31.07.2015

The true meaning of Guru is, ‘One who is beyond attributes and forms, the Supreme Self (Brahman)’. When this Self is within you, where is the need to search for a Guru? A teacher who teaches others has had a teacher himself. The one who has no Guru above him is the true Guru. The Sanskrit stanza which hails the guru as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara and as Parabrahman is misinterpreted. The right approach is to consider Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara as the Guru. These three are symbolised by the three gunas or attributes: Brahma is Rajas, Vishnu is Satwa and Shiva represents Tamas. The whole cosmos is constituted by the three gunas and the gunas are present in you. The Trinity are present in the form of the three gunas in every human heart. Hence, you are your own guru. You need not seek him elsewhere. You have to feel at all times your inherent divinity, which is also present in everyone. When you help or feed someone you must feel that the Divine in you is feeding the Divine in others. [Divine Discourse, 30-Jul-1996]

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought for the Day

(July 2015)

1.07.2015

The spiritual aspirant should note the distinction between the conduct of the ordinary (sahaja) person and the spiritual aspirant. Rice in its natural state and boiled rice —can these two be the same? The hardness of natural rice is absent in the boiled one. The boiled grain is soft, harmless, and sweet. The unboiled grain is hard, conceited, and full of delusion. Similarly both types of individuals are souls (jivis) and humans, no doubt, but those immersed in external or multiplicity based illusions (avidya-maya) are 'people', while those immersed in internal or knowledge based illusions (vidya-maya) are 'spiritual aspirants'. Though the Lord is situated in every heart, spiritual practice is necessary so that they may discover it for themselves, right? It isn't possible for us to see our own face! We need a mirror! So too, a basic path, a spiritual practice, is necessary. (Prema Vahini, Ch 59)

2.07.2015

You come to Puttaparthi to strengthen your relationship with the Divine. Hold on to it firmly. Put into practice at least one thing you learn from here. It is not enough to chant the names of God. God must be installed in the heart. Make your conscience your guide and preceptor. That will promote true devotion. All external paraphernalia will not help you. There are four mottos which all devotees should follow: (1) Avoid bad company (2) Welcome association with good persons (3) Remember always the transient and the permanent, and (4) Ceaselessly engage yourself in meritorious acts. It is through the above that you become good. Remember, the essence of

allegiance to Bhagawan. By this single feeling of faith in the Divine, unity is achieved. All of you are embodiments of the Divine. You are embodiments of love and peace, of Divinity; develop this strong conviction. With the power of the Divine to nurture you there is nothing you cannot accomplish. Karna and Ravana are examples of powerful men who were destroyed because they did not have the power of the Divine. The Pandavas were saved because of their faith in the Divine and their unity. (Divine Discourse, 1 Jan 1996)

30.07.2015

The tree growing out of the soil returns to the soil; the individual arising from Brahman (Divinity) returns to Brahman - this truth is not easily perceived and that is the mystery of this marvellous creation. Embodiments of Brahman! When a seed is sown in the earth, it sprouts as a sapling and grows in due course into a big tree. In the tree, the branches, the leaves, the flowers and the fruits all appear as distinct from each other and each of them have a specific purpose. But all of them are different forms of the mud from which they have originated. Seeing a rope at a distance, suspecting that it may be a snake, one develops fear and screams. Soon someone arrives and assures that it is not a snake but a rope. The moment that person realises that, the fear is got rid of. During all these phases, the rope was only a rope. The rope is Brahman, you mistake it to be a snake or this creation or Nature. Then comes the jnani (the wise one) who reveals that all that you see is verily Brahman. All that you see in the entire universe is a manifestation of the Brahman. [Divine Discourse, 30-Jul-1996]

every day that these special potencies, including the Divine Himself dwell deep within your heart. (Divine Discourse, 1 Jan 1996)

