towards God. Love all. Do not rely on anyone except God. Realise the impermanence of the body and place your trust solely in God. Seek refuge in Him. What is most needed today in this Kali age is faith. As often as possible, when you get the chance, meditate on God. Earn the esteem of society through sincere service. That will ensure a good future for you. (Divine Discourse, Aug 16, 1996)

29.02.2016

Irrespective of whatever inconveniences you may encounter, you must continue your spiritual practices with the same discipline. The smarana (remembrance) of the Name of the Lord you cherish should go on. Your chosen Name must not give you the slightest feeling of dislike or apathy. If the Name is changed frequently, concentration is impossible, and your mind will not attain one-pointedness, which is the goal of all spiritual disciplines. Avoid constant adoption and rejection of Lord's Names. Be convinced that all Names and Forms are the same name and form that you adore. Take all worldly losses, sufferings, and worries as merely temporal and transitory, and realise that repetition of the Name and meditation is only to overcome such grief. You must understand that loss, suffering, and worry are external, they belong to this world, while repetition of the Name and meditation are internal, they belong to the realm of the love for the Lord. (Prema Vahini, Ch 64)

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought for the Day

(February 2016)

1.02.2016
A farmer clears and levels the land, removes the stones and thorns, ploughs and prepares the field, manures and strengthens the soil, waters and fertilizes it. Then after sowing, transplanting, weeding, spraying, and waiting, he reaps the crop. After winnowing and threshing, he stacks the corn. All these various processes are for the sake of feeding the stomach. So too one must feel that all hunger and thirst, joy and sorrow, grief and loss, suffering and anger, food and appetite are but impulses that help us march forward to attain the Presence of the Lord. When you have this attitude, sin will never tarnish any of your activities. Your appetite for hunger and material desires will also vanish, without a vestige of name or form. On the other hand, if you treat the appetites as more important, you will be sure to earn only sorrow, not joy. It will be impossible to acquire peace. (Prema Vahini, Ch 55)

2.02.2016
If you are ill or if your mind is pre-occupied, you will not enjoy the taste of delicious food. So also if your heart is full of ignorance (tamas) or is straying, no joy will be experienced, even if you are engaged in remembrance of the name (namasmarana), devotional singing (japa), or meditation. The tongue will be sweet as long as there is sugar on it. Likewise if the pillar of light called devotion continues to burn in the corridor of the heart, there will be no darkness. The heart will be illumined in bliss. A bitter thing on the tongue makes your whole tongue bitter; when qualities like greed and anger enter the heart, the brightness disappears, darkness dominates the scene, and one becomes the target of countless griefs and losses. Therefore those who aspire to attain the holy presence of the Lord must acquire certain habits, disciplines, and qualities. You must modify your daily living through spiritual discipline. (Prema Vahini, Ch 56)

For example, this is a rose. It looks so beautiful. Its beauty gives happiness. But how long will its beauty last? It may be there till today or tomorrow. Thereafter all its petals will fall down and it will lose its shine. When it loses its beauty, it will no longer give you happiness. Thus in this world, you cannot find permanent beauty and permanent happiness. Only God is permanent in this world; the rest is temporary like passing clouds. Everlasting happiness can be attained only from God. (Divine Discourse, 22 July 1996)

27.02.2016
Above all, it is best that the Sadhaka under all circumstances should be joyful, smiling and enthusiastic. Even more than Bhakthi and Jnana (Devotion and Wisdom), this pure attitude is desirable. Those who have acquired it deserve to reach the goal first. This quality of joy at all times is the fruit of the good done in past births. When a person is ever worried, depressed and doubting, he can never attain bliss, whatever spiritual practices or Sadhana one may undertake. The first task of a spiritual aspirant is the cultivation of enthusiasm. Through that enthusiasm, he can derive any variety of Ananda. Never get inflated when you are praised; never get deflated when you are blamed. Be a spiritual lion, regardless of both. One must analyse and correct one's faults on his own; this is most important. (Prema Vahini, Ch 63)

