting. Religious affiliations led to ego. This led to confusion among people as to what Jesus said, whether it was right or not.

Jesus' Declaration

Jesus himself declared first that he was a messenger of God. He said, "Not only me, all of you are messengers of God." Every human being is God's messenger. But man has forgotten this truth, and he now considers that he is the master. But Jesus propagated this truth. The first declaration was, "I am the messenger of God." The second statement, "I am the son of God." The son of God indicates close proximity. It means that there is an intimate relationship between the father and the son. As he went on with spiritual endeavor and practice, Jesus declared, "I and my Father are one."



***This is the book. . . . All that is present here is present nowhere in the Holy Bible.
This is a new story of Jesus. It is not given to everybody to know this divinity.***

Finally, comes the Holy Ghost. These are the principles present in all religions. Hinduism advocates these three as dualism, qualified non-dualism and non-dualism (*Dwaita*, *Vishist-adwaita*, *Adwaita*). The Persian concept also reveals the same idea, "I am in the light," "The light is in me," and "I am the light." Jesus sacrificed his body to establish the synthesis of all schools of thought. We do not understand this philosophy clearly. We give too much importance to the differences and completely ruin human values and human qualities.

We celebrate the birthdays of great teachers, but we do not follow their ideals. There is nothing great in celebrating these birthdays. We should determine to translate the birthdays into action, to practice the teachings.

The Sacred Text

Scholars started investigating the validity of the statements made by Jesus Christ. They collected all the material that existed prior to 1530 A.D. All that information was collected into one book in England. The Russians made it into a small book, and kept it near the Black Sea in safe custody. In the tiny book everything is written. This is the book. [Baba created a small book the size of a matchbox, cream in color, with golden edges and a golden cross on the front cover.] This is the book, the "sacred text." These are the pages in it [Baba held the book, so it could be seen.] You find the cross there on the book. This proves that there was a procedure to establish the synthesis of all religions. All that is present here is not present in the *Holy Bible*. This is a brand new story of Jesus. It is not given to every-

body to know this Divinity. To know the Divine, we should develop Divine thoughts. Here you find the bookmark threads. Every thread stands for the text of every religion. The most important *sloka* (verse) of the *Bhagavad Gita* is present here in this book. [Swami chanted the *sloka*, chapter 18, verse 66.]

The essence of all religions is one. Surrender is the main duty of everybody. Surrender means the feeling of oneness, I and God are one. Why? The reason is, the one who is present in you is present in me. Bodies are different. Bodies are like light bulbs; the current that passes through all these bulbs is the same. There are differences in color and wattage, but the current, the Divinity that this book contains is one.

This book contains an important dictum which says, "One is manifested into the many." Only one God is present in everyone. Never follow the differences based on the divergence of the body. Then there is no chance for conflict. It is body attachment which is responsible for fights. Never believe that the body is permanent. The body is like a water bubble; the mind is like a mad monkey. Do not follow the mind. Do not follow the body, follow the conscience. That is the main principle of this text, So, we should follow our conscience. In the culture of Bharat, this is called *chit*. There are three aspects—*sat* (being), *chit* (awareness), *ananda* (bliss)—all three are within. We have to recognize this truth.

Have Free Will, and Practice Divine Love

We go through books, and we run after all great people, but we do not inquire whether they are really great or

not. There is no other person greater than you! But you don't know your own truth. The elephant does not know its strength; therefore, it submits itself to the mahout (elephant driver). The whole universe is within you. Everything is within your power. That is called "free will." Free will is not separate, it is the Divine Self, the spirit. That Divinity is called free will. We forget this fundamental principle, and we rely on the body, the mind and the intelligence.

Embodiments of Love! In order to acquire Divinity—in order to find the Divinity within, if you want to know yourself—you should develop pure love. It is this bond of love that binds everybody together. Although there are 250 schools and divisions in Christianity, they all propagate the principles that Jesus taught.

Even today, you find women and men involved in evangelism. However, it is only *prachara* (propagate); there is no *achara* (practice). Practice is very important. You can tell others, but that will never be permanent. You can influence others by practicing what you say. Practice is the fundamental thing. When you practice and enjoy, then others will follow your example. When you say one thing and act in a different way, nobody will ever believe you. It doesn't matter if you do not propagate, practice is enough. Today, the most essential thing is to practice, not to preach.

Kinds of Knowledge

Bhagavan tells the students repeatedly that there are five forms of knowledge. As an effect of the *Kali* Age (this present time of distress), we find book knowledge increasing. This bookish

knowledge is superficial. General knowledge is a big zero. Common sense is zero. There is discrimination knowledge, but no fundamental discrimination anywhere. When once you exercise fundamental discrimination, you will develop practical knowledge. What is fundamental here? You should develop the feeling that the same God is present in everyone; the same Divinity is present in all. Because people are attached to their bodies which are fragile like water bubbles, they have forgotten that they have a permanent relationship with God. It is selfishness that kills the human qualities. In order to develop humanness, you should develop one-pointedness. You have to understand this principle of unity as religion.

