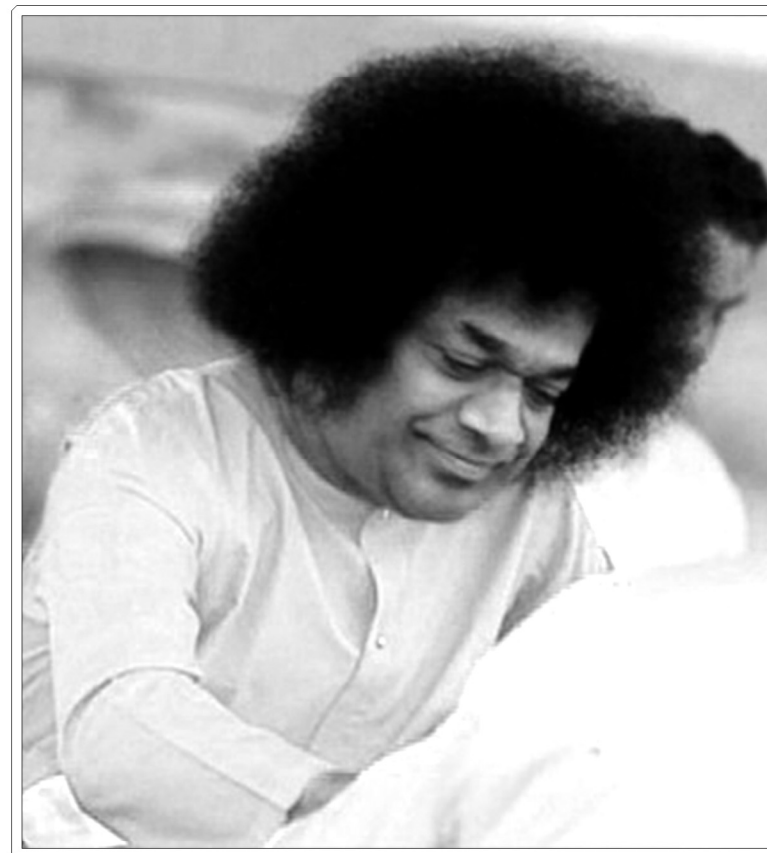


Higher Self. The body must be preserved as a vehicle for this service. But remember, you are not this body; this body cannot be you! Until the realisation of the purpose for which the human body is given, it is your duty to watch over it vigilantly and protect it from injury and disablement. Just as woollen clothes help withstand the rigour of the cold gales during winter and are discarded in summer, the material body is no longer essential when the cold gales of material life don't affect you. (Prema Vahini, Ch 1)

28.02.2015

When rains come, earth and sky are one in the sheety downpour. It is indeed a beautiful and inspiring scene, an imagery by which creation itself is teaching you to become one with the Creator. Learn three lessons: the impermanence of created things, your role as a servant, and God as the Master. The game called life is played with these - the process of creation, the created, the Creator. Rejoice that the Lord continues to place in your hands newer ways to serve Him and exult in the chance you receive. This attitude will give you immeasurable joy; to lead a life suffused with this joy is indeed bliss. Whatever is done from sunrise to sunset must be consecrated, as if it is the worship of the Lord. Just as care is taken to pluck only fresh flowers and to keep them clean and unfaded, so too, continuous and persistent effort should be made to perform deeds that are pure and unsullied. (Prema Vahini, Ch 1)

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba



Thought for the Day

(February 2015)

1.02.2015

The gross body (Sthula deha) should be ever immersed in holy company (Satsanga), and the subtle body (Sukshma deha), that is your thoughts and feelings, should be ever immersed in the contemplation of the glory of the Lord. That is the sign of a true devotee. The one who shouts and swears, and advertises one's worries to everyone they meet and craves for sympathy, is a devotee only in name! It is a great responsibility to tread the Godward path. On such a pilgrimage there is no sliding back, no halfway stop, no tardy pace or no side lane. Never deny with your tongue what you have relished in the heart; never bear false witness to your own experience. Become a true devotee with unshaken faith, and with an attitude of complete self-surrender. This attitude can come from constant, sincere and continuous remembrance of the Lord's name, as continuous as the act of breathing! (Divine Discourse, 28-Dec-1960)

