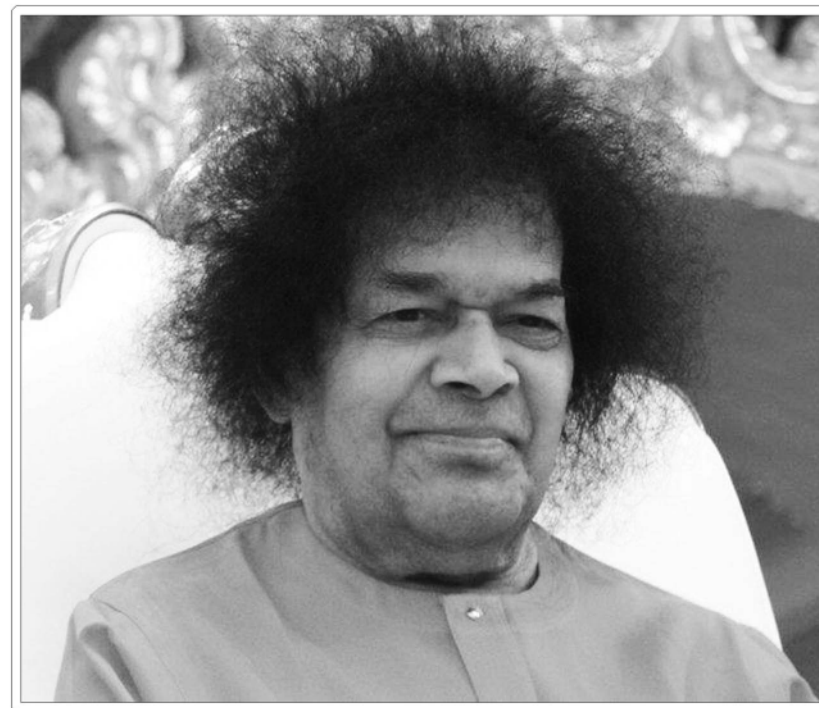


of all attachment towards the world and cultivation of Divine Love alone can win it. God is the nearest and dearest entity, but ignorance hides Him away from the eye. The stars appear as dots of light, for they are at great distances from us. Just as the stars, God appears insignificant or ineffective to many, because they are keeping themselves too far away from Him. If some believe that God is not present or visible, it only means that they are at a too great a distance to be aware of Him. The love that God bears for each and every one is unequalled.

31.12.2012

A mother fetching water from the well, will have a pot on her head, another on her hip and a third in her hand, and will be hurrying her way home, as she is always conscious of the infant in the cradle. If she forgets the infant, her gait slows down and she wanders around, chatting with all her friends. Similarly, if God, the Goal, is not cherished in the memory, one has to wander through many births and arrive home late. Hence keep the memory of the Lord and His glory, always with you. That will quicken your steps and you will arrive soon at the goal.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Thought for the Day

(December 2012)

1.12.2012

Just as the body is the house you live in, the universe is the body of God. An ant biting the little finger of your foot draws your entire attention to the spot in a split second, and you react to the pain and make an effort to remove the tiny enemy immediately. So too, you must feel the pain, the misery of the people, in the society around you. Pause for a moment to calculate what good you have done to the society that is helping you live your life comfortably. Do not fritter away your talents in profitless channels. You should not be a burden on others, or an enemy to your own self. Expand your sympathies to serve others, who stand in need, to the extent of your skill and resources. Be kind to all your kith and kin.

2.12.2012

When a plane flies across the sky, it leaves no mark on it, no streak that lasts, no furrow or pot-hole that interferes with the next plane in that path. So too, let any or all feelings or emotions cross your mind, but never allow any of them to cause an impression. You can accomplish this by inquiry, quiet reasoning within oneself. This method is more effective than listening to lectures or studying books. Little children are trained to walk by means of a three wheeled contraption. The Pranava is such an instrument, the three wheels being the syllables A U and M. Holding it, you can learn to use your feet of devotion and detachment. If one walks on with the help of this Pranava meditation, one can certainly realise the glory of the Divine, which is the very substance of the Universe.