Who Are You?

What is the meaning of religion? To "realize" is religion. What is it that we have to realize? We must ask, "Who am I? Am I the body? No. Am I the mind? No. Am I the intellect? No. Am I the senses? No." You are none of these. This body is my body. When you say, "My body," then who is this "my?" This is my kerchief; kerchief is separate from me. My body means that the body is separate from me. Then who are you? When once you inquire this way, you will realize that the body, mind, intellect and senses are instruments, and you are the master. Spouse, children, friends, relatives are like passing clouds. Prior to the marriage, who was the wife and who was the husband? Before birth, who was the child, and who was the mother? All these attachments come along the way. This is not love. Not love. Not love. [Swami said in English, three times.] It is only attach-

ment. It is only the love relationship between you and God that is the real love. Real love is there before birth, after death, during the lifetime; that is God's love which is indivisible. It remains the same in all periods of time. It is an omnipresent love. We have to develop that divine love. Attachment has come on the way during life, but it is like a passing cloud.

We have forgotten the indwelling Divinity. That is the greatest foolishness of humanity. Because of this utter state of foolishness, we have forgotten our true state. Do your worldly duty. Duty is God. Work is worship. With these two concepts in mind, do your duty. Do your duty sincerely. Don't do it with attachment to the fruits thereof. The body is given to you, so you can do. The time is there, so that you can do. Therefore you have to understand the time, the body and the duty, and discharge your responsibilities. Jesus knew this fundamental truth.

One-pointedness/Compassion

Mother Mary was an ardent devotee. She always taught her son to think of God continuously. Jesus sat on a mountaintop for 12 days. His mother was feeling sad because of the death of her husband. He sat there asking, "What is this attachment? From where has it come?" The answer was, "It is of our own making. It is not God's gift."

God's gifts are bliss, peace and truth. All the rest are passing clouds. Wife, husband, children, mother, father are only body relationships. Actually speaking, who is the mother and who is the son? All are children of God. This is the substance of the brotherhood of man, and the fatherhood of God. Gradually they

become unified. That is the main spiritual path that one should follow. One should travel closer and closer to God. That is the spiritual path. It is not holding a talisman in hand, and it is not sitting in meditation. That is time wasted. You think you are meditating, but on whom are you meditating? Do you think that you are separate from God? When you say that you meditate on God, it means that you are separate from him. When you chant his name, is your name different from God's name? This develops a feeling of separation. There should not be separation, there should not be this kind of illusion. There should not be attachment. There is only one-pointedness, unity.

Where is God? God dwells in your heart. In fact, if there is no Divine thought, it is not a heart. It is a stone, a stone! Truth + Kindness = Compassion. When there is no compassion, the heart is only a stone, so today we have to develop compassion.

Friendship With God

Love, love, love. Love is God. Live in love. That is the principle exemplified by Jesus.

- Start the day with love
- Fill the day with love
- Spend the day with love
- End the day with love
- This is the way to God

You should live in love continuously. He who lives in love is beloved by God. This book [Baba refers to the small holy book again] which contains the saying, "Such a one is beloved to God." The one full of love is a friend of God. Friends of today are acting in contradictory ways. If you have money in your pocket, and

your father has a well-placed position, then you will have hundreds of friends. They will all be saying, "Hello! Hello!" But when the pocket is empty, and father has lost his position, no one will even say, "Goodbye." Is that friendship? God is not like that. He is always with you, in you, around you. You should have such a friend, so the real friend is God. God is your permanent friend. All worldly pleasures and comforts are like passing clouds. How long do they last?

There are many foreigners who have come here. You should never change your fundamental principles in spite of other modifications. When a person is young, he is a child. After 10 years, we call him "boy." After 30 years, he is a man. After 75 years, he is a grandfather. It is the same person; the difference is in his age. That is a fundamental truth. Only one person is present. The same person at one time was a child, a boy, a man and a grandfather. In the beginning, God has a form. In times of difficulties, we pray to God. Sometimes we ask him for wealth. We become someone who asks. In this way, we start to establish a relationship with God.

Four Wives, Four Ways

A rich man had four wives. The first wife was highly spiritual. The second wife was sick. The third wife read many good books. The fourth was a modern wife; she was after fashionable sarees and jewelry. This rich man went on business to America. While there he didn't complete his work, so he went on postponing his return. Then he wrote a letter to each of his four wives. He said, "I am returning next week. Send a fax and tell what you want me to bring to you." He

wanted the fax messages to be sent immediately. [Here the assembled group laughed at Baba's joke.] The fourth wife, the modern woman, wanted the husband to bring her the latest fashionable sarees and jewelry. The third wife wanted books full of information and biographies of noble people. The second wife said, "I am sick. I can't bear it any longer. Bring the latest medicines." The first wife said, "I don't want anything. It is enough if you return home safely." The husband returned. He gave the latest sarees and jewels to the fourth wife. All books he handed over to the third wife. To the second wife he presented the latest medicines, and then he stayed with the first wife. The three other wives were angry, and asked, "Why do you stay there? Why don't you stay with us?"

