

Teachings Of Sathya Sai Baba Relevant to Cultural Inclusion and Expansion

No, I do not need grand decorations, huge pandals, arches, flags and such paraphernalia. I require only a mike to communicate My advice to the people. Even a chair is superfluous! I can talk standing. Spend sparingly for the minimum needs; do not involve yourselves in expensive luxury. I would like you to spend any extra money that you have for the feeding of the poor or for any similar beneficial object.

Attempts are being made in many places to build Sathya Sai Mandirs (halls of worship). But Sathya Sai will be happy if He is installed in your hearts; that is the Mandir I like, not those.

April 21, 1967 First All India Conference

As Andhras, it is desirable that you revere your native region and native language. But the reverence should not lead to irreverence towards other regions and languages. Be proud of your language and culture – in that there is no harm. But let not that pride lead you to dislike other languages and cultures. The languages by which thoughts are expressed may be varied, but the thoughts, emotions and feelings are the same. The language of the heart is the same, but when it comes to the tongue, it may take various forms. When it is known and appreciated that the One manifested itself as the many, and that the One is known by many Names, there is really no scope for hatred or irreverence.

SSS Vol 34, Ch 20

You cannot insist that in the *Bhajans* only songs on Sathya Sai should be sung! Fanaticism of that kind I very much dislike and condemn. For, all names and all forms denote Me only! You betray your ignorance of My truth when you stick to any one of My names and avoid the rest. When you have identified the *Aathma* principle and experienced its Glory, you pass beyond the realm of rules; but, until then, limits and lines of conduct have to be honored.

SSS Vol 13, Ch 39

So too, in the midst of the crazy habits and behaviors of today, there is no use presenting the scriptures in a language that is unfamiliar to most people. The scriptures can be explained in easy, understandable language, and the fundamentals will not be affected by this. Then, the scriptures can be practiced, understood, experienced, and enjoyed. Consequently, faith in the

scriptures will also be strengthened, and peace will also be stabilized upon faith. So, every believer must practice the important directions of the scriptures and demonstrate in their life the sweetness of such a dedicated life, so that all others might appreciate the truth and value of the ideals and disciplines.

Prasanthi Vahini, Ch 10

Group *bhajans* must be arranged to suit the convenience of the locality and the people. Some people affirm that the *bhajans* used at the Prasanthi Nilayam alone should be sung; but God is omnipresent, He is the indweller in every heart; all Names are His. So, you can call on Him by any name that gives joy. Members of Sathya Sai Organisations must not cavil at other Names and Forms of God; they should not become fanatics, blind to the Glory of other Names and Forms. They should join the Groups that honour those other manifestations and demonstrate that all Names and Forms are Mine. They should contribute to the joy and happiness of all without giving up their faith.

SSS Vol 8, Ch 21

In your organizations, there may be some who insist that only Sai bhajans should be sung, only the Name and Form of Sathya Sai be used. This is a great mistake. You are thereby dishonoring Sai.

Yesterday, someone read a list of Holy Days which the associations were to celebrate. That list mentioned Shivarathri, Navarathri, Swami's Birthday and Guru Pournami. But you must also celebrate the Birthdays of the Mahaathmas who led man to God within him, and also all days held holy by your brothers.

April 21, 1967 First All India Conference

Let the different faiths exist, let them flourish and let the glory of God be sung in all the languages and in a variety of tunes. That should be the ideal. Respect the differences between the faiths and recognize them as valid as long as they do not extinguish the flame of Unity.

Divine Discourse, July 4th, 1968

You should not expect people to follow whatever you sing. You should see that they can easily respond to your song. The names you chant should be short and sweet. If you use big words and complicated terms, the devotees will not be able to follow you... Therefore, in your bhajans use short names like Rama, Krishna, Allah, Yesu and so on. Then all would be able to follow you with ease. If you use high sounding words, few can follow you. Eschew any aversion to any faith or nation. Have no ill will towards any one. Do not cause hurt to anyone. Look upon all alike. This feeling of oneness should spread all over the world.

Divine Discourse, April 11, 1997

... there are certain matters I have to tell specially to the Executives and the Office bearers, matters they have to implant in their hearts: Followers of all faiths can join our Organisations; there should be no opposition to their entry; on the other hand, they must be welcomed with sincerity and looked upon as brothers and sisters. No ill-feeling should be allowed upon as brothers and sisters. No ill-feeling should be allowed to sprout in your minds against, say Pakistanis or Muslims, or Americans, as a consequence of the passing phases of history. Motivated by anger against some one, to injure and insult the innocent, is bestial behaviour. No one connected with our Organisation should participate in or encourage such reprehensible behaviour.

Divine Discourse, December 22, 1971