28.07.2015
Turn the love that arises in you towards God. Dedicate your body to the Divine. This is the true mark of devotion. There are three constituents in every human being: the mind, the power of speech and the body. These three are called Trikaranas - the three active agents. It is when all three are used for sacred purposes, your life is sanctified. All need devotion. Every person must cultivate this spirit, irrespective of one's beliefs. It is only spirituality that can purify the heart and mind of human beings. The second requirement is morality. Morality helps to purify speech (Vaak). The third is called Dharmikam. All righteous deeds done by the body or hands sanctify you. It is through spirituality, morality and righteousness that the three instruments get purified. Only the one who has achieved this triple purity can realise the Divine. If any of these instruments are impure, you will not be able to realise the Divine. (Divine Discourse, Jan 1, 1996)

29.07.2015
In the world, you will easily see examples of how some families prospered because of unity and others suffered because of divisions within the family. Today the Universe desperately needs unity. It is through faith in God that unity can be promoted. Look at the diversity of people in the halls of Puttaparthi! People come from different creeds, nationalities and culture, but all are united in their common

all scriptures is: 'Help ever; hurt never.' If the above basic rules are followed, all countries will be happy and peaceful. Like India, every country is a part of the mansion of planet earth. When we have this broad vision, humanity will be one in spirit. (Divine Discourse, 23 Nov 1997)

3.07.2015
In this world, there is no penance higher than fortitude, no happiness greater than contentment, no good deed holier than mercy, and no weapon more effective than patience. Devotees should consider the body as the field and good deeds as seeds. Then with the help of the heart as the farmer, cultivate the name of the Lord to reap the harvest - the Lord Himself. Like cream in milk and fire in fuel, the Lord is in everything. Have full faith in this. As is the milk, so is the cream; so also, as is the spiritual discipline, so is the direct experience (sakshatkara) of the Lord! As a consequence of taking up the Lord's name, four distinct fruits will be experienced by sincere seekers. They are: company of the noble, truth, contentment and control of the senses. Through whichever of these gates one enters, whether one is a householder, recluse, or a member of any other class, one can reach the Lord without fail. This is certain. (Prema Vahini, Ch 60)

4.07.2015
I want you to exercise control over five vital things in life. (1) 'Do not waste money.' Realize that misuse of money is evil. If you wish to keep a photo of Bhagawan, have only one. Why waste your money on buying too many? (2) 'Do

not waste food.' Realize that 'Food is God.' (3) 'Do not waste Time.' Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted. (4) 'Do not waste energy.' Understand that when you see, speak, hear, act or think energy is expended. In all these activities do not waste your energies unnecessarily. (5) 'Do not forget God', at any moment whatever you may be doing. God is present wherever you may go. He is with you, beside you and around you always. Hence there is no need for you to go to some temple to pray to God. Your heart is your temple. Turn your vision inward and understand the Atmic Principle. (Divine Discourse, 23 Nov 1997)

5.07.2015

People crave worldly happiness; this craving itself is the disease, and sufferings are but the drugs we take. In the midst of these, one rarely entertains the desire to attain the Lord. However, it is necessary to analyse and discriminate, for the spirit of renunciation is born out of such analysis. Without enquiry, detachment cannot be obtained. Miserliness is like the behavior of a dog; it must be transformed. Anger is the first enemy of a spiritual aspirant. Untruth is even worse - it destroys all the vital powers. Theft ruins life; it makes the priceless human life cheaper than rotten food. Moderate food, moderate sleep, selfless love, and fortitude will help in the upkeep of the health of both your body and the mind. Whoever you are, in whatever condition you may be, do not give room for dispiritedness! Be fearless and remember the Lord with unshaken faith and without any ulterior motive, all suffering and sorrow will fall away. (Prema Vahini, Ch 61)

26.07.2015

There are no limitations of time or space for the establishment of oneself in the contemplation of the Omnipresent Lord. There is nothing like a holy place or a special time. Wherever the mind revels in contemplation of the Divine, that place is holy! Whenever it does so, that moment becomes the auspicious moment! Ancient sages and scriptures also revealed to us that for meditation on God, there is no fixed time or place. Hence anytime and anywhere your mind desires, meditate on the Lord! The world can achieve prosperity only through disciplined souls whose hearts are pure; they represent the salt of the earth. In an attempt to promote the welfare of the world, from this very minute, everyone should pray for the advent of the noble and holy, and try to deserve the blessings of the great. Every day you retire, recall these thoughts, and try to forget the sufferings of the day. (Prema Vahini, Ch 73)