It is difficult to live with one wife, and beyond measure with two wives. Three wives were responsible for Rama being sent into exile. Four wives are—unbearable! [Again, there was laughter from the assembled devotees.] All the three started fighting with him. Then he said, "I gave you what you wanted. You wanted the jewels and sarees; you wanted good books, and you wanted medicines, but you wanted me! Since you wanted me, I am staying with you."

God is the same. He acts in a similar way. If someone prays to God, "Oh God, I want wealth and comfort." God may grant them. If some others pray to God for wisdom, certainly God will teach them wisdom. God also has constructed the Super Specialty Hospital for those who fall sick. But to those who pray, "Oh God, I want you!" He will be very close to that one. These are the four ways of approaching God.

A Permanent Visa

Whatever you want, God will grant it. But your desires are not important; God is important. If you have God, you will have everything. Real wealth is God; real health is God. You should make every effort to pray for God, because you are from God. You should go back to God. So many have assembled here. Where do you come from? You belong to different countries all over the world, and now you are here. Though in a blissful state, you have to go back the moment all the money is spent, or when the visa expires, you must then return. It is not possible to stay here always. However, God is not a temporary visit, you should have a permanent visa. It is God's grace that you can acquire love, love, love! When once you have love, you will have a permanent visa.

Embodiments of Love! There is love in each one of you. Develop that love and share it with others. You can also experience it from others. Love is not one-way traffic; it is two ways, give and take. We don't need to go anywhere if we have love. Many foolish, foolish, foolish people go everywhere seeking that Swami and this Swami. You need not go anywhere. God is in your heart. Have full faith in your God. Do not change your faith. Do not change your concentration, follow one path, have belief in one God; that is the spirit of love.

Sai Alumni

The Alumni Association of Women from Anantapur campus render service with the feeling that service to mankind is service to God. Even after their marriages, though settled abroad, they come here every year along with their hus-

bands. That is not transformation only at the individual level, but they brought about transformation in their husbands and brought them here.

Many students think only of information, but there is no transformation. Transformation is very important. How can it happen? It will happen only through service. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. They do such service. They have been working for the last fifteen years, and their numbers are increasing. They may be anywhere; they participate in Sai organizational activities. Love has no limit; love has no birth; love has no death. [Then Baba sang]:

*Love is my form
Truth is my breath
Bliss is my food
My life is my message
Expansion is my life
No reason for love
No season for love
No birth, no death*

"My form," refers to anyone who sings that way. "Love is my form." You should say, "Love is my form." Your own-form, my form is love. "Truth is my breath," you should say to yourself. Then you will understand the fundamental principle of Sai. You should not think that it is God's form that is love. "My life is my message," so you are a messenger. Therefore, in order to be a messenger, you must change, transform your life. There is "no birth, no death" for love. You should apply Swami's teachings. Then you will become one with Sai. That is what is meant by *Tat Twam Asi*, *Thou Art*, and *Aham Brahmasmi*, *I am Brahman* (the Universal Absolute). The

same fundamental truth is taught by all sacred texts. Don't hate any religion or make fun of any religion. Don't have any differences claiming that your religion is better. All are one. Be alike to everyone. Share and exemplify this truth all over the world. God is in everyone. God is in you, and you are in God. Strength-

en this fundamental truth. When you are an example of this truth, that is real service. It is the service that will take you to the proximity, the boat in this ocean of life. Be aboard the boat that will help you gain close proximity to God.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**

Divine Discourse, December 25, 1996

I've Touched You

I've touched you
With the healing rays of My Love
Across the expanse of time and space.

Timeless is My Being
Space is an illusion
Nowhere am I not
No time I was not or shall not be
Eternity to eternity, I AM.

The soul of being, awareness, bliss
Satchidanandam.
The quintessence of *Sathyam*, *Sivam*, *Sundaram*.
I am your eternal Self, Beloved.

I touched you, bathed you, embraced you
With gentle showers of golden light
Chaste and beauteous beyond imagination
Restoring sacred wholeness
To body, mind and heart.

Nurture it with love and devotion
Yearning only for ME, your loving Lord.
The plenitude of the spirit shall be yours.
Be happy, be happy, I've touched you.

—**Somar Sundarum Cooppan**

Sathya Sai Baba Center of Brookline
Massachusetts, USA

**Sathyam* (Truth), *Sivam* (Goodness), *Sundaram* (Beauty) manifest as Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Sri Sathya Sai Water Supply Project

On November 23, 1994, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba announced the inauguration of the Water Supply Project to be undertaken through the auspices of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, for the purpose of bringing desperately needed water to the drought-stricken area of Rayalaseema in South India. The inadequacy of the water supply was due not to a lack of water, but rather to the failure of the national and state governments to agree on the use of water from the rivers that could have supplied the much needed water to the Rayalaseema area. In the meantime, people living in the affected villages suffered from having no water in their communities, and they were required to walk barefooted, in the hot sun for miles everyday, to secure a minimum of water for their needs.

