another, the net result is zero. God will not tolerate the slightest hatred of any Name or Form. Avoid factions, quarrelling, scorning and fault-finding, as they reveal your ignorance and actually recoil on you. You find fault in others, because you have the same faults in you. If you throw contempt at the form of God that another reveres, the contempt falls on your own God. Remember, everyone is a pilgrim towards the same goal. Some take one route, others take another.

31.08.2013

An old grandfather of seventy was asked by his seven-year old grandchild, "Grandpa! How old are you?" and the old man replied, "Two!" The child was struck with wonder and looked a picture of doubt. The old man replied, "I have spent only the last two years in the company of the Lord, until then I was plunged in the marshland of pleasure seeking." Only the years that you have lived with the Lord have to be counted as life, the rest are not worth counting. Know that all this wealth, property and fame are but for a fleeting moment. Develop attachment for the Lord, who will be with you wherever you go.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Thought for the Day

(August 2013)

1.08.2013
The first step in samskara (refinement) is to remove dirt from the mind. Know that envy is the stickiest dirt. You must be happy, when people around you are happy. That is the true test. The Ramayana says that Lord Rama was happy when joyous events happened to others around, as if they happened to Him. Krishna describes Arjuna as An-asuya (envy-less). What a great compliment to receive from the Master Himself! That is why Lord Krishna taught the mysteries of spiritual discipline to Arjuna. Have deep Love for the Lord. But be very careful not to become depressed with envy when others also love Him or get His attention and become attached to Him. Always be vigilant to have love without envy.

2.08.2013
Parents and teachers must see that children learn good habits and attitudes in their formative years. What is read from books must be contemplated upon and reflected upon in silence and quietness. This is a very good exercise in intellectual development and in the acquisition of mental peace. The instinct to quarrel and fight over any and all misunderstandings must be regulated and sublimated. You should not cause children to suffer mental anguish or physical pain! Children also should not enjoy the infliction of pain on any being. They must be brought up with a sense of responsibility. They should be taught not to take delight in showing off their dress, ornaments, status or wealth before the less fortunate. They must be taught from early on, habits of personal cleanliness and most importantly, the habit of prayer at regular hours.

mind towards Him and turns them away from sensory desires that torment you. He satisfies the deepest thirst of all beings, for peace, joy and wisdom. Hence thirst for Krishna is a sign of health in the spiritual field. Repetition of the name Krishna is useless, unless the contemplation of the Glory of Krishna starts purifying your character. The Grace of the Lord is very powerful and is endowed on the deserving alone. Hence begin today to sublimate your character saturated with piety and devotion. Then you will secure the Grace of the Lord.

29.08.2013
Scriptures are only road-maps; at best they are guide-books that give directions for the destination. It is the actual journey that will reveal the hardships, the delays, the land-slips, the potholes as well as the beauty of the scenic route on the way, and the magnificence of the destination. No secondhand account can equal the firsthand experience! The symbols on the map are interpreted differently by different scholars according to their preconceived notions, predilections and pet theories. If you acquire Love, then you can dispense with the Scriptures; for the purpose of all the Scriptures is just that: to create the feeling of Sarvajana samaana prema (equal love for all), and to negate egoism which stands in the way. Reason too, if it comes in the way of this love, is to be discarded as ‘perverted’.

30.08.2013
Engage yourself in spiritual discipline, spiritual thoughts, and spiritual company. Forget the past and let it go its way. At least from now on be determined to save yourself. Never yield to doubt or unsteadiness. Have faith in any one Name and Form that appeals to you. If you revere one form of God and hate

is on, there is a big danger that you may be following only the trail that you yourself have laid down. Reason can be tamed only by discipline; through compassion, calmness, forbearance and endurance (Daya, Shantham, Kshama, and Sahana). Train your mind to walk quietly along small stretches of road at first and then after you have become sure of its docility, you can take it along safely down the tortuous road of the sixfold temptations of lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy.