27.07.2015

The Lord's abode is described in various ways as Vaikuntha, Kailasa, etc. All these are fanciful names. Which is the abode of God? The Lord told Sage Narada: "I reside wherever My devotees sing My glories." The Lord dwells in the hearts of devotees; this is His main address. All other places are 'branch offices!' Any message addressed to the Divine as Indweller in your heart is bound to reach God. What is meant by Ekadashi? It should not be regarded as some special place or time. The form of Ekadasa Rudra is made up of the five organs of perception, the five organs of action and the mind. Rudra is a resident of the human body, which is full of numerous divine potencies. Remind yourself, today and

after due deliberation, will have no fear of danger. All these precepts are related to education. True education consists in knowing how to lead a peaceful life. This is the mark of every educated person. In addition to furthering your career, you should aspire for world peace, for all of you are part of the world community. Your well-being is intimately tied to that of the world. Hence you should give up all narrow feelings and acquire the feeling of unity with everyone and fellowship with the Divine. (Divine Discourse, 14 Jan 1996)

25.07.2015

Though your body may be inactive, your mind will be very busy, committing acts on its own. People with such minds fall prey to fate or karmic consequences easily! When one has the mind fixed on contemplation of God and the pursuit of truth, though the body and senses do acts that are of service to the world, they won't be affected by karma; though they do actions, they are free from the fruits of the action. This is the lesson from Bhagavad Gita. The heart of the person who doesn't strive to cultivate the mind with holy thoughts is definitely the paradise of evil and wickedness. Bear this in your mind: Until you see Divinity in everyone and everywhere, continue to meditate and repeat the Lord's name. Also, devote your time to the service of the world, regardless of the fruits thereof. Carry on this until your mind is free from the waves of feelings and is full of Divinity. Then you will become blessed. (Prema Vahini, Ch 72)

6.07.2015

Avoid unnecessary and excessive association with all and sundry. People visit Puttaparthi from America, Japan, Germany, Russia, and so on leaving their parents and kith and kin. Why then should you cultivate new relationships? Keep your association with anyone to the barest minimum. Keep your mind pure. There is no need to indulge in chatter. Talk less, think or work more. Cultivate this habit. Unnecessary association with strangers may have undesirable consequences. To join bad company and come to grief is a self-wrought calamity. Genuine spiritual aspirants should be particularly careful in eschewing bad company. They should create an environment conducive to their spiritual progress and mental peace. That is the only thing Swami wants. Do not waste time. Do not give room for useless thoughts. (Divine Discourse, 23 Nov 1997)

7.07.2015

You may ask: "How am I to declare, Aham Brahmasmi(I am Divine)?" Yes, you can do so. But, first understand the Aham, the 'I', the Divine Principle. Scriptures declare - Ekam Eva adhvitheyam Brahma- The Absolute is One without a second. Though people worship the Absolute with different names and forms, the Supreme Reality is only one. Just as the same person is called in different names by different people at different times, God has many names and forms - all these are creations of the human mind. Scriptures emphatically declare that the Lord is the nameless and attributeless Eternal Reality. Understand properly the true and Divine nature of

the Aham ('I'). The 'I' is the master of your body, senses and the intellect, and is the power that permeates the entire cosmos. (Prema Vahini, Ch 59)

8.07.2015
Everyone is liable to make mistakes without being aware of it. However bright a fire may be, there will be smoke emanating from it. So also, whatever good a person might do, there will be a minute trace of evil. Make every effort to ensure that the bad or evil is minimised, and good is maximised. You may not succeed in the first attempt. Carefully think over the consequences of whatever you do or talk. In whatever way you want others to honour you, love you, or behave with you, in the same way you should first behave with others, and love and honour them. Then they will reciprocate. Instead, without you honouring or loving others, if you complain that they are not treating you properly, it is surely a wrong conclusion. Those who advise others about true and good conduct must follow the advice themselves. Then there is no need for advice, others would simply learn the lesson by example. (Prema Vahini, Ch 63)

