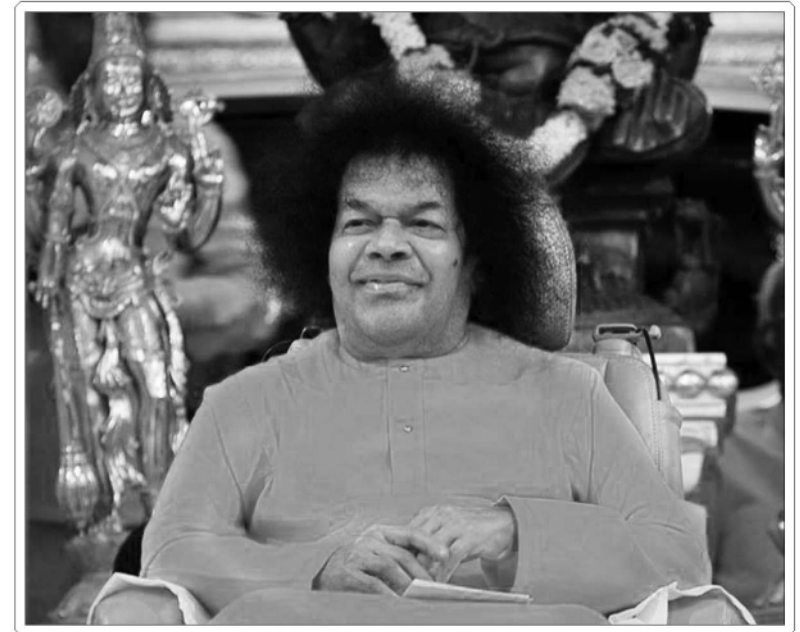


31.08.2015

Practical dharma, or rules of good behaviour (achara-dharma), relates to temporary matters concerning our problems and physical needs, to our passing relationships with the objective world. The very instrument of those rules, the human body, is not permanent, so how can then these rules be eternal? How can their nature be true? The Eternal cannot be expressed by the evanescent; light cannot be revealed from darkness. The Eternal emerges only from the Eternal; truth emanates only from truth. Therefore, follow the objective codes of dharma relating to worldly activities and daily life, with the full knowledge and consciousness of the inner basic Atma-dharma. Then only can the internal and external urges cooperate and yield the bliss of harmonious progress. If in your daily avocations, you translate the real values of eternal dharma into love-filled acts, then your duty to the inner reality, the Atma-dharma, is also fulfilled. Always build your living on the Atmic base; then, your spiritual progress is assured. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 2)

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Thought for the Day

(August 2015)

1.08.2015

Love is Divine. You must love all. More so, impart your love even to those who lack love. Love is like a mariner's compass. Wherever you may keep it, it should always point towards God. In every action in your daily life manifest selfless love. Divinity will emerge from that love. This is the easiest path to God realization. But why are people not taking to it? This is because they are obsessed with misconception relating to the means of experiencing God. They regard God as some remote entity attainable only by arduous spiritual practices. God is everywhere. There is no need to search for God. All that you see is a manifestation of the Divine. All the human beings you see are forms of the Divine. Correct your defective vision and you will experience God in all things. The power of love is immeasurable. Hence, develop and practice the sense of the spiritual oneness of all beings. [Divine Discourse, July 5, 1996]

2.08.2015

Turn your mind Godward and you will experience the bliss of the Divine. It is for this reason that Swami gives you advice from time to time as to what you should do and what you should avoid. All this is not for My sake but for your own good, to make you take to the path of God Realisation, to teach you the supreme truth about the Brahman and to make your sacred life an ideal one. Shirdi Baba used to ask for two rupees from devotees who came to him. The two rupees symbolised Shraddha (earnestness) and Bhakti (devotion). These are the two qualities He expected from the devotees. The combination of the two is essential for spiritual progress. Only then bliss

prosperity. If Dharma is ignored, it amounts to sacrilege, for Dharma is God and God is Righteousness (Dharma). People see God in a picture, an icon, or a plaster of Paris figurine but God really is most manifest in a righteous action (Dharma). One may spend enormous sums for pilgrimages and for rituals and ceremonies but that will not take them anywhere nearer to God. What profit can one earn in the spiritual field, if they adore God and at the same time, insult and injure their fellowmen? (Divine Discourse, 21-Jun-1979)