3.12.2012

Turn the key in the lock to the left, it locks. Turn it to the right, it opens. So too, turn your mind towards the objective world, it

that you are a child of immortality or a person who has earned the Grace of the Lord. In the epic Mahabharatha, the Pandavas are wonderful shining examples of faith and devotion. They won the Grace of the Lord and successfully defeated every single one of the wily strategy of their foes. The reinforcement of Grace from the Lord is the most reliable means of support. When you win the Grace of Lord, dishonour, defeat and despair fade away like fog evaporates before the Sun. Even disease cannot touch you. Hence, I advise you to face life by strengthening your spiritual urges and invoking the Grace of the Lord.

29.12.2012

Practice is the real thing that matters in spirituality. Scholarship is a burden, many times a handicap even. So long as God is believed to be far away, in temples and holy places, one will feel religion a burden and a hurdle. But instal Him in your heart and you feel light, burdenless and even strong. It is like the food basket – when carried on a shoulder, it feels heavy. You are too weak, even to carry it. But sit near a stream and eat your food from the basket – though the food weight has not decreased, you feel stronger and joyful. That is the consequence of taking the food in. Do likewise, with the idea of God. Do not carry it on the shoulder, take it ‘in’! The scriptures teach, “God is verily the Life-breath, of every soul.” So practise to live in His Glory, in His Memory, in His contemplation, every single moment of your life.

30.12.2012

The lotus in your heart pines for the Sun, the splendour of the Loving Lord. To attain Him requires effort. Withdrawal

calamity, you must attach yourself to this spiritual practice, even more firmly, instead of losing faith in it and getting slack. Do not give up the medicine, when you need it the most! The pity is that when most people face the first disappointment, they lose courage and confidence, and give up their Lord! There are also others, who call out the Names of the Lord, when they are displeased with some happenings, or when they are depressed, in a tone indicative of disgust, uttering it with a sigh or a groan. This is very incorrect. The Name of the Lord must always be pronounced with joy, gratitude, exultation and remembering Him in all splendour. Call Him with Love, call Him with a heart full of sincere yearning.

27.12.2012

There are learned scholars who spend a good deal of time in arguing that this form of God is superior to the other. This delusion has caused great harm. The truth is that each reveals a certain phase of Divinity. The comparison itself diminishes the integrity of any scholar! Anyone who has reverence for God, would not attempt at intellectually estimating the power of the Lord, they would, in fact, earnestly try to get an intuitive experience of the Divine! Harmony is the test of any religious outlook; if it breeds hate or faction or pride, the outlook is definitely evil. Keep away from these, if you are interested in your spiritual practice.

28.12.2012

The body is a house, given to you for rent. The owner is God. Live there, so long as He wills, thanking Him for it, and paying Him the rent of Faith and Devotion. A strong will is the best tonic you can intake; the will becomes strong when you know

gets locked, caught and deeply entangled. Turn it to the right, steer it away from the objects of senses, and the lock opens up, you are free and deliverance is in your hands! How to turn your mind to the right? Begin with remembering the Lord's Holy Name (Naamasmarana) as your first step. A big and long journey begins with the first step. The first step itself will take you through to the second and third, and ultimately to realizing your destination or goal.

4.12.2012

Lead your life such that, in posterity, people will remember you with gratitude and joy. To lead a good life, constant prompting from the Lord within you will be of great help. That inspiration can be got only by constantly reciting the Lord's Name and calling on the inner springs of Divinity. The Lord's Name is such a valuable instrument to win His Grace, to realize His Presence, to picture His Form and to remember His Glory. Repeating it from the depths of the heart, even once in the morning and once in the evening, will make your house, a home (griham) instead of a cave (guha). Senses are the windows, which when left open, make the lamp of the Name of God unsteady. Keep your senses away from the negative influences and concentrate on the Name of the Lord, its beauty and sweetness.

5.12.2012

The glory of the Divine - the richness, fullness, extent and the depth of Divine experience has to be experienced. It cannot be expressed through any amount of words or plays. You must feel that it is your highest destiny to acquire that experience. You are not a despicable creature, born in slime or sin to eke out a drab existence and be extinguished. You are a mixture of

the mortal and immortal (Deha and Deva). Liberation is the means to be free from grief and live in joy. And it is easy to accomplish this. All you need to do is to place all your burdens on God. That will make you carefree, and griefless. Take everything as a Divine Play of the Lord you adore and love. No matter whatever happens clap your hands in bliss and joy, for all is His Divine Play and you can be as happy as He is, for His plans are working, and they are for your highest good!