9.07.2015
It is not the nature of a spiritual aspirant to search for faults in others and hide their own. If your faults are pointed out to you by someone, don't argue and try to prove yourself right, and don't bear a grudge against them for it. Reason out within yourself how it is a fault and set right your own behaviour. Rationalising it for your own satisfaction or wreaking

service to others, and mutual love and respect. They should delay no longer; they will soon acquire contentment and joy. (Prema Vahini, Ch 70)

23.07.2015
People say that service to humanity (manava seva) is service to God (Madhava seva). That is true. But although the service of humanity is holy, unless it is merged in the bigger ideal, people won't benefit, however huge the service. Mere repetition of the slogan is useless if service is done without faith in the divinity of people and with an eye on name and fame and the fruits of one's action. Whatever actions one undertakes, if one constantly has as companion the contemplation of the Lord, and faith in the essential divinity of people, then the statement about service to humanity and service to God being the same is justified. Without thoughts of God (Madhava), how can service to God originate? Instead, whatever is done with the Lord in mind, along the path of truth and according to aspects of dharma, has to be considered as selfless service (seva) to the Lord. (Prema Vahini, Ch 71)

24.07.2015
Embodiments of Love! The hard-working farmer has no fear of starvation. The one who chants the name of God has no fear of worldly worries. The man of few words will be free from enmity. Through excessive talk people fall prey to quarrels. Hence everyone should cultivate moderation in speech. Restraint in speech is conducive to friendly feelings. The one who is careful in his behaviour, doing all actions

21.07.2015

The road laid out by holy people has to be repaired now and then, either by those who travel through it or by those who claim authority over it. That is what is called 'teaching (bodha)'. It is for the sake of such repairs that the Lord occasionally sends some authorised individuals, sages, and divine people. Through their good teachings, the path opened by the God-people of the past is again made clear and smooth. But how is one to know the consequence of the soul's yearning for the Lord's Advent? Since this can't be known, one has to pray until the world is established in happiness. The happiness of the world is the sign of His arrival; if this is understood, then it is easy to recognise the Avatar immediately. It is then that the religion of truth (sathya), of compassion (daya), of spiritual wisdom (jnana) and of love (prema) will grow and prosper. So until these are firmly rooted, people must continue their prayers. That is the responsibility of the people. (Prema Vahini, Ch 70)

22.07.2015

When the Lord's will, the needs of spiritual seekers, and the teachings of great persons produce their combined effect, the happiness of the world will be assured and undiminished. If all humanity prays together with unity for unrest, injustice, disorder, and falsehood to be transformed into peace, truth, love, and mutual service, things will certainly become better. Worrying is fruitless. There is no other way out. This is no occasion for despair. It is against the essential nature of people to plead weakness and want of strength. Therefore, giving up the search for other means, people must try prayer,

vengeance on the person who pointed it out —these are not the traits of a spiritual aspirant or devotee. Depression, doubt, conceit —these will harm one's practices and are akin to Rahu and Kethu (planets which bring ill-luck). When your devotion is well established, these qualities will be easily discarded. Seek always the truthful and the joyful, and avoid all thoughts which are untrue, sad and depressing. Always be cheerful, smiling, and enthusiastic under all circumstances. This pure attitude is most desirable. Never get inflated when praised or deflated when blamed - be a spiritual lion! (Prema Vahini Ch. 63)

10.07.2015

The doctor first diagnoses the disease and then prescribes the course of treatment. So too, you must submit yourself to the diagnosis of your illness, viz. misery, travail, and pain through Self-Enquiry. Investigate fearlessly and with care, and you will find that your nature is bliss (ananda)! You have falsely identified yourself with the temporary, the frivolous and the paltry, and that attachment brings sorrow. Realise that both joy and sorrow are passing phases, like clouds across the blue sky. Learn to treat prosperity and adversity with equanimity. Just as fish lives only when it is immersed in water, so too human being lives only when immersed in bliss. You must have bliss at home, in society, and in the world, but more than all, in your heart. Your heart is the spring of joy. That spring must be touched by constant recitation of Lord's Name and dwelling on His Glory. Never give way to doubt or despair. (Divine Discourse, Nov 23, 1961)