Before announcing the undertaking of the Water Project by the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, Bhagavan stated: *I wish to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to the 45-year-old water problem that is affecting most parts of Rayalaseema, especially in remote villages, where people have to walk several miles to get a vessel of drinking water. This needs to be immediately redressed. Rivers are the gift of God. In rivers like the Krishna and the Godavari, much water is allowed to flow to the sea. There is no point in every state claiming rights over the river water and quarreling with each other over riparian rights. The waters of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra Rivers can be harnessed to supply the much needed water to Rayalaseema. If there is*

constraint of finance, I am prepared to meet the cost even if it is 100 or 200 crores [of rupees] (one crore=10 millions) for fulfilling this dire need of the Rayalaseema people. The devotees are prepared to make any sacrifice, but I have not stretched my hand to anyone.

—Sanathana Sarathi
December 1994, page 323

In attributing the lack of water to the decline of morality, Bhagavan Baba also stated: *Water is getting scarcer every day. What is the reason? Because of the decline in morality among men, water is getting scarce in the world. For human life, morality is the life breath. Morality makes human life blossom. Because morals have been lost, water is getting scarce.*

—Sanathana Sarathi
August 1995, page 205

The Water Project was to have been undertaken by the national government in cooperation with two state governments, but after two years, nothing had happened. It was only after the governments failed to initiate the project to relieve the suffering of the affected villagers that Bhagavan Baba, out of his love and compassion, undertook the enormous project himself. In a commentary on the disputed use of rivers in India, Bhagavan Baba urged that all rivers should be placed under the governance of the Indian national government to eliminate such disputes and to insure adequate water supplies for all.

Water Project Statistics

The enormity of the Water Project ultimately undertaken by Bhagavan Baba is truly unimaginable. Key statistics may shed some small light on its vastness:

- The village project covers 20,000 kilometers and includes more than 750 villages hitherto without water.
- Some 2,500 kilometers of pipeline were laid (approximately the distance between Maine and Florida in the United States, or from Bangalore to Delhi in India).
- There were 268 overhead storage tanks constructed.
- There were 124 ground level storage reservoirs built, along with 1,050 storage cisterns.
- Some 200 pump houses were constructed.
- The source of the generation of power for the water supply was 50 generators, totaling 10,000 kilowatts in capacity.
- Some 25,000 tons of cement was used in the construction of the project together with 5,000 tons of steel.
- Some of the summer storage tanks that were constructed are over 100 acres in area.
- Materials for the project were procured from over 10 states in India.
- There were 10,000 truck loads required to move all materials to construction sites.
- Overall 15,000 persons were employed at the peak time of construction.
- The cost of the project has been

estimated at the equivalent of \$70,000,000 or approximately, twice the cost of the Super Specialty Hospital in Prasanthi Nilayam.

The enormity of the project and the speed with which it was executed are well beyond the realm of ordinary human effort. It was only because the project was undertaken by the Divine Will that it was completed in a matter of months, rather than years. It was because the project was conceived out of the compassion and love of Bhagavan Baba that the workers who contributed to the project—the Government of India, the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, the contractors, subcontractors, consultants and manufacturers—all worked in harmony and unity to complete the project well ahead of the previously announced schedule.

On November 21, 1995 the then Prime Minister of India, Sri P. V. Narasimha Rao, ceremonially inaugurated the Water Supply Project in the Divine Presence. At the moment of inauguration, sorely needed water began flowing immediately in the villages for which the project was intended.

Spiritual Significance

The spiritual significance of the project is both simple and deeply profound. The project represents the first time that a public charitable trust had ever undertaken such a major infrastructure project anywhere in the world, with the result that the concept of social service was elevated to a new and higher level than ever before. Swami demonstrated the power of his love and his compassion to inspire everyone who

worked on the project to do so with such single-minded determination in carrying out the will of the Divine to provide life-giving water to the needy. As a result, the Water Project stands today as a Divinely inspired example of what can be achieved by people who are united as one in the work of the Divine.

The project's construction in a matter of months is, likewise, a miracle. We are encouraged by the example of the Water Project to develop our love for *dharma* (righteous) work, adding the ingredient of love, so that whatever work we are called upon to do will bear fruits that are astonishingly good, conducted with a high level of efficiency and completed in minimum time.

The example of the Water Project also teaches the lesson of sacrifice. As Swami stated, the Sir Sathya Sai Central Trust was prepared to undertake the Water Project, at whatever cost, in order to relieve the immediate suffering of the people living in the drought-stricken area of Rayalaseema. *Dharma* protects *dharma* (righteousness protects righteousness). When the Divine Will announces its intention, it cannot fail, whatever the cost.

Swami has said that one can live without food but not without water. Thus the Water Project also demonstrates the need for us to become participants in his work by doing whatever we can to help address the most immediate and basic needs of others. In the case of the Water Project, Swami has lovingly provided the most basic of elements, water, without which life cannot be sustained.