28.02.2016
"The world is impermanent. Birth is a misery. Old age is a misery. Be careful!" says a Sanskrit poem. As long as you are alive, everyone would seem to love the body. This is for purely selfish reasons. God alone is utterly selfless. Love God and lead your normal lives; there is nothing wrong in this. Whatever you do, treat it as an offering to God. See God in everyone. Don't have ill will towards anyone. Do not have excessive attachment for anyone. Direct all attachment

your own satisfaction or wreaking vengeance on the person who pointed it out — these should not be the traits of a spiritual aspirant or devotee. The spiritual aspirant must always seek the truthful and joyful, and must avoid all thoughts of the untrue, sad and depressing. Depression, doubt, conceit — these are as detrimental as Rahu and Kethu (evil planetary influences) to the spiritual aspirant. They will harm one's spiritual practice. When your devotion is well established, these can be easily discarded if they appear. Above all, you must be joyful, smiling, and enthusiastic under all circumstances. (Prema Vahini, Ch 63)

25.02.2016

Expansion is the keynote of education. The first step for this expansion is the home, where you must revere and please your parents who gave you this chance to live and learn. If you ill-treat them or inflict grief on their minds, how can you ever gladden others by service and understanding? You know that when a balloon is blown, it bursts and the air inside it merges with the vast limitless expanse outside. So too your love must fill your home and your society, and finally burst even those bonds and become worldwide. A drop of water held in the palm evaporates soon; it is very solitary. But drop it into the sea - it survives! It assumes the name, the majesty and the might of a sea! Cultivate the seeds of love in all hearts! (Divine Discourse, July 25, 1975)

26.02.2016

In this vast world, every living being desires happiness that is eternal. Where can we attain this happiness from? Beauty is happiness, and happiness is the nectarous essence of life. Which objects are beautiful in this world? A number of objects attract people in various ways. You think it is the beauty of the objects that attracts. But beauty is temporary, whether it is in human beings, birds, animals, or things.

3.02.2016

Look at the crane; it walks pretty fast while in water. But while walking, it can't catch fish; for that purpose, it must become quiet and stand motionless. So also, if you lead your daily life with greed, anger, and similar qualities, you cannot secure the fish of truth (sathya), dharma, and peace (shanti). Whatever spiritual practice one may be engaged in, one must practise uninterrupted remembrance of the Lord's Name (nama-smarana). Only then can you master the natural attributes of greed, anger, etc. All the scriptures (sastras) teach this one lesson: since the Lord is the universal goal and this journey of life has Him as the destination, keep Him constantly in view and subdue the mind so that you do not stray from your chosen path. All the good qualities automatically accumulate with the person who practices control of speech and constant contemplation of the Lord. (Prema Vahini, Ch 56)

4.02.2016

For achieving anything in life two things are essential: firm faith and pure love. To experience pure, Divine love, you must be prepared to give up selfishness and self-interest. You must develop purity and steadfastness. With firm faith in the Divine, you must foster the love of God regardless of all obstacles and ordeals. You should never think that pleasure and pain are caused by some external forces; it is not so. They are the result of your own thoughts. There is no meaning in blaming others. If you develop love of God, that love will banish all sorrow and evil tendencies like attachment, anger and envy. One should pursue both spiritual education and secular studies. You have to realise that Nature is also a manifestation of God. Hence, Nature should not be ignored. Nature is the effect and God is the cause. Thus you should recognize the omnipresence of the Divine in the entire cosmos. (Divine Discourse, 20 June 1996)

5.02.2016

Develop the quality of love. Fill your entire life with love. This was the prayer which the gopikas addressed to Krishna. A life without love is utterly barren. You are the embodiment of love. Love has to be directed towards what is true. Such love must be your life-breath. Embodiments of the Divine Atma! Esteeming love as the essence of Divinity, you must engage yourselves in loving service to society. Why is it that so many lakhs of people have gathered here today? There must be some compelling reason for it. You must be seeking something which you have not found in your native place. Here there is Divine Love. What has drawn all people here is the power of Divine Love - that is the bond uniting hearts. At the root of all this is purity. Where there is purity, there love grows. When purity and love come together, there is Ananda (bliss). Whatever work we do, whatever sacrifices we perform, they are not of much use in the absence of love. (Divine Discourse, Nov 23, 1990)