11.07.2015

People driving cars concentrate on the road, for they are anxious to save themselves and others from accidents. Fear is what induces single-mindedness here. But Love is a greater force for achieving concentration. If you have steady and resolute love, concentration becomes intense and unshakeable. Faith develops into love, and love results in concentration. And under these conditions, prayer begins to yield fruit. Pray keeping all the waves of the mind stilled. Pray, as the performance of a duty for your very real existence, as the only justification for your coming into the world as a human. Narayana is the Lord of the Water (naaram means water). But what is the water of which He is the Lord of? He resides in the heart, and His presence when recognised melts even the stoniest heart, and water emanates from the eye as tears of joy, gratitude, and fullness! The function of your tears is not to weep like a fool or a coward but to express internal joy. (Divine Discourse, 23 Nov 1961)

12.07.2015

'Mine' and 'yours' — these attitudes are only for identification. They are not real; they are temporary. 'His' (All belongs to the Lord) — that is the truth, the eternal. It is like the headmaster of a school being in temporary charge of the furniture of the school. He has to hand over the items when he is transferred or retired. Treat all things with which you are endowed just as the headmaster treats the furniture. Be always aware that the final checking-up is imminent. Wait for that moment with joy. Be ready for that event. Have your

all people. As an example, Lord Rama and Lord Krishna incarnated answering the prayers of the sages. Similarly Saint Ramakrishna prayed to Goddess Kali to incarnate and establish righteousness (dharma) that would uproot injustice and selfishness. Thus prayers should be offered again and again for the realisation of this noble purpose. No one should become desperate and give up prayers if they don't result immediately in the advent of the Lord. Since the ancient times, remember that the Lord has always responded to holy and sincere prayers with His Advent. (Prema Vahini, Ch 70)

20.07.2015

People are engaged in exploring space but do not make the slightest effort to explore the Divine within. Of what use are experiments in space when there is no genuine cultivation of human qualities and the practice of basic virtues such as acting in reverence with the mother, the father and the preceptor? People today are living in human form but are filled with beastly qualities! Scriptures declare that people can attain immortality only by renunciation (tyaga) and not through actions, wealth or progeny. What must be renounced? Renounce your bad qualities. To manifest your inherent divine nature, cultivate love for God and fear of sin and adherence to right conduct (sangha niti). When you fear sin and love God, you cannot indulge in immoral acts, automatically ensuring morality in society. God can be known only by experience and not by experiments. Hence follow your chosen spiritual practices diligently and sincerely. (Divine Discourse, 5 June 1994)

world will bask in peace and joy only when everyone — leaders of countries and spiritual aspirants alike — realize the righteous path and ponder the omnipotence of the Lord. (Prema Vahini, Ch 69)

18.07.2015

It is meaningless to be born as a human being and lead an animal existence. Everyone should live up to the motto - 'Help ever - hurt never.' Every educated person should engage oneself in selfless service to the society, with humility and a pure heart. All academic distinctions or even observance of spiritual practices are of little use if there is no love in the heart. The heart is called "Hridaya" in Sanskrit. This term is made up of the two words, 'Hri' and 'Daya' (compassion). The Lord is described as Hridyavasi (the Indweller in the heart). Love and Compassion are inherent in every person. Every being must share their love with others selflessly. Failure to share one's love is gross ingratitude to society, to which one owes everything. One should give one's love freely to others and receive love in return. This is the deep significance of human life. (Divine Discourse, 5 Jun 1994)

