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*The Sunday Talk Given by Professor Anil Kumar*

*“Christmas 2009”*

*Part 1*

*December 13, 2009*

*OM...OM...OM...*

*Sai Ram*

*My humble Pranams at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan,*

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

***MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR***

The Christmas season has started and many countries are very busy making preparations for a merry Christmas. They are decorating their houses, streets and offices. People are jumping with joy, preparing for Christmas celebrations. We will soon see churches and residences everywhere in the Christian world resounding with Christmas hymns, carols and sermons. On this occasion let me wish you all a happy and a merry Christmas. May you all enjoy the bliss and happiness of Christmas throughout this season and in the following New Year.

As I think of Christmas, a few ideas come to mind, which I have collected from Sai literature; I will share with you those relevant to the occasion. It is said that three wise men followed the star in the east and reached the place of birth of Jesus Christ. The wise men came from three different places, saw the new born of Bethlehem and expressed their reactions in three different ways. One of them said: “This child will love God.” The second one said, “God will love this child.” And the third wise man said, “This child will love all. Actually speaking, He is love. There is no difference between this child and God.”

***FIRST STATEMENT: BASIS FOR DUALITY***

Let us try to understand these three statements. The first statement is, “This child will love God.” What does this mean? We love God; it is natural. We have no other refuge in this world. We have no other protector. We have no other safety and security in this world. We can only rely on God. We can pray only to Him. We depend on Him. In other words, as Baba gives an example, fish depend on water; water never depends on fish. So we are the fish, and we depend on the water of the Divine. Therefore, it is quite natural that we love God. So when the first wise man says, “This child will love God” he is referring to that kind of dependence,

reliance and trust in God. In other words, as a devotee, "I love my God. I am different from God". This is what we call dualism or *Dwaita*.

#### ***SECOND STATEMENT: BASIS FOR QUALIFIED NON-DUALISM***

The second wise man says, "God will love the child." What does this mean? It is not enough if you love God. In fact you have no other alternative. You cannot depend on any other man; no fellowman can save you, only God can. So it is not enough if you love Him; it is necessary that He loves you too. The second man says, "God loves the child." What does it mean? This child will have a right to the property of God, meaning this child will be nearer, dearer and closer to God -- close enough to claim His property. Similarly, we devotees have to love God more and more intensely so as to claim His benediction and claim His Divine grace and mercy.

Now what is God's property? God's property includes: *Sathya* - truth, *Dharma* - righteousness, *Shanthi* - peace, *Prema* - love. These are the four different components, parts or portions of His property. When we have a right to God's property, if we want God to love us, we should follow these values. This is the significance. When you claim His property, when you follow His values, you become closer to Him. When you become closer to Him, you can say, "I am the son of God." When you say, "I am the son of God" it means you are closer to God because you have been following His commandments and values which He has been teaching you all these years. This is called *Vishista Advaita* – qualified non-dualism.

The first "I love God" is dualism, the second "God loves me" is qualified non-dualism. The first statement is "I love God or I am the messenger of God." As a messenger of God, it is my duty to share the message of God with everybody. The second statement "God loves me" is qualified non-dualism and means that I have to adapt myself and follow the values that God has passed on to me. This is *Vishista Advaita* or qualified non-dualism.

#### ***THIRD STATEMENT: BASIS FOR NON-DUALISM***

And then comes the third statement: the third wise man says, "This child will love all and serve all. And this child is in fact the very love itself. There is no difference between this child and God." Why? Because God is love and love is God. So this child is Divine. That was the declaration of Jesus Christ when He said, "I and my Father in heaven are One!" So this child is Divine totally. This is called non-dualism or *Advaita*.

Therefore my friends, this is the significance of these three wise men's statements: "This child loves God" is the same as "I am the messenger of God." It therefore is the essence of duality or *Dwaita*. The second statement, "God loves this child" -- which means "I am the son of God" -- implies that because I follow his teachings I have a right to His property which happens to be truth, righteousness, peace and love. That is equal to the depth of qualified non-dualism or *Vishista Advaita*. Then the third one says, "This child loves all" which means that love is Divine and also that I and my father in Heaven are One. This amounts to the essence of non-dualism or *Advaita*. That is how we have to look at it.

Sai devotees celebrate and observe Christmas from this angle, in terms of the synthesis and unity of religions. And therefore Christmas is not merely a celebration of Christians; it is not limited to the Christian world. No! Christmas is a universal celebration and a cosmic dance. It is a global celebration and we have to understand and appreciate it within the context of universality and unity.

