29.09.2015

Some people hold the opinion that being employed is bondage, while sitting at home without any specific work is freedom! This is a sign of lack of intelligence. When employed in a job, one obeys their superiors. In the same way, being at home, can anyone escape the demands and compulsions of the family? Even when you are amidst your friends, can you avoid the necessity of acting according to their fancy? Hence, understand that all life is a prison; the differences are merely in the types of imprisonment! You will feel it this way as long as the attitude of identifying yourself with the body is there. On the other hand, the liberated ones will trample down their egoism, discriminate sensual pleasure from real happiness, and perform their duties. They will use duty (Karma) as an aid to help in the destruction of the ego. This is the path to freedom and happiness. (Dharma Vahini, Ch 2)

30.09.2015

You are unnecessarily struggling and planning several schemes, thinking about them day and night. In spite of all your struggles, what has to go out of your hands will go. The body is like a water bubble. The mind is like a mad monkey. If you follow this mad monkey, you will get into trouble. In the same manner, if you believe in the body, you do not know when this body, which is like a water bubble, will burst. Nothing is permanent. Only the Atma (Self) is eternal and immortal. 'I', 'Self', 'God' are all different names by which the Atmaswarupa is called. God incarnated as Rama, Krishna, and the like, and underwent several difficulties to demonstrate great ideals. Finally, they too left the mortal coil. The physical bodies of the Avatars undergo changes, but the Divine Atma in their bodies remains the same. It is omnipresent, eternal and changeless. Divinity in all the human beings is one and the same. (Divine Discourse, Jan 1 2009)

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought for the Day

(September 2015)

1.09.2015

Your heart should be like glass, with the spiritual light inside illuminating the world outside. The inner urges on interacting with the world outside should make one lean towards service, empathy and mutual help. Presently, people read and study all kinds of unintelligible Vedantic texts and struggle with commentaries and translations to grasp their sense. Knowledge is being poured down their throats; but the potion does not get down to soften their heart. The spiritual truths should not be put on for mere public exhibition, as in a drama, where appropriate dresses are worn on the stage but taken off when the actor moves off the stage. They must be adhered to all the time to derive the Atma ananda (Bliss of the Soul) which they genuinely confer. Bliss is easily attained by careful, well-timed and regulated discipline; it cannot be got by spurts and skips. You must take the effort to learn each lesson of virtue through systematic study and diligent application to attain success. (Divine Discourse, 21-Sep-1960)

2.09.2015

Virtues must be cultivated in each home; each member sharing in the joy with the rest, each one seeking for opportunities for helping others. This attitude must be stuck to, so that it may stay as character. How can a vessel kept with a closed lid be filled with water? It must be open to receive good impulses! In all your efforts, trust in a Higher Power which is ever ready to help you. Then your work is made easy. This comes out of devotion, and reliance on the Lord who is the source of all Power. When you travel by train, you only have to purchase the ticket, board the proper train and take a seat, you can leave the rest to the engine. Do you carry your luggage on your head? So too, trust in the Lord and march to the best of your ability. Have faith and earn the Lord's grace by using the intelligence and the conscience He has endowed you with. (Divine Discourse, 21-Sep-1960)

27.09.2015

No other person can bind you; you do it yourself! You choose to become bound, straying away from the righteous (dharmic) path. If faith in God's omnipresence is deep-rooted, you would become aware that He is within you and you will choose to be free. For that faith to grow, you must grasp the Divine (Atmic) bliss firmly. The reality of the Divinity (Atma) is the bedrock, that is the incontrovertible wisdom (nishchitha-jnana). Without that foundation, you will easily become the target of doubt, despair, and delusion. Therefore, first endeavour to be free. That is to say, as a prerequisite to successful living, cultivate faith in righteousness (dharma) as the core of your personality, and then learn and practise the discipline necessary to reach down to that core. When you acquire that qualification, you can engage fully in worldly activities, following the prescribed right conduct (dharma). Thus you transform yourself to be a moral individual (dharma-purusha). (Dharma Vahini, Ch 2)

28.09.2015

Though Alexander the Great conquered most parts of the world, he could not take with him even an iota of the property he won. He left the world with empty hands. To demonstrate this truth to the world, he instructed his ministers to take his dead body in a procession through the streets of his capital keeping both his hands in a raised position pointing the sky. When the ministers asked him the reason for this strange request, Emperor Alexander replied, "I conquered several countries, accumulated great wealth and controlled a vast army; yet, I am going back with empty hands - demonstrate this truth to everyone." You may spend a lot of time struggling to acquire a lot of wealth. Yet, not even a handful of earth will come along when you leave the body. Hence at least now accept the fact that you are Divine, and strive to appreciate the same Divinity in everyone around you. (Divine Discourse, Jan 1 2009)