In this work, there is another important lesson. It has been stated that the sustenance of human life is the most

important and fundamental service. First, we must preserve life, then we can nurture spiritual development. Can there be any substance more important for the sustenance of human life than water? No. Therefore, providing water to those who do not have it is certainly among the greatest services that can be provided.

The year 1997, has been designated as the "Year of Righteousness." Love in action is righteousness. Swami has taught us to practice righteousness which includes the practice of meaningful and beneficial selfless service. According to Swami, selfless service is the best spiritual exercise to secure his love and grace, erase our karmic burdens, deflate our ego and control our minds.

Opportunity for Service

In this context, we may ask ourselves what water related service projects we might undertake in our own communities within the United States that would enhance the availability of the basic life-giving water to all who are in need.

First, we can educate ourselves with regard to the many lessons which Swami teaches us through the example of the Water Supply Project. Our education can result from conducting study circles on the subject, writing articles and giving talks, and it can include an emphasis on the significance of water as a community asset. Centers and regions should be encouraged to continue undertaking such efforts.

Second, we can evaluate the needs of our respective communities with regard to the water supply and develop service projects relating to the specific needs. Some communities may experi-

ence frequent flooding (e.g. Northern California); others may experience a lack of an adequate water supply and problems with its distribution (e.g. Southern California); others may experience polluted water supplies and polluted rivers (e.g. Middle Georgia, and many rural areas); others, particularly desert areas, may experience drought conditions. In evaluating the water-related needs of a particular community, the state and local governments can be contacted to seek their views on immediate needs and how Sathya Sai Baba Centers might be of service. Each center might then choose a project that would be meaningful and relevant to existing water conditions in the local community. This information should be shared with all Sai Centers for their benefit.

Third, center service projects could focus on water conservation. For example, the devotees could identify areas

in which water is wasted, and encourage the elimination of such waste. For example, when we brush our teeth, water is allowed to run from the tap. Also, much water is wasted in frequent flushes of.

Fourth, service projects could be developed around the relationship of water to the environment and to health. For example, the planting of trees would be one means of preventing erosion.

In summary, service projects could be developed—in the areas of self-education, water conservation, water purification, water usage (individual, industrial, agricultural, etc.), water distribution, elimination of water waste, and the relationship of water to the environment and health—in any other areas that Sathya Sai Baba Centers might identify as worthy of focused effort.

—Wayner Crowder, Esq.

Atlanta, Georgia

For Sathya Sai Baba Central Council, USA

Announcements

Do Not Respond to Appeals for \$

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Sai Ram! Please be aware of individuals who solicit donations of money in the name of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba or on behalf of the organization to which he has so graciously lent his name. Swami has stated very clearly on many occasions that he will never authorize anyone to ask for money for any purpose at any time!

Recently, an American Sai devotee received a pamphlet requesting donations for the great ongoing Water Supply Project that Swami, through his infinite compassion, has initiated in India. This pamphlet is not approved, and the people distributing it do not have permission from Swami. Please do not respond to these appeals for money. Swami has again expressed his disapproval of these irresponsible actions.

If a Sai devotee or any Sathya Sai Baba Center is approached by individuals for the purpose of soliciting donations, please do not give money. Inform me, Michael Goldstein, without delay.

As individual Sai devotees we repeat his sacred name silently in order to maintain awareness of our own Divinity. As an organization, we must make every effort to protect the sacred name of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba from being besmirched or exploited by foolish or ruthless people.

Traveling to India? Your Photo is Needed

Starting July 1, 1997 it is necessary that all travelers to Prasanthi Nilayam bring with them one regular size passport photograph to leave at the registration office. This photo is in addition to your passport and any other identification.

—**Michael G. Goldstein, M.D.**
Deputy International Chairman
Sathya Sai Baba Organization

Alert! Welfare Reform Act Takes Effect

As the provisions of the 1996 Welfare Act take effect across the USA this year, there will be many people who need help. As Food Stamp programs, many Social Security programs, and nearly all Welfare programs are being reduced or eliminated there will be an unprecedented number of people/families needing help with food, clothing, medical care and shelter.

Each state has enacted their own laws to meet the federal requirements. It would be good for Sai devotees and Sai Centers to check with the agencies in their local areas to see how they can be of service. **The need for help will be greater than ever before.**

—**Joan E. Whitenack, Executive Director**
Foothill Unity Center, Monrovia, California

Service should be our primary responsibility and our main goal. We should not waste our lives in pursuit of useless attractions. Money and materials are not essential for service, but a loving heart is. We should fill our hearts with love.

—**Sathya Sai Baba**
Prasanthi Nilayam, November 21, 1988

Bliss Lies in Practicing Love

You can see everywhere that there is no love; we don't experience love in the true spiritual sense. In fact, God is full of love from top to toe. Take a doll made of sugar. If you cut off the head and taste it; it is sweet. Cut off the ear and have a taste; it is also sweet. Or the finger, it would be sweet too. Why? Because the whole thing is made of sugar. You may pray to God in any way you choose; he is always full of love. You have the right to pray to God, but without love, you have no right to question or ask God for anything. With bad thoughts and bad sentiments, it is not possible to pray to the Lord who is pure, unsullied and calm. But at least, in the holy shrines and sacred places remain at peace and enjoy bliss.