30.08.2015

When you do not discriminate the process and purpose of every act, and go ahead doing them with no understanding, you reduce them to a funny fossilized routine. Once even Prahlada observed, "Since it is difficult to destroy egotism, people take the easier option to offer dumb animals at the altar. Animal sacrifice is the manifestation of the quality of inertia (tamo guna); it is the path of bondage. Sacrifice of the animal of egotism is the purest sacrifice (satwic yajna) on the Godward path of liberation." Thus the highest goal (paramaarth) of the past is turned into the fool's goal (paaramaarth) of these days! Similarly every one of the ancient practices, which were once full of meaning has grown wild beyond recognition. It is now impossible to pluck the tree by the roots and plant a new one. So the existing tree must be trimmed and trained to grow straight. Always remember the highest goal and never dilute it into the lowest. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 1)

(sadhana) for purifying the pupils' minds and to render them strong enough to overcome temptations of all kinds. Virtue and character alone marks a truly educated person. (Divine Discourse, 21-Jun-1979)

28.08.2015

When you eat a banana, you have to first remove the skin; so it is with other fruits as well be it a mango or an orange. The sweet substance has to be reached after removal of the bitter skin. For Emperor Bali to be received and accepted by God, the bitter cover of egoism and power-mania had to be removed. Ignorance, maya (delusion), illusion, pride, etc. are the components of the skin. The festival of Onam comes and goes, but you are no way nearer to God. This is because while Onam is thoroughly welcomed and enjoyed, generosity, renunciation, love and the spirit of service are not given an equally hearty welcome. Take this as the Onam Message - strive to manifest, cultivate and express Love, suppressing pride and egoism, so that you win the Grace of God. (Divine Discourse, 30-Aug-1974)

29.08.2015

Truth (Satya) sustains the cosmos, virtue (Dharma) protects and promotes the peace of mankind. All activities must be infused with the ideals of Satya and Dharma. Dharma never suffers decline; only its practice declines. So divine incarnations take place to restore faith in Dharma, to revitalise its practice and to demonstrate that the practice of Dharma confers peace, joy and

will emerge like a plant from a seed. Everyone should strive to become an ideal human being. This means that everyone should testify to his Divinity. Imagine how happy everyone would be if the entire world was filled with this pure, sublime and sacred ideal. [Divine Discourse, July 30, 1996]

3.08.2015

All the pain and pleasure people experience are the results of their own actions and not due to any act of the Divine. God is only a witness, a postman! He delivers to you whatever letter is addressed to you. The grief or joy you derive from the contents of the letter is intended for you! Likewise suffering or happiness one experiences is the result of one's own bad or good deeds! However, God will shower 'special grace', when you pray to God with a pure heart, without a trace of selfishness and with sacred feelings. Also, when a person has done some unique sacrifice in a previous life or sometime in the past, the Divine rewards it at the appropriate time. Lord Krishna rescued Draupadi when Duryodhana attempted to disrobe her by making her sari endless. This was in return for the spontaneous act of Draupadi wherein she tore off a piece from her sari to stop the bleeding from Krishna's finger. [Sathya Sai Speaks, June 30, 1996]

4.08.2015

The hallmark of love is thyaga (selfless sacrifice). Love seeks nothing from anyone. It bears no ill-will towards anyone. It is utterly selfless and pure. Failing to understand the true nature of love, people yearn for it in various ways. You must

cherish love with the feelings of selflessness and sacrifice. In what is deemed as love in the world - whether it is maternal love, brotherly love, or friendship - there is an element of selfishness. Only God's love is totally free from the taint of selfishness. Divine love reaches out even to the remotest being. It brings together those who are separate. It raises a person from animality to Divinity. It transforms gradually all forms of worldly love to Divine love. To experience this Divine love, you must be prepared to give up selfishness and self-interest and develop purity and steadfastness. With firm faith in the Divine, foster love for God regardless of all obstacles and ordeals. [Divine Discourse, June 20, 1996]