6.12.2012

Often, people try to reform the world without making any or proportionate effort to reform themselves. For, it is far easier to give advice and admonish others, than to take the advice and advance ourselves. The other is fundamentally, a reflection of your own self. You are the original and you yourself have to improve your shape. Invest time to strengthen your inner urges towards virtues and goodness, becoming impregnable and unassailable from within. Then you can set about reforming others in the planet.

7.12.2012

A judge of the Supreme Court may, while at home play with his grandchild and bend on all fours for the little fellow to mount his back. He may crawl around on the floor while the child rides him; but all the while, his status as a judge does not suffer diminution, nor does he forget it. So too you must always be conscious of the high calling for which you have come. You should not disgrace it by any means or through any meaningless act or thought or word. I have come to give you the courage and confidence to conceive yourself as the Supreme Truth (Paramathma) you really are, to give you the

24.12.2012

In the world today all those who are held in high esteem as great personages, have earned their good name only by their character and conduct. To accomplish anything, one should have a firm determination. All religions and scriptures agree that helping fellow-beings in times of need and saving them from distress is the greatest virtue. Every human being has equal rights in the world, for Divinity is present in all. To enjoy peace of mind, it is essential to practice forbearance and equanimity. Good and bad, rich and poor, educated and uneducated exist in every country. Even though born in the same family, some are narrow minded and have crooked ideas and indulge in selfish deeds, while others are noble and selfless. To be friendly towards all beings and do good with love is the primary duty of all.

25.12.2012

Embodiments of Love! In all religions and countries, birthdays of great personalities are celebrated, but the ideals for which they lived are not remembered and followed. This turns celebrations into artificial observances. Christ taught people to love all beings and serve all with compassion. It is only by practising these ideals that one can truly celebrate Jesus Christ's birthday. The Divinity within should be reflected in your every action. The seat of Truth is in your heart. Worshipping God means loving others with your full heart. You must live in love and lead a life of selfless service based on love. This is the best way to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

26.12.2012

Repetition of God's Name is the process by which the dedicatory attitude can be cultivated and grown. When confronted by a

swift current. But the tiny fishes are able to swim in it and move about merrily, despite the speed of the current. In the same river, a huge elephant caught in the rapids, is likely to get washed away or drowned in spite of its enormous size. The elephant just cannot survive there! The reason is: What you need for survival in a river is not being large, but the ability to swim. Likewise a person who is caught up in the ocean of worldly existence needs, not so much metaphysics, scholarship or wealth, as much as the grace of Divine love.' Without any knowledge of Vedanta, one can still surmount all the problems of life if one is blessed with God's love. Hence, remember the Lord with Love, worship Him with Love and sanctify your life with Love.

23.12.2012

Live in truth, you will then experience Divine Bliss. Faith in God promotes love. Love leads to peace. Peace prepares the way for truth. Where there is faith there is Love, Where there is Love there is Peace, Where there is Peace there is Truth. Where there is Truth there is Bliss, Where there is Bliss there is God. The Divine manifests Himself in many forms and is worshipped as such, for the joy to be derived from it. Truth is one, regardless of nation or religion. The names and forms of human beings may vary, but the Supreme in them (Sath-chith-ananda) does not vary. It is eternal and changeless. Embodiments of Divine Love! Strike down the walls that separate man from man. Get rid of differences based on caste and creed. Develop firm faith in the oneness of Humanity. Cultivate love in your hearts. Then nations will be united, prosperous and happy.

intellectual power (dhee shakthi) to grasp the reality. These alone can destroy the delusion born of ignorance.

8.12.2012

Divinity expresses itself infinitely as the five elements – the sky, the wind, the fire, the water and the earth. All creation is but a combination of two or more of these in varying proportions. The characteristic nature of these elements are sound, touch, form, taste and smell, cognized by the ear, the skin, the eye, the tongue and the nose. All the elements are abundant in Nature and are precious and potent with Divinity. So use them in moderation, reverentially, with humility and gratefulness. Excessive or inappropriate usage will injure your well-being just as drinking more or less water than needed is a torture. Inhaling more air is suffocating. Fire in moderation can warm or serve to heat and melt, but beyond a certain limit, it is a holocaust. Even excessive use of sound will distract people and drive them crazy. Hence, learn to use the natural resources intelligently, in moderation, with the idea of loving service to all in the community.