There are many people who lecture; there are many people who can give discourses that would make your heart melt. But what is the use? They waste their time in lecturing, but they do not practice. Bliss lies in practicing, not in lecturing. Instead of giving many lectures, it is better that you should take one drop of love. Only then, you will have all that you deserve.

Embodiments of Love! Truly speaking, if you want devotion follow the path of love. In order to pacify the sentiments and emotions, partake of the food of love. You are totally disappointed, living in frustration because of too many desires. You are disappointed because of all your meaningless, limitless desires. You want to have all your desires fulfilled, therefore, you are frustrated.

God's love is shining like a lighthouse that will show the direction from afar. When can you realize this love? When

the lighthouse of love directs you in one way, then you cannot go in the opposite direction. Travel toward the lighthouse. You are overburdened with the responsibility of family. With all your burdens, travel toward God. You are certain to reach the goal and redeem your life.

Develop Duty With Pure Love

Embodiments of Love! You do not need to do any spiritual practice. Why do you meditate? The One whom you meditate upon is present within you. Why should you meditate? Meditate on love, direct your mind toward love. When you do not know how to discharge household duties, then offer them totally to God and attend to your obligations. That is love. You do not need to give up your household responsibilities. You do not need to apply to your office for leave. You do not need to stop business. Do your duty, and feel that everything should be done to please God. God is everywhere; there is no place that God is not. All are embodiments of God. Everything is Divine. We must strengthen this feeling of Divinity. It should shine like the sun, and grow day by day. Love should grow day by day; it should shine like the full moon. The moonlight changes with the seasons, but in the dark of night it shines. Love is like the full moon, there is no sense of darkness.

Know that this is strong language of the heart. Do not make use of your heart for any other reason. You have your hands and your mind, do your duties in the world. This is what has been said, "Have God in your heart, and work with your own hands." Right from this day, everyone should develop pure love, and yearn for God; then, you will have

everything. Without divine love in your heart, you are bound to be miserable. Everything worldly is temporary and transient, and will not bring you bliss.

This is what Buddha stated, "Follow the path of wisdom, righteousness and-surrender to society." First, offer yourself to your intellect. Make use of your intellect to render service; then, offer yourself to society. Once you dedicate yourself to righteousness, naturally, that will protect you. Then you will be blissful. If there is sugar in one hand and water in the other hand, how can you expect to have syrup? The sugar and water should be combined, and you will have a very good, cool drink. Never separate nature and God. The whole universe is Divine; the whole world is the form of God. You find God in every atom and in every cell. You have to know that this is the truth.

Even if someone is your enemy, you must love him. His heart will change someday. If you love the one who has harmed you, his mind will change. You don't need to change your mind, because the heart is the center of love. No other substance can reside there.

The "Main Door"

We pray to God, but we doubt whether he will respond. Even Radha doubted. She was making an attempt to rest in her room. She thought that somebody may enter. There came the inner prompting to close the door. That thought was because of identification with the body. Because of Krishna (God) within, there was a call to open the door. As there was a prompting inside to close, there was a call to open the door. Are mere doors going to protect you? We have steel and

iron doors; they can be broken by thieves. Is a wooden door going to protect you? Watching this inner conflict, she was smiling to herself.

When the whole universe is the temple of God, where is the main door? The whole world is a Divine temple. Then why do you need a main door? You play on the strings of a veena. It is as if the strings of the veena are inhaling, retaining and exhaling the breath. These are the strings of life's breath. Surrender with tears of joy. That is the main door that you do not understand.

In ancient times, the sages and poets' compositions came from their hearts. But today, we accept the ways of the world. The sages of old were good examples. Every word they uttered had an inner significance, such as the songs and sayings of Radha and Meera. [Baba sang from a song by Meera.]:

*You don't need to go anywhere,
Just be pure like the Ganges and
Jamuna Rivers. They are pure,
They flow very well.*

Purity means selflessness.

These rivers don't drink the water; they share the water with society. God is present there. This composition has an inner significance which will fill you with bliss.

You need to go within. There is no need to make any advanced reservations [to go to God.]

Sing God's Name

God has been described as one who loves music. God really gets lost in music. By singing God's name, you can merge in God. For this reason, a chorus of singers is prescribed. No other spiritual path has as much attraction as

singing. People need not be disappointed if there is no chorus. Sing within yourself, don't bother about the others. In music there is life and beauty. It starts from the navel and comes out over the tongue. The unity of these three—the navel, the tongue, and the rhythm—are important. Purity of these will lead to the manifestation of God.