5.08.2015

Fill your heart with love. You will be betraying yourself if you entertain evil thoughts but pretend outwardly to be full of love. Divine love will manifest itself anywhere at any time. One filled with Divine Love will be fearless, will seek nothing from others, and will be spontaneous and selfless in expressing their love. There is no need to pray for gifts from God. God will give of His own accord what is good for such a devotee. Did not Shabari and Jatayu get the Lord's grace without their asking for it? God will decide what, when, and where to give. Hence, dedicate all actions to God and Let Him decide what you are fit to receive. When everything is left to God with pure love and total faith, God will take full care of you. People today lack such firm faith. Great devotees of the past who faced ordeals with faith and fortitude, ultimately secured divine grace and experienced bliss. [Divine Discourse, June 20, 1996]

26.08.2015

The Universe is the best university; Nature is your best teacher. With an observant mind you can learn many lessons from rivers and hills, from birds and beasts, from stars and flowers and from trees. The trees offer cool shade to all who seek it; they do not deny it to anyone on the basis of caste, creed or colour. They offer their fruits to all, irrespective of their social or economic status. Prosperity is to be welcomed but that alone is not enough. Prosperity without the will to share it will only breed fear and anxiety. Human nature is an amalgam of animal, human and divine characteristics. Love, compassion, humility, charity - these are all divine. One has to cultivate these in order to be at peace with oneself and others. These spiritual qualities are your real life-savers; they elevate you from being human to the status of the Divine. (Divine Discourse, 21-Jun-1979)

27.08.2015

The Gurus (preceptors) of the past taught only from experience; they loved their pupils and sought to correct their faults and failings, that is how their students lead happy and useful lives. When the pupils finally left the Guru's home, he exhorted them to follow two guidelines (Sutras) which were as essential for life as the two eyes (netras) - Speak the truth; Walk on the path of righteousness (Satyam vada, Dharmam chara). The Guru had the faith that the pupil (shishya) would take the advice to heart, for he himself was the living proof of their value and validity. The Guru always takes great care to remove from the heart of the pupil the weeds of evil habits and tendencies, and implant therein the seeds of love. He insists on spiritual discipline

Me; I will hold on to you. I am not worried if you leave Me, for I am not anxious that there should be a huge gathering! Who gave hand-written invitation to everyone present here? People come, on their own, in thousands - you attach yourselves to Me! I am unattached. I am attached only to the task. But be assured of one thing. Whether you come to Me or not, you are all in Me. I have the love of a thousand mothers. I love each one of you and protect you always. Whenever I appear to be angry, remember, it is only love in another form. I do not have even an iota of anger in Me. I express My disappointment when you do not shape up as I expect. (Divine Discourse, Feb 11, 1964)

25.08.2015

Some of you may think, “How can Dharma, which sets limits on thoughts and words, and regulates and controls, make a person free?” Freedom is the name that you give to a certain type of bondage. Genuine freedom is obtained only when delusion is absent, when there is no identification with the body and senses, and no servitude to the objective world. People who have escaped from this servitude and achieved freedom in the genuine sense are very few in number. Bondage lies in every act done with the consciousness of the body as the Self, for one is then the plaything of the senses. Only those who have escaped this fate are free; this ‘freedom’ is the ideal stage to which Dharma leads. With this stage constantly in mind, if you are engaged in the activity of living, then you will become a liberated person (mukta-purusha) in this very life. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 2)

6.08.2015

The greatest disease (or absence of ease) is the absence of Shanti; when the mind gets peace, the body also will have health. So everyone who craves for good health must pay attention to the emotions, feelings and motives that animate you. Just as you wash clothes regularly, you must wash the mind free from dust and dross again and again! Otherwise, if dirt accumulates and you form a ‘habit’, it is difficult to get rid of the ‘stains’, besides it is harmful for the clothes. So washing should be a daily process; you should see that no mud settles upon the mind! That is to say, you have to move about in such company that dirt is avoided. Falsehood, injustice, indiscipline, cruelty, hate - these form the dirt; Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema (Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love) - these are the cleansers. If you inhale the pure air of virtues, your mind will be free from evil viruses and you will be mentally sturdy and physically strong. (Divine Discourse, 21-Sep-1960)