25.09.2015

To be free is your birthright! When you guide your steps along the path illumined by the universal unbound dharma you will become really free; if you stray away from the light, you will get bound. What you call 'freedom' is 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 play thing 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, one who engages in the activity of living, can become a liberated person (muktha-purusha). (Dharma Vahini, Ch 2)

26.09.2015

When common people say, 'Idi naa dehamu' (this is my body), scholars would interpret the expression 'naa dehamu' and say, it connotes 'I am not the body' (as 'naa' means 'not'). Extending the same logic, it is possible for you to maintain a state of perfect equanimity unaffected by pain and pleasure at all times by affirming, 'these sorrows and difficulties as well as happiness and pleasure are not mine. I am beyond these dualities.' When you say, 'It is my body' doesn't it automatically imply, 'I' is different from 'the body'? When you are separate from your body, why should you feel the pain out of it? The truth is, you are unable to overcome the delusion of body attachment and are also unable to bear the pain caused to the body, as you remain at the level of a human being. Be aware that as long as you are attached to the body, sorrows, difficulties and pain will haunt you. (Divine Discourse, Jan 1, 2009)

3.09.2015

True friends are those who help in uplifting your life by cleansing your ideals and emotions. Those who drag you into pomp, pedantry, paltry entertainment and petty pranks are enemies, not friends. True friends cannot be won by social status, external scintillation or verbal assertions. A friendship knit by monetary bonds is disrupted as soon as you ask the loan to be repaid. So, when you oblige your friend with a loan, the friendship too is broken at that very moment. How can friendship be cemented by words or by coins? The feeling of friendship must activate every nerve, permeate every blood-cell, and purify every emotional wave; it has no place for the slightest trace of egotism. The companionship which seeks to exploit or fleece for personal benefit cannot be elevated into the noble quality of friendship. Perhaps, the only friend who can pass this rigorous test, is God. (Divine Discourse, 24-May-1973)

4.09.2015

Teachers should regard their vocation as a sacred duty. They have the responsibility to mould the future generations of young students by what they teach, referencing practical examples from the lives of illustrious leaders. Teachers should inspire, and be an example by the way they live outside the classroom. Educational institutions have the responsibility to give to society well educated persons who are competent, who possess integrity and who can be relied upon to serve society with devotion and competence. What gives education its true value and significance is its moral and spiritual content. If teachers dedicate themselves to this noble cause, students will not go astray. I hope teachers will devote themselves to their duties with greater vigour and enthusiasm, and bring about a transformation in the students so that they become useful and worthy citizens. (Divine Discourse, 15-Dec-1985)

5.09.2015

In order to save humanity, the Lord appeared in a most charming form, so that He could draw devotees' hearts through Love. This is why He is called 'Raso vai sah' (He is sweetness itself). Krishna incarnated to establish Dharma. So what He likes most is Dharma. Walk in the path of Dharma; that is the worship He is pleased with. The Flute is His favourite. So like a flute, become hollow (devoid of desires) and straight (with no crookedness), and He will accept you. Think of the sublime sweetness that Krishna evoked in the hearts of those who had the good fortune to be His contemporaries! Every one, from the unlettered cowherd to the most profound scholar and sage, was drawn to Him; they held on to Him firmly in unshakeable devotion. Whatever be the hardships and troubles, they never gave up His Lotus Feet. Hold on to the Lord; that is the way to peace and joy. (Divine Discourse, 19-Aug-1968)

6.09.2015

The heart must yearn for His voice, His form, His flute, His smile, His sport and His pranks. That is the tapas (penance) which is rewarded by His grace. The yearning must be so deep that all body consciousness is lost, the senses are ineffective, and the mind is inactive, the intelligence is at a standstill, and all ideas of duality disappear. The individual sees before him only step after step of Aananda leading him to the highest bliss of merging in the Lord. The culture of Bharath has marked out the guidelines for achieving this bliss. This bliss is the consummation of all sweetness, all the joy, and all the fulfilment derived from all the highest desires. But yet man is struggling to achieve petty things, paltry joys and low desires. When you seek God, you must not be misled into by-paths and mirages. The seeker after gold must cast away brass and other yellow metals which may distract or at times even destroy him. (Divine Discourse, 19-Aug-1968)