Many poets compose verse, and they also write prose. Some compose poems saying things like, "Rama! You protect me!" Some say, "Oh Rama! Protect me!" That kind of verse is not attractive. On the other hand, it is good if you pray while singing. It is music that helps you merge with the Divine. Music is God's gift; music is blissful; it is an easy path to God. We have a singer here [Mrs.] M. S. Subbulakshmi. As she sings, her heart will be full of love. That is a gift not given to everybody. It is God's gift. While singing the glory of God, you can share the joy by singing within yourselves.

Take the Medicine!

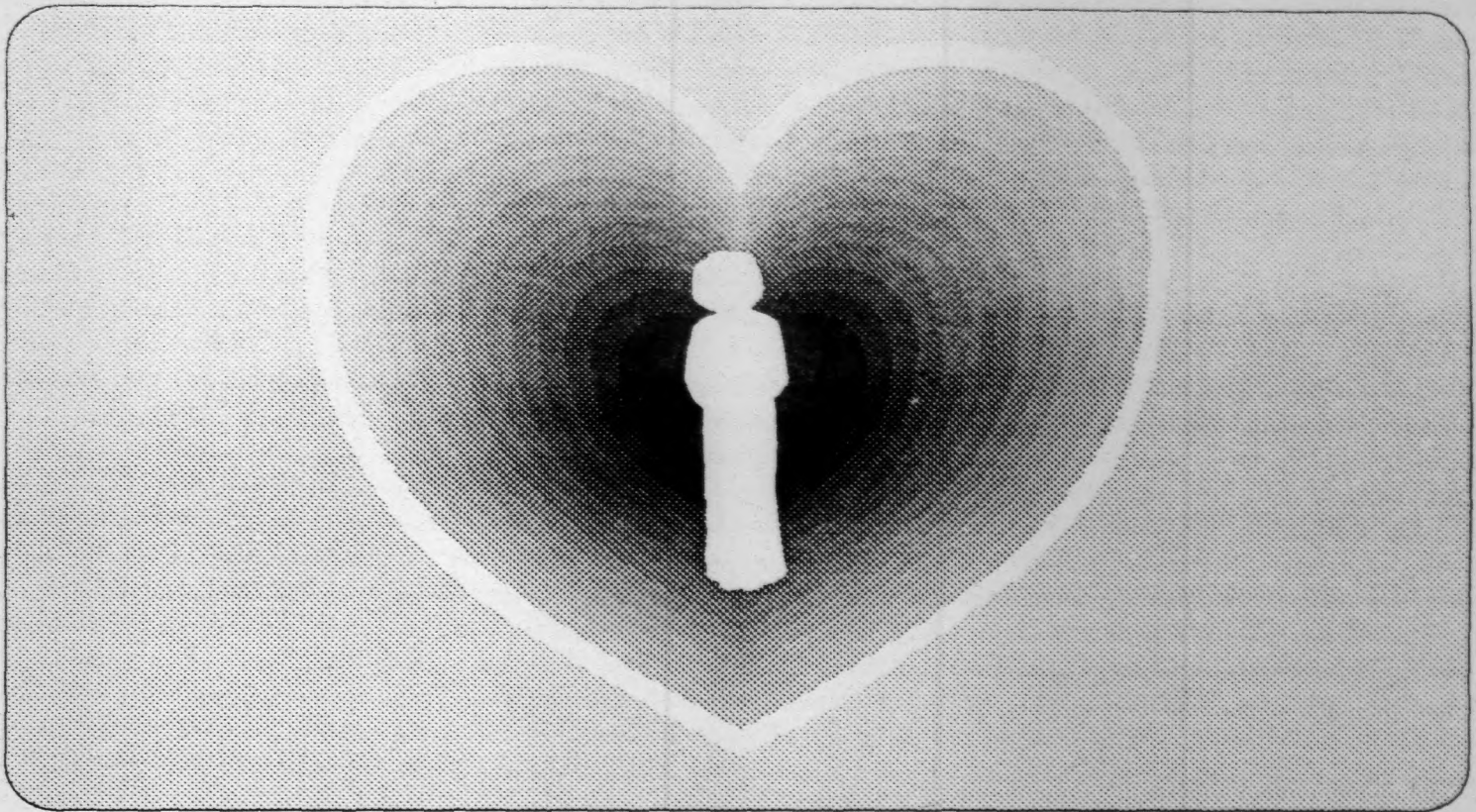
Indulge in all activities with love, do anything, but consider it as Divine Love. That may be bad from the worldly point of view, but it is God's gift. If you are suffering from malaria, for a cure, you have to take the medicine, quinine. The quinine mixture may be bitter, but you must take it. There may be contrary feelings and ideas from others, but you must take the medicine.

The diamond that is cut with many facets shines brightly. Gold has to be melted, then hammered to be made into something beautiful. Therefore, all the difficulties, losses, and problems are for your own good. Let anything happen to you, and know that it is for your own good. That gives you the feeling of unity.

What is the Entry Fee?