7.08.2015

There are four key questions that every person must show interest in: “Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? How long will I be here?” All spiritual inquiry begins with these questions. The four Vedas give you the answers! Will you drop a letter into the post box without writing the address of the sender and receiver? If you do, then, the letter will go nowhere and the effort in thinking and writing the letter would be wasted! So too, it would be a phenomenal waste of opportunity to have come into this world, without knowing where we have come from and where we are going. Just as the

no-address letter will go to the dead-letters office, the clueless individual soul will be caught in the cycle of birth and death for eternity! To avoid this phenomenon, enquiry about the Self with spiritual discipline is essential and must be prioritized. The answers will automatically come to you, as practical experiences. (Divine Discourse, 25 Jun 1960)

8.08.2015

Every village and town today is sick with animosities and petty quarrels. Even though many attempts have been made during the past years to better the lot of the common people, results have been far below expectations and expense. This is because of the absence of three requisites essential for all advancement: Dhairyam, Utsaham and Aanandam (courage, enthusiasm and joy). Nature has sufficient beauty to instill awe and wonder, to impart courage, to inspire enthusiasm and fill you with joy! It is a type of false vairagyam (non-attachment) to close one's eye to all the beauty, plenty, mercy that you receive from Mother Nature, and to run around in sorrow, bewailing your lot. Be thankful to the Lord for the chance given to you to serve others and yourselves, to witness His Glory and Grace, and look upon all as brothers and sisters. The virtues of the people are the treasures of the State; the remembrance of the name of the Lord is the root of all virtues. (Divine Discourse, Nov 23, 1960)

9.08.2015

Some people may laugh at devotional singing (Bhajans) and call it mere show and exhibition, and recommend instead quiet meditation in the silent recess of the shrine room. But coming

heart. Move forward towards the Light and the shadow falls behind; you move away from it and you have to follow your own shadow. Go every moment one step nearer to the Lord, and then the shadow maya (illusion) will fall back and will not delude you at all. Be steady, be resolved. (Divine Discourse, Feb 11, 1964)

23.08.2015

When visiting a temple of Lord Shiva, none should pass between the bull (Nandi) and the Lingam - the Jiva (individual soul) and Lord Shiva, it is said; for they are to merge into one. Shiva must be seen through the two horns of Nandi, they say. When asked the reason for this procedure people reply, "Well, it is holier than other methods of viewing the Lingam". But the inner meaning is, 'You must see the Shiva in Jiva' - Pasu (animal) and Pasupathi (Lord of all beings) are one: Nandi and Iswara become Nandiswara. When in bondage, it is Nandi; when the bound becomes free, it is Iswara - Nandiswara! This Union is entitled to be honoured. When Pasu is offered to the Pasupathi, and its separate identity is cast away, it is true Yajna (sacrifice). Today, these symbolic acts have changed beyond recognition. The practices of today and the principles of yesterday are far apart – the smallest detail of secular life must be inspired by the higher ideal of spiritual fulfillment. (Dharma Vahini Ch 1)

24.08.2015

I have come to reform you; I won't leave you until I do that. Even if you get away before I do that, don't think you can escape

21.08.2015

Beautiful fields and groves run wild with neglect and soon become unrecognizable bushland and thorny jungle; fine trees are hewn by greedy men and the shape of the landscape is changed. With the passage of time, people get accustomed to the new state of things. This has happened to Dharma also. Misunderstood by incompetent intelligence, unbridled emotion and impure reasoning, the scriptures have been grossly diluted and their glory has suffered grievously. Just as the raindrops from the clear blue sky get colored and contaminated when they fall on the soil, the unsullied message of the ancient rishis, the example of their shining deeds, and the bright untarnished urges behind their actions are all turned into ugly caricatures of the original grandeur, by uncultured interpreters and scholars. Hence, every one of you must acquaint yourselves with the outlines of Dharma, expounded in the Vedas, Sastras and the Puranas. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 1)

22.08.2015

Step by step, you reach the end of the road. One act followed by another leads to a good habit. Listening, over and over you get prodded into action. Resolve to act, to engage only with good company, to read only elevating books, and to form the habit of remembering the Lord's Name (Namasmarana), then ignorance will vanish automatically. The Divine Bliss that will well up within you with the contemplation of the Ananda Swarupa (Bliss Personified) will drive out all grief and all worry. Develop bliss and joy, then evil impulses and tendencies will vanish, for they will not get any foothold in the

out and doing Bhajan in company of others helps in removing egoism; one is not afraid nor ashamed to call out the Name of the Lord. One gets inspired by the devotion of others; the company of people with kindred sentiments helps to foster the tiny seedling from being scorched by the heat of derision. A person will sweep the floor of his room with a broom when nobody is looking on; but to do the same act when people are looking on requires some mastery over the ego. Jayadeva, Gouranga, Meera, Purandaradasa, Thyagaraja and the like sang their hearts out to the Lord and were thrilled at the thought of the Lord, because they had Love for God in such a pure and overpowering form. Selfless love fills your mind with joy and hope. (Divine Discourse, Sep 29, 1960)