23.09.2015

There is nothing greater in the world than Bhakti (devotion). Once sage Narada demonstrated to his disciples how devotion is greater than anything in the world, including the Divine. While the Divine was greater than the cosmos, which the Lord as Vamana could measure in two steps, the Lord Himself is held in his heart by the devotion of the devotee. Devotion bestows the highest benefits. Devotion alone is the means to Realisation. Devotion alone confers supreme peace. Devotion is the panacea for all ills. Divine love encompasses all sacred acts. To achieve oneness with the Divine, one will have to be prepared to sacrifice everything. It is not easy for anyone to recognise the truth about the Divine. His leelas (miraculous sportive activities) are beyond the grasp of the mind and speech. There is no Veda or Sastra superior to devotion. (Divine Discourse, 15-Sep-1988)

24.09.2015

Uttering the truth is easy. But indulging in falsehood is a tortuous process. One has to take a lot of trouble to cover up one lie with more lies. Hence it is said: Speak the truth, speak what is pleasing, do not utter truth that is unpleasant (Sathyam brooyath; priyam brooyath; na brooyath Sathyam Apriyam). God is the embodiment of Truth. Truth is the foundation of the universe. This transcendental changeless Truth is beyond mind, speech and the categories of time and space. Vedanta has described it as 'Ritam'. Live up to this Truth. Internalize the fact that the Lord is present in everyone. Only when you recognise the omnipresence of the Divine, will you easily experience the Divine. Hence from today give up swartha (selfishness), turn your mind towards the Supreme (Parartha), lead a life of Truth (Yadartha) and sanctify your lives. If you earn the love of God even to the slightest extent, you will experience infinite joy. (Divine Discourse, 15-Sep-1988)

21.09.2015

Every being is an embodiment of the Divine. True human relationship can grow only when this truth is recognised. The first stage is where you recognise, 'I am in the Light.' Next is when you know, 'The Light is in me,' and finally you realise, 'I am the Light.' 'I' represents love and light which connotes Supreme Wisdom (Jnana). When love and light unite, there is Realisation. The path of devotion is easier than the path of wisdom. Love should come from within, not forced from outside. Develop spontaneous love. The attitude of petitioning to God for favours should be given up. Love of God should not be based on quid pro quo, seeking favours in exchange for prayers and offerings to God. Place your faith in God and do your duty to the best of your ability. Saturate yourself with love and share it with all. (Divine Discourse,15-Sep-1988)

22.09.2015

You may install idols and worship them. But do not forget the inner significance of all that worship. All external activities are necessary only to help you to get the spirit of non-duality and experience unity in diversity. Love and sacrifice are very important. Where there is pure, unsullied, selfless, sacred and sublime love there is no fear at all. Giving and not getting is the underlying principle of spiritual sadhana. Your heart is full of love, but you are using it only for selfish purposes instead of diverting it towards God. God is in the heart and not in the head. The heart is full of love. Every day, remind yourself that God is one; all religions uphold the same principle of 'One God, who is omnipresent.' Do not have contempt for any religion, as each is a pathway to God. Fostering love towards your fellow-beings, receive the blessings of the Divine. This is the goal of life. (Divine Discourse, 9-Sep-1994)

7.09.2015

What is seen by your eyes, what moves your mind, what awakens your body and what shapes your entire life is the creation around you. Gopala is well versed in tending the cows, caring for them and nurturing them. The word 'Go' refers to cow, earth, sensory organs, heaven, speech, etc. So Gopala can play with you and make you sing. He can move you and all others. He can protect you and make you happy. This is the aspect of Gopala, the Divine Incarnate. The act of creation and the creator are permanent and they go on forever. Conditions may change and times may alter but Divinity will never change. The most important aspect of the Divine (Paramatma) is to look after the cows (His creation), protect them and ultimately ensure they merge in Him. Hence make sincere efforts to promote the divinity that is present in you and enjoy bliss. You should persevere to elevate yourself and never let yourself slip down. (Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1978 Ch 23)

8.09.2015

To every being born on earth, Truth is the visible manifestation of God. The entire cosmos composed of moving and immovable objects has emerged from Truth, is sustained by Truth and merges in Truth. Truth is Divine and eternal (Sathyam-Jnanam-Anantham Brahma). Hence everyone must revere Truth. Sathya and Dharma (truth and righteousness) will not submit to anyone. Every kind of strength, physical or otherwise, will have to come under their sway. Success follows Sathya and Dharma. Whatever be your scholarship or position, you have to cultivate respect for human values. Protect Sathya and Dharma always. What students and people must safeguard is not merely nations, but Sathya and Dharma. In turn these values will protect the Universe. Educated persons, who in the name of countries are giving up truth and right conduct, are actually undermining the human civilization.