6.02.2016

While doing Kundalini Yoga, people practice breath control. In the breathing exercises, inhalation is described as Purakam, exhalation as Rechakam and holding the breath as Kumbhakam. These alone do not constitute the means to achieve yogic power. To breathe in all that is good is Purakam. To give up all that is bad is Rechakam. To retain in the heart what is good is Kumbhakam. Every human being must practice this divine type of yoga; in fact this must become your primary goal. Puttaparthi is a small hamlet. How has this village attained this eminent state? You can find the answer for yourself. It was not merely a great piece of good fortune or a lucky accident. It is due to the power of thought. Every sacred thought has the power to find fulfilment. Hence scriptures declared: “As you think, that you become (Yad bhavam tad bhavati)”. Develop good thoughts and naturally you will be entitled to the right of its fruits. (Divine Discourse, 23 Nov 1990)

that the evil is minimised, that the good is more and the bad is less. Naturally in the present atmosphere, you may not succeed in the very first attempt. You must carefully think over the consequences of whatever you do, talk, or execute. In whatever way you want others to honour you, or to love you, or to behave with you, in the same way you should first behave with others, and love and honour them. Then only will those honour you. Instead without yourself honouring and loving others, if you complain that they are not treating you properly, it is surely a wrong conclusion. (Prema Vahini, Ch 63)

23.02.2016

Love is Divine. Love all, impart your love even to those who lack love. Love is like a mariner’s compass. Wherever you may keep it, it points the way to God. In every action in daily life manifest your love. Divinity will emerge from that love. This is the easiest path to God-realization. But why aren’t people 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. Speak lovingly, act lovingly, think with love and do every action with a love-filled heart. (Divine Discourse, July 5, 1996)

24.02.2016

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 that you were 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

which will give rise to the spirit of renunciation. Without this effort, renunciation is difficult to obtain. Miserliness is like the behavior of a dog; it has to be transformed. Anger is enemy number one of the spiritual aspirant; it is like spittle and has to be treated as such. And untruth is even more disgusting — through untruth, the vital powers of all are destroyed. It should be treated as scavenging itself. Theft ruins life; it makes the priceless human life cheaper than a pie; it is like rotten and foul smelling flesh. Moderate food, moderate sleep, love (prema), and fortitude will help in the upkeep of the health of both body and mind. (Prema Vahini, Ch 61)

21.02.2016

Young age is like a delicious fruit. You should offer this sweet and delicious fruit to God. It is not possible to begin worshipping God after retirement in old age, when your body becomes weak, the sense organs lose their power, and the mind becomes feeble. Start early, drive slowly and reach safely. Start praying to God right from an early age. If you do not undertake sacred actions when your physical and mental faculties are strong, then when will you perform them? What can you do when the sense organs have lost all their power? Hence practice offering the fragrant flowers of your mind and heart to God with total faith from a young age. This is true naivedyam (food offering). Many people today do not make such offerings. When their senses become weak after indulging in all sorts of sensual pleasures, they think of offering them to God, akin to offering leftover food. (Divine Discourse 16-Jul-1996)

22.02.2016

Every person is liable to commit mistakes without being aware of it. However bright the fire or light, some smoke will emanate from it. So also, whatever good deed a person might do, mixed with it will be a minute trace of evil. But efforts should be made to ensure

7.02.2016

Those who are agitated by doubts about what to accept and what to reject, those who are blinded by illusion, and those who cannot distinguish between darkness and light, death and immortality — all these should approach great people who can show the path to understand the eternal truth - the self-illumined basis of all creation. Then both this world and heaven will be merged in the same effulgence! For the sake of this realisation, one should have deep yearning and hard, disciplined practice. This human birth is the consequence of countless good deeds, and it should not be cast aside; the chance must be fully exploited. As the Kenopanishad says, “This present precious life should not be thrown away.” When there are so many chances of saving oneself, isn’t it a big loss to waste them all? For all those who are slaves of pride and animal traits, this awareness in time is most important. Delay is fruitless; it is as silly as starting to dig a well when the house catches fire. (Prema Vahini, Ch 57)

8.02.2016

Embodiments of Love! The hallmark of love is selfless sacrifice (thyaga). 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. Love must be cherished with feelings of selflessness and sacrifice. In what is deemed as love in the world - whether it be 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 man from animality to Divinity. It transforms gradually all forms of worldly love to Divine love. Even the feeling of universal brotherliness is not the same as the experience of ekatvam (oneness). Even in such a fraternal feeling

there is an element of self-interest. Those who really wish to promote universal brotherhood too should develop the consciousness of the one Spirit dwelling in all beings. (Divine Discourse, 20 June 1996)