2.02.2015

When some friends, well-wishers or relatives place a gift-article in our hands which does not please us, we accept it gladly only because our acceptance pleases them. When the gift pleases us, our reaction is hearty. We treasure it and are filled with it. Know that God too reacts in the same way to what man offers Him. When the offering is tainted, He may accept it in order to satisfy the longing of the devotee (sadhak). But when the offering pleases Him by its purity and sincerity, He welcomes it and His joy translates itself as abundant Grace. So, one has to discover and decide on the offering that gives Him delight and receive the blessing of Grace. Discriminate, prepare and plant healthy and potent seeds in the inner field of your hearts, so that you reap a plentiful harvest of Grace. (Divine Discourse, 5-Dec-1985)

of eating and drinking, toiling, and sleeping. But verily life has a much greater meaning, and a deeper significance. Life is a sacrifice (yajna). Each little act is an offering to the Lord. If the day is spent in deeds performed in this spirit of surrender, what else can sleep be except total immersion in the Godhead (samadhi)? (Prema Vahini, Ch 1)

26.02.2015

Following the true path of dharma, we will be in a position to receive much more benefit than what is anticipated. On the other hand, if we tread a path different from dharma, then we will find that if we have a thousand desires, not even one of those desires will be fulfilled. One who destroys dharma will in turn be destroyed by dharma, but one who protects dharma will in turn be protected by dharma. Whether it is punishment or protection it can arise only out of dharma. It is only by dharma that we can attain prosperity. We should try to follow the path followed by Dharmaraja (Yudhisthira) at least to a certain extent. Invest time to understand Indian culture, the scriptures (Ithihasas and Puranas) and Vedas and their sacred inner significance. There is no room for cruel and bad ideas, and it is possible for everyone to lead a good and happy life. (Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974, Part 1, Ch 13)

27.02.2015

People commit the great fault of identifying themselves with the body. They accumulate a variety of things for the upkeep and comfort of the body, even when the body becomes weak and decrepit with age! Can death be postponed? When Yama's (God of death) warrant comes, all must depart. Position, pride, and power - all vanish before death. Knowing this, strive day and night, with purity of body, mind and spirit, to realise the

deeds, then the evening blesses us with deep sleep, invigorating refreshing sleep, the sleep which is said to be akin to samadhi. [Prema Vahini, Ch. 1]

24.02.2015

We must clearly understand the meaning of 'death' and 'immortality'. We regard death as synonymous with all kinds of strength in the body being lost. In other words, death is the ebbing away of the life force from the body. If the life force remains in the body forever, we regard that situation as immortality. This is incorrect. To be able to completely identify oneself with the aspect of God and completely forget the aspect of the body is true immortality. If at all times we are totally immersed only in the thought of the body and its comforts, and forget the aspect of Atma, that is death. It is only when we are able to clearly recognise the connection between birth and death that the sacred desire for securing immortality will sprout in us. There is birth and death for the body, but there is no birth or death for the Atma. To be able to understand this eternity of the Atma is the real meaning of attaining immortality. [Divine Discourse, Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974, Ch. 13]

25.02.2015

One has only a short span of life on earth. But even in this short life one can attain divine bliss, by wisely and carefully using the time. Two people, same in appearance, ostensibly of the same mould, and also grown under the same conditions, but one turns out to be an angel while the other stays on with one's animal nature. What's the reason for this differential development? Habits, behaviour formed out of these habits, and the character into which that behaviour has solidified. People are creatures of character. To a superficial observer, life appears to be a rotation