19.07.2015

When people need any convenience or assistance, they approach those in authority and convey their request. So also, in the internal state, when there is no possibility of achieving and acquiring devotion, charity, peace, and truth by normal people, the great and noble, who desire to achieve these, pray to the Lord within themselves. Listening to these prayers, He Himself comes into the world and showers His grace on

accounts up to date and the balance already calculated to be handed over. Treat all things entrusted to you with care and diligence. (Divine Discourse, Nov 23, 1961)

13.07.2015

You must be careful even in matters relating to the realisation of God. Whatever inconveniences one may encounter, one must try to carry on spiritual practices without any break or modification in the disciplines. One should not be changing the name that one has loved, cherished and selected for remembrance (smarana). Concentration is impossible if the name is changed once every few days. The mind won't attain one-pointedness. All spiritual discipline has this one-pointedness as its ultimate aim. Therefore, avoid constant adoption and rejection of names and forms of the Lord. One single name must be used throughout for repetition of the name (japa) and meditation. One has also to get the strong conviction that all the Lord's names and forms are but the name and form that one is repeating. Your chosen name and form must not give the slightest feeling of dislike or disaffection. (Prema Vahini, Ch 64)

14.07.2015

Everyone should so lead life that no pain is caused to any living thing. That is their supreme duty. Also, it is the prime duty of everyone who has had the chance of this human birth, to spare a part of their energies occasionally to prayer, repetition of the Lord's name, meditation, etc. Everyone must equate living with truth, righteousness, peacefulness, and good works that are of service to others. One must be

as afraid of doing acts that are harmful to others or deeds that are sinful as one is now afraid to touch fire or disturb a cobra. One must have as much attachment and steadfastness in carrying out good works, in making others happy, and in worshiping the Lord as one now has in accumulating gold and riches. This is the code of conduct (dharma) of all human beings. (Prema Vahini, Ch 65)

15.07.2015

Those who yearn to establish themselves in contemplation of Divinity must seek solitude, practice meditation and repeat Lord's name at specified times, and acquire one-pointedness through spiritual exercises. They must always be anxious to do deeds that will bring about the welfare of all beings. They must always be engaged in performing work without any concern for the fruit thereof. Sacrifice your selfish needs. Your desire should be to establish the welfare of the world. Let there be constant effort to do good to others. With all these feelings filling the heart, meditate on the Lord. This is the right path. If everyone is thus engaged in the service of humanity and in promoting the welfare of the world, the thieves of passion, hatred, pride, envy, jealousy, and conceit won't invade people's minds and divine possessions, like dharma, mercy, truth, love, knowledge, and wisdom, will be safe from harm. (Prema Vahini, Ch. 68)

16.07.2015

Everyone is proud of their body, mind and intellect, forgetting the indwelling Atma, which is the real basis. The Atma has no birth or death. It is akin to the root of a tree, which sustains

its branches, leaves, flowers and fruits. Atma is the basis on which the superstructure of life rests. Human life is noble, sacred and precious. Every human body is constituted by the five elements (Pancha Bhutas) and you are enclosed by the five sheaths (Pancha koshas) — food (Annamaya), life-force (Pranamaya), mind (Manomaya), intelligence (Vijnanamaya) and the sheath of Bliss (Anandamaya). While all other living species have only the first three sheaths, human beings alone have all the five. Hence, embodiments of Divine, it is everyone's primary duty to strive and experience that Divine reality. The surest and easiest way is to begin every day with the feeling that you are very much a part of the Divine. (Divine Discourse, 5 Jun 1994)

17.07.2015

Police and law-makers can defeat only external foes; they have no power to destroy internal enemies. They will find the task impossible, for they are not the authorities for that. The internal foes, six enemies (arishadvarga) that operate within a person, can be uprooted only with the teachings of great saints, love for God, and the company of the noble and holy. The world suffers harm at the hands of wicked people when the law-makers responsible for apprehending thieves themselves become entangled with them. Equally, the world becomes enveloped in darker ignorance when righteousness (dharma) is destroyed and those contemplating on the Brahman incessantly and the 'great' spiritual aspirants give up the path of well-being of the world and become victims of sense enjoyment or ambition to earn name and fame. Then suffering will increase every single day. The whole