It is more vital to cultivate virtues than go after scholarship or other worldly riches and possessions of transient nature. (Divine Discourse, 20-May-1990)

9.09.2015

In this transient world, wading through joy and grief, people have a sore need of someone of their kind with whom they can communicate their feelings, share their discoveries and depressions, their moments of bliss and sorrow; someone to be by their side while trekking the hard road to truth and peace. However, friendship and friends today are far from the ideal. Friends who can confer real counsel, comfort and consolation are rarely found. If friendship must last then heart must understand heart, heart must be drawn to heart. Friendship must bind two hearts and affect both of them beneficially, whatever be the circumstance - loss or gain, pain or pleasure, good fortune or bad. The bond must survive all the blows of fate and be unaffected by time, place and situation. The trust and honour of each is in the safekeeping of the other. (Divine Discourse, 24-May-1973)

10.09.2015

You should realise that for every action there is a consequence. The results of each action depend on the nature of the action, just as the nature of the tree depends on the seed which is sowed. The consequences of one's actions are inescapable and it is for this reason that the Emperor Manu laid down that all should observe Dharma. The consequences of actions may appear sooner or later but they are bound to occur. When you constantly think of God and perform all actions with Divine feelings, you will experience the full blossoming of the human qualities. Consider every action as dedicated to God. You cannot avoid actions. You must transform work into worship. You have to perform work in this spirit. You cannot substitute prayer for work. You have to combine both work and worship. (Divine Discourse, 31-Aug-1992)

19.09.2015

God is infinite. It is impossible to measure Him or compare Him with anything, for there is no 'other' to compare. He is omnipresent. The Vedas declare, "He is One alone without a second" (Ekam eva Advitiyam). The Divine willed: "I am One; I shall become many" (Ekoham Bahusyaam). By His Will God manifested Himself in the many. All religions have accepted this truth. The Bible declares: "God created man in His own image." Thus from the One, the manifold cosmos emerged. With the growth of knowledge, the animal nature in man has diminished and he has been able to develop and refine his culture. As the saying goes, Divine appears in human form (Daivam maanusha rupena). Hence do not consider yourself as a mere product of Nature, a creature of the senses and the physical elements. You are an embodiment of Divinity. (Divine Discourse, 15-Sep-1988)

20.09.2015

You may have immense faith in God. But from time to time, the power of Maya may undermine this faith. So be vigilant. In Mahabharata even staunch devotees of Krishna like Dharmaraja and Arjuna displayed hesitancy in following the advice of Krishna and had to be reminded of their duty through Bhishma and Draupadi respectively. Faith in God should never waver. In no circumstance should anyone go against the injunctions of the Divine. Whatever worship one may offer, however intensely one may meditate, if one transgresses the commands of the Lord, these devotional practices become futile. The reason is that the Lord has no selfish objectives or goals. It is out of small-minded, narrow and selfish motives that people choose to act against the sacred and noble commandments of the Lord. Even small acts of transgression may in due course assume dangerous proportions. (Divine Discourse, 12-Sep-1991)

17.09.2015

Easwara blessed Ganapathi saying, "I have many attributes, but not Your intelligence. Hence, before offering worship to Me, let all people worship You. This is the boon I confer on You." Easwara is a parent who conferred such an honour of a higher status than His own on His son. Hence Ganapathi represents no commonplace principle. He is the embodiment of all potencies. He is the abode of every kind of intelligence. Nothing untoward can happen wherever He is present. Ganapathi occupies the position of one who is the source of all prosperity. Moreover, when He is invoked before any undertaking, there will be no impediments to its completion. People look upon the Vighneswara festival as some routine affair. But Vighneswara embodies all the forms and all the powers of all the deities. It is not enough to worship Him once a year. We must worship Him always. (Divine Discourse, 25-Aug-1998)

18.09.2015

In the twilight of dusk, one mistakes a thick rope for a snake. When the place is lit, only rope remains - the snake was never there. A momentary delusion caused the appearance of the snake and the absence of the rope. This phenomenon is called Maya. Maya makes you imagine the presence of what is not there and believe in the existence of that which is nonexistent. The combined power of Prakriti, Avidya and Maya (Phenomenal world, Ignorance and Delusion) makes people forget their true nature. People often imagine that they accomplished many things, and believe that all their achievements are entirely due to their own efforts and capabilities. They forget the truth that there is a higher power which is the driving force for action as well as the results thereof! This is the effect of delusion (bhrama). To help get rid of this delusion and enable one to comprehend the inherent divine nature, the ancients suggested prayers. (Divine Discourse, 12-Sep-1991)