3.02.2015

Birds, beasts and trees do service to man, without anticipating any recompense, but human beings seek help from their kind, from their parents, preceptors and even God, offering in return only insult and injury. They parade their loyalty to Truth, Right Conduct, Peace and Nonviolence - virtues arising from self-less love; but it is only for exhibition and not for experience. They long to recede respect and affection from others but are reluctant to treat others in the same manner. Their full concern is centered on the body-mind complex, ignoring the fact even a hundred-year long life has to end in the cemetery. In order to free oneself from the ego, people must learn to recognize the one Divinity that temporarily wears different forms and names to distract by apparent multiplicity. Removal of this mistaken view and attainment of the awareness of the unity in Divinity - this is the true purpose of education. (Divine Discourse, 5-Dec-1985)

4.02.2015

A bubble is born out of water, made up of water, and it ultimately mixes with water and disappears. Man is like a bubble and Narayana (God) is like the water source. Man is born out of Narayana, is made up of Him and ultimately merges with Him. This is the simple and elemental truth. The jiva (individual) has three aspects: one is the spiritual, the other is the material, and the third is something connected with daily life. These three aspects resemble the deep sleep state, the waking state and the dreaming state. Just as the waves are created out of water and are contained in water, so also the worldly life is contained in the spiritual life. Sweetness and coolness are qualities of water. These qualities are also noticed in the waves and in the foam. Similarly Sat, Chit and Ananda (Being, Awareness and Bliss) are three attributes which may be noticed in an individual.

Through the individual, they show up in the worldly life and thus demonstrate the spiritual aspect present in every individual. (Summer Showers 1977, Ch 8)

5.02.2015

The attitude of forbearance (Titiksha) refuses to be affected or pained when afflicted with sorrow, loss, or ingratitude and wickedness of others. In fact, you must remain calm, and bear all blows patiently and gladly, without any form of retaliation, for these are results of your own past actions. The natural reactions of people, when someone injures them are to hurt them in return, that is, return harm and insult to those who harm them and insult them. These are characteristics of the worldly path (pravritti). Those who seek the inner path of sublimation and purification (nivritti) must desist from such reactions. For, if you choose to return injury for evil, you are only adding to your own karmic burden! Paying evil with evil may confer immediate relief and contentment, but will never lighten the weight of karma. Forbearance, therefore, requires people to do good even to those who injure them. (Sutra Vahini, Ch 1)

6.02.2015

Even Rama, who had established Rama Rajya (the ideal kingdom) on one historic occasion, had to leave this world and pass away. Everything has to pass away some day. Nothing is going to remain permanently in this world. Even the Rama Rajya had to disappear and change. Everything changes with time and nothing remains unchanged. Many people have ruled over this land, but could any one of them take away even a small portion of the land? The only thing which you can carry and which you should take is the permanent grace of the Lord. A good name is all that you should aspire for during your life. We should do

22.02.2015

In the present Age of Kali, there is so much hatred between brothers. When there is no unity within the family, is it possible to bring about unity amidst all persons in this world? In many platform speeches, people address each other as brothers and sisters. We must ask ourselves whether such words are coming from the depths of our hearts or whether we are simply reading them from a piece of paper. If you truly mean the words ‘brothers and sisters’ from the depths of your heart, you most definitely will win the grace of the Lord and good consequences will follow. Never worry or fear that you may have to distribute your ancestral property, or share wealth with those whom you address as brothers and sisters. It is necessary and sufficient if you realise and accept that one common Divine is present in every one of you and is the basis for brotherhood amongst all of humanity. [Divine Discourse, Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974, Ch. 13]