27.08.2013

Never get shaken in your mind, never let your faith waver or decline. That will only add to the grief you already suffer from. Make it your vow to be steadfast in your faith. Whoever is your chosen deity - Shiva, Devi, Krishna, Allah, Baba or Jesus, hold on to them tight! Do not lose the contact and the company, for it is only when the coal is in contact with the live embers, that it can also become a live ember. Cultivate nearness to Me in the heart and you will be rewarded. Then you too will acquire a fraction of the Supreme Love. This is a great chance. This chance will not come your way again, beware of that. If you cannot and do not, cross the sea of grief now, taking hold of this chance, when again can you get such an opportunity? Indeed you are very fortunate.

28.08.2013

Thirst for Krishna, to see Him, to hear Him, to listen to His Flute, for installing Him in the heart and mind, and for grasping His reality through the intellect - this thirst is most conducive to peace and joy. Devotion to Krishna is the chain by which the monkey mind can be fastened and subdued. The word Krish means to attract (as in aakarshana). Lord Krishna attracts your

3.08.2013

Many of you often come to Puttaparthi or visit other holy places. You hear scholars expounding the scriptures. You have observed great and noble souls. What is the benefit? How have you improved by all this? Have you succeeded in at least recognising your rajasik (passionate) and thamasik (dark) habits and tendencies? Recognizing them as deleterious is the first step in removing them. Have you become more and more serene and poised (Sathvik) as the years go by, or are you the same dull or perhaps fiery individual? If you must know the Lord, you must love the Lord and lead your life with good conduct. Hatred or even indifference will result only in misunderstanding. Develop close association with the Lord and He will reveal Himself to you.

4.08.2013

All objects are suffused by the same Divine Principle. All names are attributes of His glory. Divinity is imminent and inherent in every soul, and the process of reminding people of this fact began with the very dawn of human history. What is to be done to lead a Divine life? Remove the fog which hides the Truth! The fog of illusion makes you believe that you are something inferior, momentary, evanescent and material! That is incorrect! All are holy, pure and are part of Eternity. Each one of you shine in proportion to your spiritual efforts (Sadhana), just as bulbs spread illumination according to their wattage. There is no body which is not sustained by the Absolute. There is no name that does not indicate the Universal. All are His!

5.08.2013

Walk the path shown to you by the Ramayana, Mahabharatha, Bhagavatha and other scriptures. Proceed along that path,

unmindful of halts and handicaps, approvals or disapproval of kith and kin, of praise or blame from society. What exactly is praise or blame? They are words - just sound waves coming from across the air; waves that strike your ear. Let them strike only the outer ear, do not welcome them in. Grace is won by suffering alone. The Lord incarnates in the world when unrighteousness becomes rampant. Therefore adharma (unrighteousness) has to be suffered so that each one may have the joy of welcoming the Lord and experiencing His Presence.

6.08.2013

'Samskrithi', the Sanskrit word for culture, is derived from the root word 'Samskara' which means the dual process of removing dust and dirt, and planting the virtues of Truth, Right Conduct, Love, Non-violence and Love. Certain obligatory rites of initiation and purification prescribed by the Vedas for one's spiritual upliftment, are also referred to as Samskaras. There are 48 such, but all of them can be reduced to just one, which is the final and fulfilling one - recognition of one's identity with the Divine. Man (Nara) is God (Narayana). The individual entity (Jiva) is Divinity (Brahman) seen through the limitations of primal ignorance.

7.08.2013

For the wisdom of discrimination to dawn on people, elders must first set an example in discrimination and detachment. If they run after sensory pleasures with feverish excitement, how can the youth be blamed for their selfishness and greed? The elders must practise what they preach, show how a divine life confers mental poise, joy, contentment and harmony. They must spend at least some time everyday in the recital of the

moment remembering the property you accumulated, the fame you amassed or the titles you won! The eagle is pestered by the crows, so long as it has a fish in its beak. The crows swish past the eagle to steal the fish from its mouth. They pursue the bird wherever it sits for a little rest. At last, the eagle gives up the attachment to the fish and drops it from its beak; the crows fly after the fish and leave the eagle free. So too, when you give up sense pleasures, the crows of pride, envy, malice and hatred will fly away and leave you in peace.