9.12.2012

The ancient sages who decided upon the many festivals that we celebrate today, had a high purpose in mind when they did so. They want us to imbibe the inner meaning and use each such day as a step in saadhana (spiritual efforts), as a reminder of the journey which each person has to undertake alone to the feet of the Lord. The festival of Dasara for instance, celebrates the victory of the forces of good over the evil ones which resist one's progress towards love and light. You must remind yourself that the forces of good are combating the forces of evil

in every living being, and if they only rely on the great Divine Force that fosters and fends the Universe, they can easily win and reach the goal.

10.12.2012

God resides in the heart of all beings” says Lord Krishna in the Gita. He is not to be found specially in cities like Amarnath, Kashi, Tirupati, Kedar or Gokarna alone. Just as every drop of the ocean has the salty taste, the composition and the name of the ocean, so too every single being has the divine taste, composition, and the name of the Lord. Only you do not realise it so clearly. The river realises itself by reaching the sea; man realises himself by merging in the Absolute. The space encased in the pot must become one with the space that traverses the entire Universe. This can be achieved by the negation of the attachment, which is just an artificial creation of the deluded mind. The inferior status of manhood that now satisfies you, must give place to the status of Reality of God which is the true status.

11.12.2012

Have you heard the story of the rabbit that borrowed from Mother Earth four paisa (pence)? The rabbit thought to itself, “If I run away as far as I can, from the place I received the loan, I will be free from the obligation”. So one day, the rabbit ran as fast as its legs could carry it. After a while, it sat down in great relief thinking, “Now no one will ask me to repay.” The rabbit was shocked, for at that very moment, it heard from the ground beneath, “Mother Earth is right under your feet! You cannot escape from me, however fast you run!” So too, you cannot run away from Divinity. Wherever you may go seeking refuge,

20.12.2012

The highest spiritual discipline is to follow assiduously the instructions of the Master. Years and years of rigorous training make a soldier, who can then stand all the rigours of warfare. The heroic fighter was not made in a day. Restrictions, regulations, drills and techniques laid out for him, were practised for a long time. So too, the practising spiritual aspirant, who can win victories in life, cannot be made in just a day! Understand this and seize your opportunity in this life; put it to full use. You will need to come and merge in the Divine, if not in this birth, at least in ten more births. Hence, do not let go of the opportunity and strive most earnestly, from today, to acquire the Lord’s Grace. The Compassionate Lord will certainly bestow Grace upon you as a reward for your spiritual practices.

21.12.2012

A green gourd sinks in water, but a dry one floats. Become dry – rid yourselves of attachments, desires, and avoid anxieties and worries. Then you can float unaffected on the waters of change and chance. Even water, when it becomes steam, can rise into the sky. Be free from the desires that drag you down; have only the yearning to come face to face with the Truth. The truth is shining inside you, waiting to be discovered. God is your Indweller and so when you seek Him outside, He cannot be caught. Look for Him within you. Love Him with no other thought, and feel that without Him, nothing is worth anything. Feel that He is all. Then you become His and He becomes yours. There is no kinship nearer than that!

22.12.2012

Lord Jesus Christ gave the following example while teaching His fishermen disciples: ‘In a river the water is flowing in a

18.12.2012

Just as the calf seeks the udder of the cow for the nourishing milk, seek the Lord and His Glory in Nature. As a matter of fact, Nature is useful only when it adds to the wonder and awe that it is able to provoke and sustain. Everything is an image of the Lord. That is why joy wells up in you when you see and hear the stories of the Lord, and how He attracts all to Himself. It is the call of the bimba (object) for the prathibimba (reflection) to merge in it. So all are entitled to the merger, and all finally have to attain it. Remember, you have to come to Me, if not in this birth, at least within ten more births! Strive to acquire Grace which is the reward for spiritual practice. And the highest spiritual practice is to follow the instructions of the Master.