9.02.2016

Education and other things that make one grow and become big are of no use for spiritual progress; they bring about only spiritual downfall. That is why the world is called the 'illusory universe' (maya-prapancha). Truth, in whatever illusion it is immersed, will only shine more effulgently, for such is the nature of truth. How can we say that the objective world, which undergoes modifications every minute, waning and waxing with the waywardness of appearing and disappearing, is eternal truth? The characteristic of a spiritual aspirant is the attainment of Truth, not the search of the unreal in this evanescent world. In this false world, there can be no true living (satya-achara). There can be only false living (mithya-achara). True living consists in the realisation of the Lord. This must be borne in mind by everyone every moment of one's life. (Prema Vahini, Ch 58)

10.02.2016

Spiritual aspirants must carefully understand the distinction between the conduct of the ordinary (sahaja) person and spiritual aspirant. The ordinary person has no fortitude (sahana), is conceited (ahamkara), and is full of desires related to the world, through which the person is trying to have a contented existence. Aspirants engaged in contemplation of the Lord (Sarveswara-chinthana) as ceaselessly as the waves of the sea, accumulate the wealth of equality and equal love to all, and are content in the thought that all is the Lord's and nothing is theirs. Unlike the ordinary person, the spiritual seeker won't easily bend before grief, loss, anger or hatred or selfishness, hunger, thirst or fickleness. Aspirants should

suffering and sorrow will fall away. The Lord will never enquire at any time the caste to which you belong or the precepts or traditions that you follow. Devotion doesn't consist in wearing an ochre cloth, organising festivals, performing ritual sacrifices, shaving off the hair, carrying water pot or rod, matting the hair, etc. Instead, the characteristics of devotion are: a pure mind (anthah-karana), uninterrupted (whatever one may be doing) contemplation on God, the feeling that everything is the Lord's creation, and therefore a) non-attachment to sense objects; b) the embracement of all in equal love; and c) dedication to true speech. (Prema Vahini, Ch 61)

19.02.2016

Before offering to God, it is food. Once it is offered to God, it becomes free from all impurities and gets transformed into prasadam. By eating such sacred food, one will not acquire any mental impurities. We offer food to God on a clean plantain leaf. The human body is a plantain leaf, your heart is a sacred vessel and and the sacred food items are the virtues and acts of good conduct. Today to whom are you offering food? Your sacred food offering is to demons of wicked feelings such as anger, hatred, and jealousy. The left over is being offered to God. That is why you are victims of restlessness, difficulties, sorrows, and misery. Get rid of your evil qualities and offer your virtues to God with the prayer: 'Oh God, You are the resident of my heart and You are the embodiment of love, kindness, and compassion. (Divine Discourse 16-Jul-1996)

20.02.2016

People crave worldly happiness. If you analyse properly, this is the disease, and the resultant suffering we experience is its medicine and remedy. In the midst of these worldly pleasures, one rarely entertains the desire to attain the Lord. Besides it is necessary to analyse and discriminate every act of a person. It is this analysis

a check on yourself when you laugh or scorn at others. Not just this, your speech and vision also must be in check. Some people sing inappropriate songs and eve tease women walking on the road. Has God given you a tongue to sing such vulgar songs? How sacred is the tongue, and what an evil use you put it to? By acting in an inappropriate manner, you ruin your reputation and subject yourself to ridicule by others. Therefore exercise control over your speech, vision, and laughter. If you want to earn a good name in the society and be respected by it, conduct yourself in a befitting manner. (Divine Discourse, 9 July 1996)

17.02.2016

With diligent efforts success can be achieved. Even an ant can cover miles by moving continuously. However even Garuda (the celestial eagle) cannot soar two feet if it has no will to fly. Likewise without good thoughts and good deeds based on them, one cannot accomplish anything good. The child Dhruva achieved what he desired despite many difficult obstacles, because of his firm determination and spiritual austerities. By his sublime thoughts, he achieved the status of a star in the sky. Likewise any person, irrespective of age or abilities, with faith and determination, can accomplish what they want. In every field steadfast performance (sadhana) is essential. In addition, you must control your temper. Sage Durvasa, despite his penance had no peace because he could not control his temper. Together with peace, the quality of (Kshama) is essential. Forgiveness is truth, it is Dharma, it is the essence of the Veda, it is non-violence and the best penance (Yajna). (Divine Discourse, July 5, 1996)

18.02.2016

Whoever one may be, in whatever condition, if one gives no room for dispiritedness, if one has no fear at all, and if one remembers the Lord with unshaken faith and without any ulterior motive, all

master all good things as much as possible and journey through life in fortitude, courage, joy, peace, charity, and humility. Realise that tending the body is not all-important, and bear even hunger and thirst patiently and engage uninterruptedly in contemplation of the Lord. (Prema Vahini, Ch 59)