25.08.2013

Develop attachment for the Lord, who will always be with you wherever you go. Only the years that you have lived with the Lord and for the Lord, are to be counted as true living. Develop prema (divine love) towards Him, parama-prema (supreme love) of which He is the embodiment. Never give room for doubts and hesitations or questions to test the Lord's love. Do not entertain questions such as, "Why have my troubles not ended? Does He not love me enough? Why is He ignoring Me? Why is it that He did not speak to me?" Never think that God does not care for you and that He does not know you. God is full of selfless love and truly cares for you always. In fact every act of His, is for your wellbeing!

26.08.2013

The demon Bhasmasura, through God's Grace earned the power to turn into ash anyone by placing his hand on their head. However his instincts were not tamed, his reasoning was not purified. Blinded by greed and egoism, he tried to reduce the very Giver of the gift. Hence, unless you are extra careful to examine the very process of reasoning, even while the process

untamed bull. Always be aware of the limitations of reason and logic. They must give way and yield to devotion. After a point in time, your spiritual path must be illumined by devotion and intuition. Hence, be aware – your intellect can help you only for some distance along the Godward path. Very often, egoism tends to encourage and justify one's actions, for a person is led along the wrong path by one's own reason, if that is the path the person likes! You often come to the conclusion you want to reach! So make a careful choice on the path you tread!

23.08.2013

You are happiest when you are immersed in yourself! The child in the womb is in the state Soham ('I am He' - union with God) but when it is born in the world, it starts the question Koham ('Who am I'). For it forgot its truth and identifies itself with the body and the senses. Until it becomes a realized person (Jnani), it will never regain the knowledge of Soham. When Madhava-tatvam (Divine state) assumes a form, it is Manava (Man). Manava can become Madhava (Divine) by engaging in actions dedicated to God. You can then discover your Divine State. What is the use of doing only human action (Manava Karma) or even demoniac action and claiming that human being is Divine? Virtue must be your life-breath. Character must be your backbone. Without these no meritorious act will fructify. Retain your evil qualities and win troubles; Renounce them and win peace!

24.08.2013

Practice renunciation from now on, so that you may set out on the journey when the call comes! No one knows when the call will come and there is no point in being in tears at that

Lord's Name or on Meditation. Then, children too, will imbibe that atmosphere and acquire peace for sure. Today, many speak with full passion that there is nothing as sweet as the Name of the Lord, but they do not repeat it at all. Children will easily discover the hoax, if one neglects their own spiritual progress on the path, but preaches it. The accountability of those who profess the spiritual path is great and must not be undermined.

8.08.2013

Picture this inward journey as walking through a four storied building to get to the top – the ground floor being the union with God through action (Karma Yoga), and the other floors being Devotion, Wisdom and Detachment (Bhakthi, Jnana and Vairagya). When it is just a nascent fruit, it is karma. That is, all are capable of the activity, and so it is the first step in spirituality as well. When it matures and is rendered free from egoism and greed, it becomes worship, and so, it leads one onto the second floor, Bhakthi. When it is ripe and sweet, that is to say, when the devotee achieves complete self-surrender, then it is the acquisition of Jnana (Wisdom). When the fruit drops from the tree, it marks full detachment (Vairagya); the fourth floor of God's mansion is then reached.

9.08.2013

There is no point in distributing the essence of spirituality (Adhyatma rasa) to underfed and weak people; give them food (Anna rasa) first, make them strong enough to entertain strong beliefs and contain strong ideals. Physical hunger must first be appeased by simple and pure (Sathwik) food. Then the repetition of the Name of the Lord must be undertaken; it can be any name that appeals to you the most. Do not treat the

Name lightly. Respect it even if you hear it from the lips of a beggar, who uses it to procure alms. Though the person who utters the Name is bad or though his motive in uttering it may not be noble, do not ill treat the Name for its purity can never be harmed. Thank them for reminding you of the Lord and go your way.