#### ***WE ARE NOT THE BODY***

Now we come to the next point. Jesus realised that He and His father were one. He attained the state of non-dualism; He was beyond pain and pleasure, victory and defeat, loss and profit. He was and is beyond all, non-dual and totally Divine. That is the height of experience of Jesus on the cross. He never complained against anybody, and had no regrets. That is the sign of the greatness of attainment of Jesus on the cross - the state of non-dualism or supreme bliss, *Paramananda* or *Brahmananda*. Jesus

Christ on the cross indicated that He was not the body, but that He was the spirit. If He were the body, he would have suffered agony and excruciating pain. But Jesus didn't suffer. He was smiling. He sought the pardon of those who persecuted him. He prayed for them.

What does this mean? This means he had gone beyond the body. Today Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has been teaching repeatedly that we are not the body. We find at this moment that Swami is in a wheelchair. Swami being in the wheelchair often makes us think that He is having some pain and bodily complaints. But look Him straight in His eye. Watch His smiling face, the freshness in Him, and latent energy in Him. Watch His daily routine. We will come to the conclusion that just as Jesus rose above the body level, our Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has not only taught us that we are beyond the body, but He exhibits and demonstrates today that He is beyond the body. The body does not affect Him, not in the least.

### *KNOWER OF GOD BECOMES GOD*

Jesus said, "I and my Father in heaven are One". That supreme state of attainment in life makes Him completely Divine. That is why we find Jesus being worshipped - the only begotten son. The son of Mother Mary is worshipped all over the world, why? Because he realised the Divine and He became Divine Himself. The knower of the Supreme becomes the Supreme.

### *BRAHMA VID BRAHMAIVA BHAVATHI*

If you know Brahman, you become Brahman yourself. Jesus is revered, worshipped and adored everywhere because of his attainment of the supreme state of Divinity. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba today is worshipped and accepted as an incarnation all over the world. Why? Because in Him, we see Divinity. He expresses, manifests, demonstrates and acts as totally Divine, nothing but Divine. He has all the Divinity; that has become patent today. When someone asked Him, "Oh Bhagavan, who are You?" He said, "I am God. I know it But understand that you are also God, but you do not know it." Thereby Bhagavan wants us to know the Divinity within us, feeling and openly declaring that "I am God". In His recent talks we see Bhagavan repeatedly emphasising this point. If anyone asks you, "Who are you?" your response should be "I am God." That is what He has been drilling into our ears day in and day out.

### *AN AVATAR'S INCARNATION IS AN HISTORIC AND RARE EVENT*

Now I come to some of the Biblical statements which support all that Jesus declared. I will try to relate them to Swami's life and mission. The Gospel according to Mark, chapter 8 verses 29 and 30: Jesus asks Peter, "Who do you think I am? O Peter do you know who am I?" That is the question put to Peter by Jesus. And Peter's answer is this, "My Lord you are the Christ. You are the cosmic Christ, the Christ Divine; Divinity is in front of me in the name of the person Jesus." That was the feeling of Peter. Similarly Bhagavan Baba declares, "I am God. I am the embodiment of Bliss." Not only that; some of the devotees have recognised this and experienced His Divinity. They say, "O God, O Bhagavan. You are Rama". "O Swami, You are Krishna" And some Christians say, "Baba, You are the cosmic Christ. Your advent symbolises the second return of Jesus Christ, the second coming of Jesus Christ."

Again, in Mark, chapter 11, verse 10, He clearly declares, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David." What does it mean? He is blessed, because he is going to bless us all. The advent of an Avatar is a blessing to the entire humanity. The emergence of an Avatar is not an everyday happening. It occurs exceptionally rarely. Jesus' advent as Christ on earth is an historic event. It is a blessing to the entire humanity. So also is the birth of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The incarnation of Sri Sathya Sai Baba is to usher in a new era of hope for the whole of humanity at the global level today.

And you know that certain mysterious inexplicable miraculous things happen at the time of the advent of an Avatar. When Jesus was born, could you ever dream that wise men from different places would bring costly gifts and offerings to the new born babe? At the time of the birth of Baba musical instruments near Him started playing on their own. His body was surrounded by a serpent, reminding us of Lord Krishna who was reclining on a snake. These are the indications of an Avatar.

The birth of Jesus was not normal, not an ordinary birth. He was born to the Virgin Mary because of the will of God. Similarly, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was not born in a natural way. He was born as per the will of God. A ray of light entered the womb of mother Eswaremma and led to the birth of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Therefore the Divine in our midst, though in a human form, cannot be mistaken as usual, casual or normal. It is a supernatural, Divine manifestation and expression of the Divine will and the Divine consciousness.

