

Vasantha Sai humbly requests you to ... Take a Vow!

A printed piece of paper was found at the ashram and brought to me. I always consider things brought to my attention in this manner as being given by Swami, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The paper said,

"There is a reason for everything. In our life, wherever we are and whatever we do, whatever happens, all reveals God's love and grace. This must be realized. Each experience, be it large or small, is there to teach us. Nothing happens of its own accord..."

I found this to be true in my life. Whomever I met, whatever I saw, from each and everything, I learned a lesson. All are my gurus. For this reason, to show gratitude to all, I asked Swami to grant world liberation as my guru dakshina. Swami told in my first book, 'Liberation Here Itself Right Now', that our surroundings are only a reflection of our own thoughts and actions. The world is a mirror, which reveals your present state of being. 'This is that'. The world is but a reflection of our own thoughts. If we are good, the world appears to be good and if we are bad, then all seems bad. This is shown by a story from the Mahabharata about the nature of Dharmaraja and Duryodhana. If we purify our mind, the world also becomes pure.

The world is a school in which we have come to learn. Only if we finish our studies will we not have rebirth. Our studies end when we realize who we really are. We are not the body. We are Atma, a part of the Cosmic Self. Realizing this, the Atma merges with Paramatma and we will not be born again.

Just to live in this world is a test. How to take the test? One may pass or fail, yet all must be accepted with calm and equanimity. If we perform all actions with God as our center, then we will see all as a reflection of the inner Self, the Atma within. This is how I lived. Every moment of

my life functions focused on God. He is at the center of all. The many experiences in this state, I wrote as songs and poems. *I wrote letters of gratitude to Him for the experiences I have had.* I experience God every moment. This is how my life functions.

In my youth, I read of Lord Panduranga's devotees in the book, 'Bhaktha Vijayam'. I prayed that like them, the Lord should always help me. This became my experience also. When there were no servants to help with household work, I prayed to God and immediately someone would come. I have written this as a song:

If we want to tether the cow,

He will come in a form and tie the cow.

If I want, help to grind the batter,

He will come in another form.

The God, the Primal source for whom I searched

Came in search of me.

Daily He helps me,

How to tell this?

In those days as there were no electric grinders, grinding batter had to be done by hand. If no

one came that day, I would immediately pray to Swami and someone would come from the village to make the batter. If the cow became untied, I would think 'there is no one here to tether the cow'. Immediately, someone would come and tie up the cow. It is in this way the Primal God whom I searched for, came in search of me, helping me in many ways. I showed my gratitude through many letters and songs. If we pray in this way every moment, many wonders happen! We experience God first hand.

To complete life's journey, we must put into practice what Swami has preached. We must realize that God is verily in all. Do not let the qualities and nature of a person distract you from seeing the God who is within. Wherever we might be living, sense and mind control is of the greatest importance. If we do not do this, our efforts to realize God will be in vain.

God came to the earth and taught us each day. Has any previous Avatar come to the world as Swami did, living among ordinary people, talking to all and guiding them. How many years? How many discourses? How much Swami has written showing the correct path to all. Has this ever happened anywhere or at any time before? This is a great wonder, which has never happened in the world. It is proof for God's compassion. Krishna declares in the Gita:

Yada yada hi dharmasya glanirbhavati bharatha

Abhyutthanamadharmasya tadatmanam srujamyaham

Paritranaya sadhunam vinashaya cha dushkrutham

Dharmasamsthapanarthaya sambhavami yuge yuge

Whenever Dharma declines and Adharma prevails, I manifest myself. I come into being from age to age to protect the righteous, destroy the wicked, and for the establishment of Dharma.

This is what the Lord declares. He is born now in accordance with this. Dharma declines because there is no love. For this reason, Swami came and preached love. Swami preached for 84 years. He came to transform humanity. Those who believe that Swami is God and those who benefit from Him must all take a vow.

"I will practice one of Swami's teachings in my life."

One must show their gratitude to God. How many students, teachers, ordinary people and those who are in Prasanthi benefitted from Swami! If they would all take this pledge, think how much happiness it would give to Swami. *This is the request I write to the people of the world. Now, from today, vow to practice one of Swami's teachings for the rest of your life.* This is the only way to show our gratitude to Him.

A few days ago, I read a story in Swami's 'Chinna Katha' book, which demonstrates what I am telling you.

A thief once went to an ashram and asked the Guru for initiation into spiritual life. The Guru asked him to give up stealing first, but the thief explained that this was his livelihood and his only way to survive in life. The Guru then said, 'You give up at least one bad habit'. The thief agreed and said he would not utter a lie and would always tell the truth from that moment onward. That night, when he went to the Royal Palace to commit a robbery, he found on the terrace another person who said he too was a thief. Together, they broke into the treasury and divided between themselves the diamonds found there.

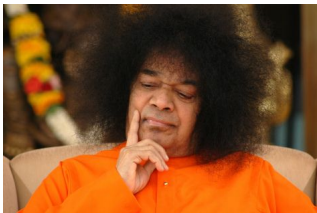
The other person, however, was none other than the king. He pretended to be a thief and he knew where the keys of the treasury were. The king and the thief opened the safe and shared all the treasure. Finally, there were only three large diamonds left. The thief told the king, we will take one each and leave one for the king! The king agreed and asked that the thief tell his address, so he could visit him. The thief told him. The next morning, it was discovered that the treasury had been looted.

The Minister was sent by the King to assess the loss. The Minister went to the safe and found a single diamond that had been left by the thieves. He quietly put it to his own pocket and told the king there was nothing left in the safe. The previous night the King had obtained the address of

the honest thief, as they were parting company. He sent for him and when he stood in court before the King, he confessed that he had taken all but left one diamond. The king then told the soldiers to search the minister, where they found the missing diamond. The King threw the minister in jail and appointed the honest thief as minister. The thief now had no need to steal anymore. The thief then went to the Guru and fell at his feet.

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Like the thief, take a vow to practice one of Swami's teachings in your life. The thief vowed only to speak truth and became a royal minister. If you do as he has, all good will come to you. You will be honored and respected and escape from the cycle of birth and death. Thus, I ask all those who have benefitted from Swami to take a vow.



In this world, millions have benefitted from Swami. Thousands and thousands of students have studied in Swami's institute and benefitted. All should put into practice one thing that Swami has taught to show their gratitude. There may be some already practicing in this way. If this is so, then I ask that they practice another one of Swami's teachings.

Swami has protected so many people, saving them from dangers, problems, disaster and difficulties. Those who have experienced this should join in following one of Swami's teachings out of gratitude to Him. If you act in this way, Swami will be pleased. Show Him gratitude, this is enough. This is my tearful humble request to everyone in the world. I stand before all begging alms from you. Please, all vow to transform yourselves. Practice one good quality. This will give happiness to Swami and He will come soon. Sai Ram.

Vasantha Sai

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