23.02.2015

If your minds revel in external objects and in purposeless observation and criticism of the outside world, how then can it be trained to be steadfast? Ask yourself this question: ‘Great souls (mahatmas) and sages were also people like me. If they could attain perfection, so can I if I follow their method. What profit do I get spending my time in discovering the faults and weakness of others?’ Thus the first spiritual practice (sadhana) is to search for the faults and weaknesses within yourself, and to strive to correct them and become perfect. The unceasing toil of each succeeding day has as its aim and justification this consummation: to make one’s last days sweet and pleasant. But each day also has its evening. If the day is spent in good

very soon plunges us into deep sorrow. But the kind of bliss that one gets through the Soul (Atma) is permanent, pure and selfless. Hence spiritual education (Brahma Vidyā) advocates that love must be cultivated for love's sake only. You must not express love to merely obtain material benefits. If love is showered to win temporary benefits, then it will last for a very short time only. Divine Atma symbolises eternal truth and is permanent. Therefore Prema attached to Atma will be true and permanent. This infinite love and eternal truth is present in every being (jīva). If we focus on developing love and truth for its own sake, then we will experience bliss supreme. That is why the Upanishads advocate Selfless Love as 'Satyasya satyam' or the Truth of truths. [Divine Discourse, Summer Showers in Brindavan 1974, Ch. 1-18]

21.02.2015

The lion, though crowned as the king of the forest, turns back every few steps while walking through the woods, because it is afraid of being pursued. Fear in the mind will make your vision falter. Violence within the heart distorts the vision and distracts the sight. Be vigilant! You must practice and develop impartial vision. All creation must appear equally auspicious in your eyes. You must look upon all with as much love and faith as they have in themselves, for absolutely nothing is evil in creation – no, not even an iota! Evil appears as such only through faulty vision. Creation is colored only by the nature of the glasses you wear. By itself, every creation is eternally pure and holy. Hence you must cultivate one-pointed steadfastness (ekagrata) in whatever you do. Impartial vision (sama-drishti) is auspicious vision (subha-drishti). [Prema Vahini, Ch. 1]

good and earn a good name, and thus lead a good life by doing good to others. This is the ideal which we have to hand over to the rest of the world. (Summer Showers 1977, Ch 8)

7.02.2015

Scriptures are designed to ensure the peace and prosperity of the world as well as the spiritual perfection of humanity. They lead you to Self-realization. So you must have faith or shraddha in the holy scriptures and Gurus. Noble Gurus must and will instruct people on the knowledge of the one Divine Soul immanent in every living being (sarva jivaatmaikya jnana). Your intellect must rest upon and draw inspiration from the Divine Soul, at all times and under all circumstances. You must be attached only to the Divine and all your actions must have the only goal of pleasing God. You must act with the implicit faith that all living beings are facets and fractions of God, and look upon all beings as equal. For this experience, the quality of equanimity (sama-dhana) is a treasure. (Sutra Vahini, Ch 1)

8.02.2015

You have worked very hard in your life discharging worldly duties and come to Prasanthi Nilayam, seeking rest for the body and peace for the mind. That being so, it might look strange if you were asked to undertake some kind of work here also. In the olden days the Guru would collect his disciples in the forest and give them different types of work, sometimes for 10 to 12 years. This was done with a purpose. One important object of work is purification of the Chittha (heart). Once the heart is purified one is ready to receive the teachings of the Guru. Therefore in earlier times the disciples were given work in the beginning so that they slowly get purified. Only when the teacher was

satisfied regarding the student's ripeness for receiving spiritual instruction, would he start teaching Brahma Vidya (the supreme knowledge). (Divine Discourse, 7 Jul 1985)

9.02.2015

Mind control, restraining the senses, transcending the worldly dualities, forbearance, unwavering faith, and equanimity are the primary virtues that must exist in a true spiritual aspirant. In addition, there must be an intense longing for liberation (moksha). This longing cannot arise from riches or scholarships. Nor can it emerge from wealth, progeny, rites and rituals recommended in the scriptures, or acts of charity. Moksha can come only from the conquest of ignorance (ajnana). A person might master all the scriptures along with all the learned commentaries written on them by experts, or propitiate all the gods by performing the prescribed modes of worship and ceremonies. But this cannot grant the boon of liberation. Just like a person who may have every ingredient needed for cooking, but if fire is not available, can he prepare the meal? Success in acquiring self-knowledge alone can confer salvation. (Sutra Vahini, Ch 1)