Mark says, "Blessed is the kingdom of the Lord." Baba speaks of the golden age. Blessed is the golden age of Sathya Sai Baba. The gospel of peace and the philosophy of love, the importance of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God are all propagated on a larger, wider scale by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This is the golden age. Blessed is the Lord who was born for us -- Jesus then and Baba now. Blessed is the kingdom of the Lord, blessed is the golden age which is the present day.

#### ***DIVINE MIRACLES ARE INEXPLICABLE***

I would also like to draw your attention to the gospel according to Saint John, verses 10 to 25. John clearly says this fundamental point -- Jesus is going to perform miracles. You are not going to believe them or accept them. You don't understand or realise the fact that Jesus does all these miracles - all in the name of His Father - Supreme God, the consciousness. In other words, the Divinity in Jesus made Him perform miracles which were not accepted or believed by the contemporary world.

The same thing is repeated even today. Baba's miracles are questioned by some people. Baba's miracles led to a certain kind of doubt in the minds of some people. So people want to investigate, some people want to experiment; some people want to negate, contradict, and question His miracles. This is not anything new. Every incarnation suffered from this and Bhagavan Baba is no exception. Jesus clearly said according to St. John, "You are not going to believe me but I perform miracles. The miracles I do in My Father's name speak for Me. In other words, the miracles of Jesus speak of His Divinity. They speak of His magnificence and stupendous glory, His authority and control over nature. And today we are the contemporaries of Sathya Sai Baba who performs miracles right in front of us. They are beyond scientific reasoning, rationale and thinking logic. They are miraculous and inexplicable, beyond the reach of our minds -- incomprehensible. That is what happened then and is also happening today.

#### ***WHENEVER DHARMA DECLINES, THE LORD INCARNATES***

Bhagavan clearly said,

*Dharma Nasanam Aguchunna Dharani Yandu  
Prabhavamundemu Sri Sai Parthi Yandu*

In this world where righteousness is on the decline, you find God incarnating. And that God who has incarnated in this age is Sathya Sai Baba. He himself has declared that He is Divine.

*Dharma Nasanam Aguchunna Dharani Yandu  
Prabhavamundemu Sri Sai Parthi Yandu*

God has taken birth in this world in Parthi, in this land and in this world where Dharma -- righteousness -- is on the decline. That is what Jesus declared in John chapter 10, verse 30: "I and my Father are One. I am Divine." Understand what Jesus said. People could not swallow the truth stated by Jesus then. People are not able to unconditionally accept it even to this day. Perhaps history repeats itself. Perhaps humanity is in ignorance. It is not anything new today. It happens all the time. The worldly sensual pleasures and body attachment are the factors that will make us blind. We are blinded because of worldliness. We are not able to know Divinity in its totality.

#### ***THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN JESUS WILL ALSO BELIEVE IN HIS FATHER***

And then clearly in John chapter 12, verse 44, Jesus says: Those who believe in Me will believe in My Father also, who has sent Me. When you believe in Me, you do not believe in Me only, but in the One who sent Me. What does it mean? God, who is all-pervasive, nameless, formless and attributeless, is in a human form today. So those who love, and believe in the human form today, in the name and person of Sri Sathya Sai Baba will have equal belief in that all-pervasive God. Jesus says, those who have belief in Me will have equal belief in Him who has sent Me. He will have faith in the formless God also, as well as faith in the God with form. God with a form will take you to formless God. This is the implication of this verse.

### *THE AVATAR LEADS US TOWARDS DIVINITY*

Then I can also quote at this moment St. John chapter 12, verse 46. Things that we see are managed by the unseen. I see the light but I do not see the electricity. Unseen electricity is the cause of the light. When you see the light, you can also think of that unseen electricity. That is the meaning of John chapter 3, verse 46: he who sees Me sees the One who sent Me. He that sees the electricity bulb and the light will also deduce the presence of the electricity behind. So Sathya Sai Baba in a human form will make us experience that Divinity within us and everywhere. The Avatar is an effective vehicle of transport from form to formlessness, from name to namelessness, from attribute to attributelessness, as we understand here. You now notice the identities and parallels in the purpose of Jesus and Baba.

### *JESUS AND BABA SHOW US THE LIGHT OF WISDOM*

St. John chapter 12, verse 46 again: "I have come into the world as a light so that no one who believes in Me should stay in darkness." What a wonderful statement of the Lord. We are in darkness, but once we see Jesus, we shall not be in darkness again. We will be in the light. We shall know the truth. And the truth will set us free. You shall see Jesus and you will be away from darkness. Your darkness will be dispelled. What is darkness? What is light? The darkness of ignorance and the light of wisdom. So Jesus declares: I have come here as a light so that you will be taken out of your darkness.