11.09.2015

There is electromagnetic energy in every body. Nature is the embodiment of the same energy. This energy may assume different forms, but its essential character is one and the same. A lighted bulb, a fan that is revolving, and many other things working through electrical power depend on the same kind of current. The energy may manifest itself in the form of light, heat, or magnetic energy, but it proclaims the power of the Divine, which is the source of all energy. This electromagnetic energy in man expresses itself in the form of radiation. It is also called reflection of the 'Inner being'. The power of sight, hearing, speech, digestion, and movement of the limbs is derived from this energy. Water also contains this energy. In fact, the entire cosmos is permeated by this divine energy. On the basis of this, Vedanta declares, "Sarvam khalu idam Brahma (verily, every being is Divine)." (Divine Discourse, 25-Aug-1998)

12.09.2015

You have to seek love only through love. The Gopikas prayed: "Oh Krishna, play Your sweet flute and sow the seeds of love in the desert of loveless hearts. Let the rain of love fall on earth and make the rivers of love flow." The rivers of love must flow continuously. It is enough, if you can understand this one principle of love. This love is everything. Treat this love as the be-all and end-all of your life. Do not direct your love towards material objects. If you continue to love for love's sake, then such a love will be eternal. It is not the body that is to be loved, but the principle of love. All the names and forms are evanescent and impermanent. Love directed towards temporary objects or beings is physical, whereas love for love's sake is eternal. Love is God. You must attain Divinity with such love. (Divine Discourse, 28-Oct-2003)

13.09.2015

Embodiments of divine Love! As long as a person is conceited and egotistic, no one will like that person. Even their wedded spouse and their own children, though they may appear to respect them externally, will not be happy with an arrogant person. As long as one is filled with ego, one can never be really happy. Therefore, at the very outset, you should get rid of your ego (ahamkara). If one is filled with anger, one cannot experience joy (Krodham hithva na sochathi). Only when anger is subdued, happiness can be experienced. As long as one is filled with insatiable desires, one cannot feel really wealthy. The moment the person gives up desires, all riches will come to them. Till the moment a person is greedy, they will be a stranger to happiness. When you give up greed, you will feel endowed with all riches. (Divine Discourse,25-Aug-1998)

14.09.2015

For acquiring selfless love, the quality of kshama or forbearance is a vital necessity. (kshama is a word rich in meaning. Besides forbearance, it also implies extreme patience and an enormous capacity to forget as also forgive). Every individual must cultivate this noble quality. Kshama is not achieved by reading books or learnt from an instructor. Nor can it be received as a gift from someone else. This prime virtue of kshama can be acquired solely by self-effort, by facing squarely diverse problems and difficulties of various sorts, by going through anxieties and suffering as well as sorrow. In the absence of kshama, man becomes susceptible to all kinds of evil tendencies. Hatred and jealousy easily take root in a person lacking this virtue. Divinity is merely the combined manifestation of prema (love) and kshama. (Divine Discourse, 25-May-2000)

15.09.2015

Study of books alone will not enhance your capability; they will merely provide you with superficial or bookish knowledge. This obviously is not enough. Real capability and strength come by tapping the Inner Power latent in you. All that is outside is artificial. Real truth and power are both inside, in your heart. It is the heart that must be strengthened, but, unaware of this fact, people become furiously active in the external world, only to get lost there. There are many types of food catering to the needs of the gross body but what about food for the heart? That food can be obtained only when you turn your head toward God. You must understand the subtle linkages here – food, head, and God. Thus, along with the acquisition of worldly knowledge, you must also give importance to culture and refinement. (Divine Discourse, 25-May-2000)

16.09.2015

For spiritual progress kshama (forbearance) is the real basis or foundation. Great people and countries have lost their glory, prestige, and reputation because of the disappearance of Kshama. Without patience and the capacity for forbearance, one becomes spiritually weak. Such weakness leads to bad feelings, undesirable thoughts, and unbecoming actions. This virtue is best cultivated under adverse circumstances, and one must therefore gladly welcome troubles instead of regarding them as unwelcome. Thus times of distress, and an environment of sorrow and misery offer the ideal opportunity for the development of Kshama. However, because of mental weakness and ignorance, we shun painful experiences and distress. You should not be weak; be brave and welcome troubles. Let them come, more the merrier. Only with such a courageous attitude, you would be able to bring out the kshama hidden within you. (Divine Discourse, 25-May-2000)