10.02.2015

In the course of one's day to day activities a number of small creatures and insects may be destroyed. In these and other ways, sins may be committed, knowingly or unknowingly. For removing such sins, the scriptures have prescribed five types of Yajnas or worships - Brahma Yajna, Deva Yajna, Pitru Yajna, Manushya Yajna and Bhuta Yajna. Brahma Yajna is the study of sacred books and scriptures. Deva Yajna involves offering worship, bhajans, etc. Pitru Yajna refers to ceremonies to departed ancestors. The fourth one, Manushya Yajna, refers to extending hospitality to guests, invited and uninvited. Bhuta

for a moment, without faith in God; it is just impossible! Why? Do not be under the impression that God exists somewhere, having a special form, vested with special powers and so on. That which is contained in your own heart as a clean thought and as supreme consciousness is verily God! This sacred part of one's heart is present in every being in the Universe. There is no one who does not have such a sacred heart. Hence, God is within you and you do not have to look for Him elsewhere. As this sacred heart is present in everyone, you must firmly believe that God is in everyone at all times. [Summer Showers in Brindavan, Ch 3, 22-May-1973]

19.02.2015

Books and facilities for mind-training are available in plenty, and at very cheap prices. The heaps of books that lie around cannot succeed in penetrating the heavy binding and emerge as light in you. For, just as God is hidden by the mountain ranges of lust, anger, envy, and selfishness within, the sun of wisdom is also hidden in the books. Though books and reading habits have spread to all corners of the earth, we can't say that culture or wisdom has increased; the human is still not far from the ape. An attractive binding, title and beautiful pictures are what the reader seeks; these are transitory pleasures which give momentary contentment. Aimless reading of all and sundry books will confuse you and confer no peace. Hence discriminate, select and read books that contain life histories of saints and sages, and those that aid in the contemplation of the Divine. Practice what you read. Then you will realise truth and enjoy everlasting bliss. [Prema Vahini, Ch. 1]

20.02.2015

Happiness generally relates to bodily comforts and is transient. Such temporary pleasure comes to us for a few moments but

the treasure of knowledge and bliss. Shankaracharya refers to this as the key of devotion (bhakti). When you use the key of devotion and turn it on the side of detachment, you will easily open the door of knowledge and bliss. But, if the key of devotion is turned in the wrong direction, away from detachment and towards attachment, you will not be able to open the treasure-chest. Therefore, either for detachment or for attachment, this key of devotion which is between the two is important, and you should protect it. It will be possible for you to have this devotion when you have faith in God. [Summer Showers in Brindavan, Ch. 3, 22-May-1973]

17.02.2015

Rathri means night, signifying darkness. Shiva means auspiciousness. 'Shivarathri' signifies auspiciousness which is inherent in darkness. It refers to the wisdom which exists in the midst of ignorance. Wisdom and ignorance are not two different things; they are essentially the same, opposite polarities of the same underlying principle. The state that transcends both wisdom and ignorance is Divinity, Paratatva. This Shivarathri is a day when one tries to establish friendship between mind and God. Shivarathri reminds everyone of the fact that Divinity is all-pervasive and is to be found everywhere. It is said that Shiva lives in Kailasa. But where is Kailasa? Kailasa is our own mind full of joy and bliss. It means that when you develop purity, steadiness and sacredness from within, your heart becomes filled with peace and bliss, and ultimately your heart itself is Kailasa. [Divine Discourse 17 Feb 1985]

18.02.2015

Today in the world, we see many people who say that they have no faith in God. The one who does not have faith in oneself alone will have no faith in God. Truly speaking, nobody can live even

Yajna refers to offering food to animals, birds and insects, and looking after wild animals. By engaging in such service and thereby fulfilling the requirements of these Yajnas, we can atone for sins of various kinds that might have been committed. (Divine Discourse 7 Jul 1985)