10.08.2013
Become like the flute, a hollow reed, straight, light, with no substance to hinder His breath. Then He will come and pick you up and breathe divine music through you, playing upon you with a delicate touch. In His hand the infinitesimal will be transmuted into the Infinite. Intensify the love that is present within you. It is a sacred gift. Expand your love so that all beings can share in it. Your love must be such that if someone around you is sad, you feel sad and if they are happy, you feel that happiness. Have your love fixed and devoted on the Lord, whether your petty wishes get fulfilled or not. Never let go, under any circumstances, this precious treasure - your Love for God.

11.08.2013
Your worldly intelligence cannot fathom the ways of God. He cannot be recognised by mere cleverness, which is what your intelligence mostly is. You may benefit from God, but you cannot explain Him. You may benefit from electricity, and use it in a thousand ways, but you cannot explore and explain its mystery. How and why it works in a particular manner and not in any other way, is beyond your ken. Your explanations are merely guesses, attempts to clothe your ignorance in pompous expressions. The mistake is, you give the brain more value than

faith, joy and steadiness, you will certainly succeed. The mind and the intellect are like two bullocks tied to a cart. The bullocks are not used to the road of Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Love, and so they drag the cart along the road familiar to them, namely, falsehood, injustice, worry and hatred. You have to train the bullocks to tread the right path, so that they may not bring disaster to themselves and to others. Every object or being in the world will give both pleasure and pain. Control and train your mind to see this real nature of the objective world. That is the real fruit of education.

21.08.2013
All the effort and investment you expend in pursuing the scriptures and noble thoughts are a sheer waste, if study and reflection do not help you to recognize that the mind is worse than a drunken monkey. Pilgrimages are for elevating the heart, sublimating the impulses and leading the lower self to higher levels of thought and action. Reason serves the same purpose, or at least, it ought to. Reason seeks to know the unity of the universe, the origin and the goal of all of it. Through reason, you should understand the laws that govern the microcosm (anu) and the macrocosm (Bruhath). It peeps behind the ever receding curtain to get a glimpse of the Puppeteer (Suthradhari) who pulls the strings.

22.08.2013
Intellect loves to revel in discussions and disputations. Once you yield to this temptation, it takes a long while for you to escape from its shackles and move on to enjoy the bliss, which you can attain only from its nullification. Your feelings and emotions warp your thought process, and convert reason into an

18.08.2013
The Lord is the Indweller in all beings and is All Pervading. He is the soul in every being. He is in you as much as He in everyone else. He is not present more in a rich person or bigger in a fat person. His spark illumines the cave of the heart, of every one. The Sun shines equally on all; His Grace is falling equally on all. You construct obstacles that prevent the rays of His Grace from touching and warming your heart. Do not blame the Lord for your ignorance or foolishness or perversity. Just as underground water wells up in a gushy spring when a bore is sunk down to that depth, by constant repetition of the Lord's Name, touch the spring of Divinity, and one day, it will gush out in plenty giving you never ending joy.

19.08.2013
When some of you visit a temple or a holy shrine, even as you participate in the worship, your thoughts are about the safety of your footwear that you left outside. You will not get joy or liberation by merely going to a holy place. You will not get the joy even through darshan, sparshan and sambhashan - seeing Him, touching Him and conversing with Him. You must follow the prescription and act in accordance with the Divine Directions. Earnestly and enthusiastically, take the path shown by the great devotees of the Lord. You must feel inseparable affinity with the Lord, just as the wave is inseparable from the sea. Butter is imminent in milk and is invisible. So too, Divinity is present in every being and will manifest from within.

20.08.2013
Life is a pilgrimage to God and the path lies before you. But, unless you take the first step forward and follow it with succeeding steps, how can you reach it? Start with courage,

it deserves. The Para-thathwa (Supreme Truth) is beyond the reach of the brain; you cannot lift a rock when you are standing on it! Standing in Maya, you cannot discard it.