10.08.2015

Prema (pure love) is filial piety when directed towards parents, companionship when it flows towards friends, love when it is felt towards the partner, respect when it is expressed to elders, and affection when you are drawn towards children. Bhakthi (devotion) affects your acts in three forms: first, you do some acts consciously in order to express your love or give shape to the Prema that animates you; second, you do acts as dedicated offerings to enhance the glory of the Lord, in a spirit of worshipful humility, as if you are offering at His feet all that you are and all that you are capable of; and third you do acts which are full of Prema towards all, as part of your mere existence, automatically, without any tinge of violence upsetting the perfume of the act. One dedicated act leads on to all activity being dedicated; the Ananda you experience

makes you feel that your effort has been worthwhile. That is the end, the aim and the inspiration. (Sathya Sai Speaks, Sep 29, 1960)

11.08.2015

Never yield to indolence or despair. Suffer loss and grief gladly, for they help to toughen your personality. The diamond is found amidst rocks; you will have to blast through the vein to get gold. Follow the strict regimen that the doctor enforces in order to make the medicine yield the best result. The battery of your 'car' is charged when you come to Puttaparthi or when you go to some other holy place. Or at least that should be the aim of the pilgrimage. Charge the battery of your spiritual effort and then, after you return home, do not keep the car idle. If you do, the battery will run down; take the car around and keep it going; then the battery will charge itself. So also, if you do not continue the holy company, the good attitude, bhajans, and remembering God's Name as part of your life, all this charging will turn into a waste. (Divine Discourse, June 25, 1960)

12.08.2015

No one is outside the Love of the Lord. The eighteen-year old boy is asked by the mother to go into the kitchen, take a plate and serve himself rice and curry and eat. The mother is not callous or unkind; she knows the capacity of the boy and treats him as he ought to be treated. For another son she accompanies to the kitchen, sits by his side and serves food to him. But she seats the third son on her lap and feeds with many a song in order to

the Over-Soul, which broadens the vision towards the Divinity immanent everywhere, is a righteous act. Each such act is a tiny stream that swells the river of holiness rushing towards the sea of knowledge of Divinity. Your acts and activities are all rituals in the worship of the Paramatma that pervades the Universe. Whatever is done in an attitude of dedication and surrender is a component of the Dharma, which leads to Realisation. The strategy of the ancient Bharathiya (Indian) way of life is directed towards the sanctification of every moment and every word, thought and deed as a step towards realising the Divine. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 1)

20.08.2015

You are not a despicable creature, born in slime or sin, to eke out a drab existence and be extinguished forever. You are immortal and eternal. So when the call comes, respond with your whole heart. The Principle of Divinity must be experienced, for it is beyond expressions and explanation. The richness, fullness and depth of that experience can never be communicated in words. You must feel that it is your highest destiny to attain that experience. You are a mixture of Deha and Deva - the mortal and the immortal. Liberation means stoppage of grief and acquisition of joy. All that you have to do is to place all your burdens on God. It makes you care-free and grief-free. Then you will take everything as a divine play of the Lord you love and live in bliss just as He is, when His plans are going through! (Divine Discourse, Feb 11, 1964)

vigilant to discover the Truth behind all this scintillating variety. This is your duty, your Dharma. The blazing fire of Jnana, which convinces you that all this is Brahman (Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma) will consume into ashes all traces of your egoism, and worldly attachment. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 1)

18.08.2015

You are wasting a lot of time in meaningless pursuits. Time wasted is life wasted. Our ancients never wasted even a minute. They considered God as the embodiment of time and extolled Him thus: Kalaya Namah, Kala Kalaaya Namah, Kalaateetaya Namah, Kalaniyamitaya Namah (Salutations to the Embodiment of Time, to the One who conquered time, to the One who transcends time and to the One who ordains time). Why have you forgotten the truth that time is verily God? You eagerly await a Sunday thinking that you can relax and enjoy. In fact, you should feel sad that you are wasting time without doing any work on a Sunday. You have to utilise your time in a proper way. If you do not have any work, undertake social service. Help your fellowmen. Life becomes meaningful only when you make proper use of time. (Divine Discourse, Nov 19, 2002)