11.02.2015

Within humans there is some residual animal nature and this nature must be refined and transformed. One who is able to transform this animal nature in man is Govinda. For an animal, human nature is inaccessible as a goal, but for human, Divinity is accessible as a goal. When green grass is shown to a herbivorous animal, it is attracted, comes close and expresses its pleasure by moving its tail. The same animal runs away if you take a stick to hurt it. Human beings today are attracted and come closer when they see wealth, but if someone is angry and shouts at them, they stay away from them. Is this not displaying animal nature? As human beings, never be afraid of anyone nor should you cause fear to others. Bhaja Govindam exhorts you to control your animal nature within and attain Divine proximity. Chant the loving Name of God daily and grow in faith and confidence in Him. [Summer Showers in Brindavan, Ch 3, 22-May-1973.]

12.02.2015

As all objects and individuals, rites and activities are transitory, they suffer from decay and destruction. They can at best help the cleansing of the mind. Activity (karma) cannot liberate one from the basic ignorance or award the awareness of the reality as Brahman. Be conscious of this limitation in order to win the right of inquiry into the mystery of the Brahman, the source and core of the cosmos. The one who devotes life to earn the knowledge of the Atma must possess holy virtues and good

character. Character is power. No knowledge is higher than a virtuous character. For the person who has dedicated one's years to the acquisition of higher learning, ever good character is an indispensable qualification. Every religion emphasises the same need; virtuous character is the very foundation of spiritual life. Those who lead lives on these lines can never come to harm. They will be endowed with sacred merit. [Sutra Vahini, Ch. 1]

13.02.2015

Buddha, Jesus Christ, Shankaracharya, Vivekananda, and many great saints and devotees of the Lord are treasured in the memory of people even to this day. What quality made them memorable for all times to come? It is their character. The qualities that make up a flawless character are: love, patience, forbearance, steadfastness, and charity. These must be revered. Character is the fragrance of the flower of life; it gives value and worth to life. The hundred little deeds that we indulge in every day harden into habits; these habits shape the intelligence and mould our outlook and life. All that we weave in our imagination, seek in our ideals, and yearn in our aspirations leave an indelible imprint on the mind. Poets, painters, artists, and scientists may be great, each in their own field, but without character, they can have no standing in society. [Prema Vahini, Ch. 1]

14.02.2015

To be able to experience the aspects of knowledge and bliss, we should protect our body, mind and life. Consider this example: We store valuable jewels and gems in our homes, in a relatively cheap iron safe to protect them. The steel almirah or an iron safe has no value compared to the jewels, but they are good enough to protect them. So too, our body is like the valueless iron safe. In this valueless, perishable body, God has kept for protection,

very valuable things like knowledge and bliss. We all understand that valuable jewels cannot be protected by a valuable gold box, as the box itself can be stolen with the jewels in no time. Hence it is natural to protect valuable things in a valueless box which will not attract attention. Therefore, to reach the realm of knowledge, bliss and happiness it is necessary to look after the well-being of the outer casing namely, body, mind and life. [Summer Showers in Brindavan, Ch 3, 22-May-1973]

15.02.2015

No person or wickedness in this planet is incorrigible. Wasn't Angulimala, the robber, turned into a kindhearted person by Lord Buddha? Wasn't the thief Ratnakara transformed to Sage Valmiki? By conscious effort, habits can be changed and character refined. People always have within them, within their reach, the capacity to challenge their evil propensities and to change their evil habits. By selfless service, renunciation, devotion, prayer, and regulation of conduct, the old habits that bind people to earth can be discarded and new habits that take them along the divine path can be instilled into their lives. The purpose of all spiritual literature, poems, epics and books is to discuss the nature of mind, its ways and vagaries, and to inform about the process of reshaping it. Please realize that the mere reading of a book will not vouchsafe discrimination. That which is seen, heard, or read must be put into practice in actual life. [Prema Vahini, Ch. 1]

16.02.2015

When we keep valuable things in a box, we lock the box and keep the key safely with us. If we lose the key or forget where we stored it, we cannot retrieve the valuables when we need them most. So too, in this human body, we need a key to get