Embodiments of Love! Don't go by this body which is seventy-one years old today (November 23, 1996), but think of the principle of love inherent therein. The life of Bhagavan is full of love. Bhagavan will never make anybody suffer. Bhagavan will never harm anybody. He has never hated anybody. In fact, Bhagavan does not hate. Why? It is the love of Bhagavan that brings transformation. The age of this body is seventy-one. Who can know the power behind it? To correct you, Swami may bang and shout as if he is angry, but he is not. Right from the nails to the hair, there is love that flows. And it is Bhagavan's love which is flowing everywhere. Bhagavan doesn't want anything.

There are three P's: The first P is for purity. The second P is for patience. The third P is for perseverance. All three P's are present in Bhagavan; therefore, he shines brilliantly. Who are the people who are invited here? Who are asked to be here? No one whatsoever. It is the tender, soft, delicate magnet of love that has attracted you here. There is power in this magnet. Some don't carry with them the iron filings; therefore, they are not drawn by the magnet. There is power in the magnet, but the iron is dusty and rusty, so it is not drawn to the magnet. Remove the dust and the rust, then the iron is bound to be drawn to the magnet. What causes that rust? It is jealousy and anger. If you cleanse and purify yourself, you will belong to Bhagavan. You may be anywhere—in a forest, or in space, in a city, village, town, hilltop or deep in the sea—but if you are forlorn and needy, Bhagavan will come to your rescue.



Bhagavan blesses you, so that you will be happy every minute of your life by sharing love with everyone.

No matter where you are, make your heart always sacred, develop sacred love. It is love that redeems your life, also the lives of your family members, the neighborhood and the society. The heart should be transformed in such a way that it is full of love. You need not make offerings here. In Prasanthi Nilayam you are not allowed to offer even a flower or a coconut. No! Nothing is allowed to be given here. The entry fee is love.

that, their hearts will change. When you turn your face, the other person will also turn away from you. As is the approach, so the response. The heart is the witness. Talk to everyone with love, and to the extent possible, develop love. Kill this hatred, kill envy, don't allow anger to be anywhere nearby. The farther away these characteristics are, the happier you'll be.

The foreigners have said, "happy birthday, Swami." Bhagavan is always happy. Some of you don't have happiness. Bhagavan blesses you, so that you will be happy. Bhagavan is happy every second; he does not have to wait to be greeted with happiness. He is happy at all times.

Bhagavan blesses you, so that you will be happy every minute of your life by sharing love with everyone.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Birthday Discourse, November 23, 1996

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given to everybody. It is God's gift. While singing the glory of God, you can share the joy by singing within yourselves.

Take the Medicine!

Indulge in all activities with love, do anything, but consider it as Divine Love. That may be bad from the worldly point of view, but it is God's gift. If you are suffering from malaria, for a cure, you have to take the medicine, quinine. The quinine mixture may be bitter, but you must take it. There may be contrary feelings and ideas from others, but you must take the medicine.

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purity. The second P is for patience. The third P is for perseverance. All three P's are present in Bhagavan; therefore, he shines brilliantly. Who are the people who are invited here? Who are asked to be here? No one whatsoever. It is the tender, soft, delicate magnet of love that has attracted you here. There is power in this magnet. Some don't carry with them the iron filings; therefore, they are not drawn by the magnet. There is power in the magnet, but the iron is dusty and rusty, so it is not drawn to the magnet. Remove the dust and the rust, then the iron is bound to be drawn to the magnet. What causes that rust? It is jealousy and anger. If you cleanse and purify yourself, you will belong to Bhagavan. You may be anywhere—in a forest, or in space, in a city, village, town, hilltop or deep in the sea—but if you are forlorn and needy, Bhagavan will come to your rescue.



Bhagavan blesses you, so that you will be happy every minute of your life by sharing love with everyone.

No matter where you are, make your heart always sacred, develop sacred love. It is love that redeems your life, also the lives of your family members, the neighborhood and the society. The heart should be transformed in such a way that it is full of love. You need not make offerings here. In Prasanthi Nilayam you are not allowed to offer even a flower or a coconut. No! Nothing is allowed to be given here. The entry fee is love.

As Bhagavan began this morning, you experienced drops of love [rain drops had fallen], that is an auspicious sign. The whole world should be full of love, then there will be no jealousy, envy, or pride. Today, jealousy is a disease among people. One family is jealous of another family. One person is envious of another. A whole village is jealous of another village. A whole country is jealous of another country. Jealousy is widespread. Therefore, first kill this jealousy, kill this hatred, kill this anger. How to kill them? It is love that will destroy them. There is no more powerful medicine than love.

Develop love. Smile when you are talking to people. If an enemy comes to you, say, "How are you, Sir?" Say, "Good morning." When you talk like that, their hearts will change. When you turn your face, the other person will also turn away from you. As is the approach, so the response. The heart is the witness. Talk to everyone with love, and to the extent possible, develop love. Kill this hatred, kill envy, don't allow anger to be anywhere nearby. The farther away these characteristics are, the happier you'll be.

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Bhagavan blesses you, so that you will be happy every minute of your life by sharing love with everyone.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Birthday Discourse, November 23, 1996

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