19.12.2012

Man is the monarch of all animals. Though the elephant lives longer, the lion is more fierce, the eagle more far-seeing, the cock more punctual in early rising, the cow more imbued with the spirit of sacrifice and so on, human birth alone has in it, the potentialities that can be brought out by proper culture. You are born with a helpless lamenting cry; you should die with a smile of joy. That is the purpose of the years between. But those years are wasted now. People are tossed about from one want to another, one grief to another, until they are blinded by despair and exhausted by foiled pursuits. Most illnesses are due to this despair and exhaustion. God alone is your anchor, who will save you from stress and storm. Do not neglect or ignore Him in your life.

the Lord demands good conduct, good habits, good thoughts and good company! Make use of this opportunity, accept this noble advice, select good company and strive sincerely to reach your goal!

12.12.2012

You can feel the presence of God, in the depth of silence. In the excitement, clutter and confusion of the marketplace, you cannot hear His gentle footsteps. He resounds with clarity, when all is filled with silence. Hence I insist on silence, practice of soft speech and minimum sound. Talk little, talk in whispers, sweet and true. When you want to place a heavy thing on the ground, place it with care, do not drop it and create noise around you. Bend a little, keep it softly and gently on the floor with care. Similarly examine each and every act of yours and see to it that you execute it softly and silently. Transact all dealings with minimum speech and eliminate noise. Do not shout to persons standing far, go near them or beckon them to approach you. Loud noise is a sacrilege on the sky, just as there are sacrilegious uses of earth and water.

13.12.2012

Be steady, make a firm resolution. Do not commit one fault or take a false step and then repent. Be very intentional, faithful to your resolve, every single day. Before you act, deliberate and make a decision. That is better than taking a weak step and regretting and losing the way. In the Mahabharatha, Arjuna had the foresight to pause and think about the consequences of the war even before the battle began. So he asked Lord Krishna to advise and guide him. Hence, take every step in spiritual practice, or in your day to day affairs, only after deep deliberation and satisfying yourself that it will be for your

good and well-being. Reason out, discriminate; do not rush to conclusions or be led away by mere hearsay.

14.12.2012

Three fishes lived in a pond. One told the other two that the water was drying up and they should leave before it was too late. The first fish decided to leave the pond immediately, the second said it could save itself when the contingency arose and the third fish ignored it. In due course, the second and third fish were caught by a fisherman. The second fish managed to break through the net and escape, the third one resigned its fate to destiny. God of Death, Yama is the fisherman; unless early notice is taken of the process of drying to which the tank of one's lifespan is subject, one gets caught. Migrate into the sea of Grace, which will not dry; or learn the art of breaking through the net of death. Discard sloth and slumber, denounce fanaticism and make yourself a dedicated servant of the Lord. Then all strength, joy and Grace will be showered on you.

15.12.2012

One must develop deep detachment. There is no use renouncing some food or drink, to which you have become bound, when you hear a discourse, or when some religious text is expounded within hearing. Detach yourself from all that keeps you away from God. Spend more time on meditation or namasmarana, for peace and joy are not to be found in external nature; they are treasures lying hidden in the inner realms of each and everyone. Once they are located, one can never again be sad or agitated. With every inhalation, utter the Name of the Lord. With every exhalation, utter the Name of the Lord. Use this splendid and precious chance in your life to the fullest. Live in God, for Him and with Him.

16.12.2012

You know only the present that is happening before your eyes; you do not realise that the present is related to the past and is preparing the course of the future. Each birth wipes out the memory of the one already experienced. The tree came from the seed and the seed from the tree and so on. You may not know which came first, tree or seed, but you can easily put an end to the cycle by frying the seed. You do not realise that the end of this cycle of birth and death lies in your own hands. The scriptures and holy books serve this very purpose. These are not meant to mislead you. That is not the desire of the sages who wrote down these annals and their own experiences. It is to tell mankind the truth about oneself.

17.12.2012

The body is the chariot (ratha) of the individual (jeevi), who is the Master. Human birth is the glorious and precious opportunity amongst all living beings. The human body is the castle from which one can fight successfully against the foes of attachment and egoism. It is the boat by which one can cross the sea of change and chance. The realization of the reality within oneself, through relentless spiritual discipline is an arduous challenge – as fraught with dangers and calamity, like playing with fire or duelling with wild animals. Scriptures (Upanishads) have compared the spiritual aspirant's path to that of a razor's edge. One has to be alert, vigilant and fully trained to meet all emergencies. Use the precious opportunity of this human birth and leverage your intelligence, discrimination and detachment you are gifted with, to rise above all, and realize the Ultimate Reality.