19.08.2015

“Sacrifice ignorance (ajnana) and ego (ahamkara) at the altar of wisdom (Jnana), and install righteousness (Dharma) therein” - this is the message of the scriptures. Every single unselfish act, which prepares the ground for the merging of the Soul with

make the process pleasant for the child. Do not think that the mother is partial; no, she is only making use of her knowledge of the capacity of her children to make them progress. That is the nature of maternal love. (Divine Discourse, Sep 29, 1960)

13.08.2015

You must dedicate yourself to right conduct (Dharma) and always be engaged in righteousness (Dharma). Then you will live in peace and the world will enjoy peace. No one can acquire real peace, nor can they win the grace of the Lord through any means other than right conduct. Dharma is the foundation for the welfare of humanity; it is the only unchanging truth across all times. When Dharma fails to transform human life, the world will be afflicted by agony and fear, tormented by stormy revolutions. When the effulgence of Dharma fails to illumine human relationships, people will be shrouded in sorrow. All religions and scriptures expound Dharma and proclaim aloud the Glory of Dharma. The stream of Dharmic activity should never run dry; when its cool waters cease to flow, disaster is certain. God is the embodiment of Dharma; His Grace is won by Dharma. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 1)

14.08.2015

The happiness that one derives from virtues is far superior to the happiness that we get from the possession of wealth. Unfortunately the educated youth are striving for wealth, physical strength and friendship. But all these have little value without the wealth of character. For men or women, character is the foundation. If one lacks character, one becomes feeble

in all other respects. People of those days strove for noble character. They were prepared to give up their very lives for a righteous cause. Women strived to uphold the honor of their husbands. The strength of an individual lies in one's character, not in the wealth one earns. One should be prepared to face any hardship to lead a virtuous life. The country is in dire straits due to the absence of men and women of character. Materialistic wealth is not what we need today. We need to earn the wealth of virtues. (Divine Discourse, 19-Nov-2002)

15.08.2015

What is meant by Dharma? What is its essence? Can common people lead a happy life and survive if they stick to Dharma? These doubts confuse people's minds in the course of their natural livelihood. Solving them is necessary, even urgent. As soon as the word Dharma is mentioned, people relate it to giving of alms, providing food and shelter to pilgrims, adherence to one's traditional profession or craft, law-abiding nature, the discrimination between right and wrong, the pursuit of one's innate nature over the freaks of one's own mind, the fruition of one's fondest desires, etc. Of course, it is a long, long time since the spotless countenance of Dharma has been tarnished beyond recognition. Now, who can cure the present blindness? All of you! All you need to do is to slay the six-fold beast of inner enemies, leading you on to disaster through the pulls of lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and hate. Only then Dharma can be restored. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 1)

16.08.2015

In spite of education and intelligence, a foolish person will not know one's true Self, and an evil minded person will not give up wicked qualities. Modern education leads only to argumentation, not to true wisdom. What is the use of acquiring worldly education if it cannot lead you to immortality? Acquire that knowledge which will make you immortal. Modern education can help you only to eke out a livelihood. It is meant for a living and not for life. In fact, it is responsible for the present decline of morality in society. In olden days, people gave topmost priority to truth and righteousness. They considered divine love as their very life. The women of Bharat sacrificed their lives for the sake of truth. Women should develop the wealth of virtues and also safeguard the honor of their husbands and families. Both men and women should have good character. Without good character, all your learning will prove futile. (Divine Discourse, Nov 19, 2002)

17.08.2015

Whoever subdues egoism, conquers selfish desires, destroy one's bestial feelings and impulses, and gives up the natural tendency to regard the body as the Self, is surely on the path of Dharma; they know that the goal of Dharma is the merging of the wave in the sea! In all worldly activities, you should be careful not to offend propriety, or the canons of good nature; you should not play false to the promptings of the Inner Voice, you should be prepared at all times to respect the appropriate dictates of conscience; you should watch your steps to see whether you are in someone else's way; you must be ever