11.02.2016

Good and bad, wealth and poverty, praise and blame go together in this world. You cannot derive happiness out of happiness (Na sukhat labhate sukham). Happiness comes only out of sorrow. A wealthy man today may become a pauper tomorrow. Similarly, a pauper may become a rich man some day or other. Today you are being praised, but tomorrow you may be criticised. To consider praise and blame, happiness and sorrow, prosperity and adversity with equal-mindedness is the hallmark of a true human being. The Gita declares, “Remain equal-minded in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat (Sukha Dukhe same kritva labhalabhau jayajayau). You can truly enjoy your life as a human being only when you consider both sorrow and happiness, profit and loss with equanimity. There is no value for happiness without sorrow. Therefore, welcome sorrow if you want to experience real happiness. (Divine Discourse, 9 Jul 1996)

12.02.2016

Quarreling at every tiny little thing, losing one’s temper, becoming sad at the slightest provocation, getting angry at the smallest insult, worried at thirst, hunger, and loss of sleep — these can never be the characteristics of an 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 raw grain is hard, conceited, and full of delusion. Both types are souls (jivis) and humans no doubt, but those immersed in

external illusions (avidya-maya) are 'people', while those immersed in internal illusions (vidya-maya) are 'spiritual aspirants'. God has neither internal illusions nor external illusions; He is devoid of both. The one who has no external illusions, becomes a spiritual aspirant, and when they are devoid of internal illusions too, they can be termed as God. Such a person's heart is truly the seat of God. (Prema Vahini, Ch 59)

13.02.2016

Many aspirants lack moral commitment and seek God for the fulfilment of their petty desires and transient benefits. No one seeks to understand the nature of true love or the Divinity that underlies everything. What we witness today in the world, is a great deal of play-acting. All appear as devotees and all proclaim their spirit of sacrifice. Everyone declares himself or herself as a sadhaka (spiritual aspirant). Every believer claims that they are connecting with God. Sincerely enquire within, "Is the aspirant (Sadhaka) serving God or is God serving the Sadhaka?" The service that the sadhaka is doing is trivial. Offering to God what God has provided is like offering to the Ganga water from the Ganga. The truth is it is God who is serving the devotee. All the capacities given by God should be used in the service of the Divine. There is no need to go in quest of God. God is all the time searching for the genuine and steadfast devotee. (Divine Discourse 13 Jan 1984)

14.02.2016

When you satisfy God, the entire world will be satisfied with you. If God disowns you, then the world will also disown you. Hence, there is no need for you to make efforts to please this person or that person. Do not waste your life in the pursuit of mean and petty desires. Make earnest efforts to please God. When you please God and become dear to Him, the entire world will become yours.

Thyagaraja sang, "Oh Rama! If I have Your Grace (Anugraha), all the nine planets (navagraha) will become subservient to me." To become recipients of God's grace, treat the pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain, happiness and sorrow, praise and blame with equal-mindedness. Always contemplate on God's Divine Name and become deserving of His love. Once you become the recipients of God's love, you need not be afraid of anything. You will achieve everything in life. Therefore, develop equal-mindedness and make efforts to earn divine grace. (Divine Discourse, 9 Jul 1996)

15.02.2016

There is no penance (tapas) higher than fortitude, no happiness greater than contentment, no good deed (punya) holier than mercy, no weapon more effective than patience. Consider your body as the field and good deeds as seeds and cultivate the name of the Lord, with the help of the heart as farmer, to reap the harvest of the Lord Himself. Like cream in milk and fire in fuel, the Lord is in everything. Have full faith in this. As the milk, so the cream; as the fuel, so the fire; so also, as the spiritual discipline, so is the direct divine experience (sakshatkara)! Even if you don't attain liberation (mukthi) as a consequence of taking up the Lord's name, one of these four gates will be open to you: Company of the virtuous, truth, contentment and control of the senses. Anyone who enters through any one of these gates will certainly attain the Lord without fail. (Prema Vahini, Ch 60)

16.02.2016

None can escape from the reaction, reflection, and resound of their actions. Everyone will have to experience the consequences of their own actions. People who indulge in evil practices become distant from God. People who earn a bad reputation through their evil deeds will have no place in divine proximity. Therefore have