12.08.2013
People grieve because they develop attachment towards the unreal. They cultivate an unreasonable affection for wealth. However they are ready to sacrifice their hard earned riches to save the lives of their children, for their attachment to children is stronger than their attachment to wealth. Some people however, stoop so low as to neglect even their children, when the choice is between their preferences and their children's well-being. Real joy can be found only by dwelling on Divinity within you! The orange has a rind, which is not very tasty, but it protects the fruit and preserves it from decay. To get the sweetness of the orange, you must peel and throw off the rind. Such is the fruit of the tree of life. It is protected by a bitter rind! A wise person does not try to eat the rind – after due consideration, he removes it and discards it, and then enjoys the sweetness of the fruit.

13.08.2013
The mind is the wind that brings to us the smell, foul or fragrant from the world. When the mind turns towards the foul, you get disgusted. When it turns towards the fragrant, you are happy. The wind gathers the clouds from the four quarters; similarly the mind brings into your consciousness the disappointments of many hopes. Again, it is the mind that, like the wind, scatters the clouds that darken it or make it feel lost in the night of doubt. Control the mind and you will remain in peace! To gain this equanimity, you have to do not reading, but systematic sadhana

(spiritual effort). Then you will be always happy, whether you are rich or poor, appreciated or rejected, prosperous or unlucky. Entering the arena of life without equanimity is like sailing on a storm-tossed sea in a tiny rudderless boat! So enter upon the path of spiritual discipline right now.

14.08.2013

When you go to a temple, some of you break a coconut before the altar. If you try to break the coconut, just as it is when it falls from the tree, will it break? No! The fibre protects the shell and prevents any damage to the fruit. Hence, you must first remove the fibrous cover with a lot of effort. Moksha (liberation) results from the breaking of the mind with all its vagaries and wishes. You have to break your mind but, how can you do it, when the fibrous armour of sensual desires encompasses it? The toughest fibre is anger, it is the stickiest dirt. When you get angry, you forget mother, father, and teacher and descend to the lowest depths. You lose all discrimination in the excitement. So remove them and dedicate the mind to God and smash it in His presence. That moment, you are free.

15.08.2013

Krishna declared in the Bhagavad Gita, "Mamaivamsho jivaloke jivabhuta sanathana (Every being is an aspect of My Divinity)." When God considers you as part of Himself, you should also consider others as your own self. Love All, Serve All. See no difference between individuals; do not think of one as a pauper and the other a millionaire. Many millionaires today are engaged in filling their own belly. They are not prepared to give even a morsel of food as alms to a beggar who stands at their doorstep. What is the use of having such rich men in

our country? They are rich only for name's sake but in reality they are the poorest of the poor. Pursue the path of charity and righteousness. Consider others as your own brothers and sisters. Rather, consider them as thyself.

16.08.2013

Each and every one of you has a great deal of concentration. For, every task requires concentration and every one of you have benefitted from it. The carpenter, the weaver, the clerk, the boatman, the scientist, all have it, greater or lesser, and use it in their daily lives. You must learn to apply it towards your own mind also. Direct the mind towards its own working, examine it and train it to restrict itself to good company, good thoughts and good deeds. Practise meditation on any Form of the Lord, and repeat any Name of the Lord, with the awareness of its sweetness. That will teach the mind to be sharp, and produce good music out of the joys as well as the grief that are incidental to life.

17.08.2013

Conceit or egoism is a fatal weakness. It is the desire to be praised, to be talked about. People take delight in tom-tomming their achievements and capabilities. This actually makes them ludicrous and pitiable. They want their names and deeds to appear in the daily newspapers in big bold letters. Please understand, it is not in the newspapers that you should get attention. Earn your status in the realm of God. Earn fame in the company of the good and godly. If you are forever in the primary class working on A, B, C and other alphabets, how can you understand what the scholars say? Make progress in being humble and in showing reverence towards elders and parents.