Baba said:

*Teranu Daagina Sathyambu Telusukonaga*  
*Vishramimpaga Naa Thoda Vedali Randu*  
*Teranu Daagina Sathyambu Telusukonaga*

Come with me to know the truth behind that light. I will take you hand-in-hand and take you to the light of wisdom and knowledge; and by discrimination, you don't have to remain in the darkness of ignorance.

It is also very interesting to note John, chapter 14, verses 7 to 12. Jesus most unexpectedly talks to Phillip, saying, "O Phillip, you asked me who I am. Don't you know me? I have been amongst you for long. You have been seeing me for years. Don't you know me? Know this: if you have seen me, you have seen my Father also." The situation is the same today; when somebody asked, "Bhagavan, who are You?"

*Nemu Sachchidanandudamu* – I am that eternal bliss

*Santhrupthi* – satisfaction

*Bheethi Cherabodu* – there cannot be any fear in me

*Vyathanu Kleshammu Nanmu Sprishimpabodu* – no worry, no suffering could ever touch me

*Sachchidananduda* – I am eternal bliss

That is what Jesus said. The one who has seen me has seen my Father. "Phillip, though I have been among you all these years, don't you know who I am? Can't you identify me?" Baba says the same thing.

I am reminded of an incident. I saw Baba giving a discourse in the auditorium. A doctor from Italy was speaking, and he said Baba was the cosmic Christ. Even ordinarily when I think of Baba, I am in good spirits . . . you may say hyper-active. You can imagine my feeling when I heard a Catholic Christian say that Baba is Cosmic Christ. Immediately I started running after his car. Swami had already retired, but I ran and tapped the door. Somebody opened the door and I saw Baba.

Baba said, "Why are you running gasping for breath. What happened to you?"

I said, "Swami, what a statement the doctor made at the meeting!" He said, "You are the Christ. It is not an ordinary thing, Swami."

You know what Baba said? "O ho. You want the doctor to certify your feeling. You are waiting for the doctor to say yes to this. And you say it is not an ordinary thing. Are you under the impression that it was ordinary all these years?" I was really wonderstruck my friends.

Similarly when Jesus said, "O Phillip, though I have been among you all these years, don't you know me?" That is how I look at it.

John again, chapter 14, verse 11: Baba always talks about this statement. If I miss any part of it, He also reminds me. "God is above me, below me, beyond me, in me, around me. God is everywhere. He is in me, above me, below me, around me." That is what Swami always says.

*Nee Venta, Kanta, Janta Vunmanu*

"I am always with you." And this is the statement in John, chapter 14, verse 11: I am in the Father, the Father is in me. I am in God. God is in me. That is total identity - an ecstatic expression of non-dualism and a blissful experience of non-dualism or the *Advaitic* concept.

***BE ALIKE TO EVERYONE***

Now, I want to draw your attention to two important points made by Jesus while He was on the cross. He said two things. "All are one, my dear son. Be alike to everyone." Baba always says that we should move as brothers and sisters – the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. He is our Father. We are all His children. No one is less, no one is more. All are His children. That is what Baba wants us to know, learn and practise.

***CONSCIOUSNESS IS CHANGELESS***

Jesus said, "Death is the dress of life." What does it mean? I change my dress, wearing new clothes. My clothes may change, but I am changeless. Similarly, consciousness is changeless, though the body or dress changes. Life after life, the body may go on changing, but I am changeless, immortal.

*Srunvantu Vishve Amritasya Putrah.*

*You are the son of immortality.*

You will never die. Your body may perish. That is what is meant by Jesus' statement – death is the dress of life.

***SEEK GOD AND YOU SHALL FIND HIM***

I would also like to give a small episode from the life of Jesus. As a boy, He followed his mother Mary to a fair in a village. You know villages have fairs once every week. So Mary was busy going around the fair. When she looked behind, she did not notice Jesus.

The boy was missing. She searched frantically for Jesus, "O boy where are you?" She could not find Him anywhere. Ultimately she went to a temple. There in the temple she saw Jesus listening to the teachings of a priest in rapt attention, totally forgetful of the whole fair and everything else. Mary goes there and says, "O Jesus where were you all along? I have been searching for you". And Jesus replies, "Mother, you have not searched for Me where you should have. You have been searching everywhere, but not at a place where I am".

What a statement it is! We should search for God. Though He is everywhere we should search for Him where there is good company, good action, good thought and spiritual dialogue. On the one hand, we say God is everywhere; but at the same time we say we search for Him. Seek and thou shall find. Knock and it shall be opened. Search for Him and you will find. He is everywhere, so then why should you search? Baba gives a simple example. "The whole land belongs to Me, but I don't sit everywhere. I sit at a place which is quite clean." Similarly, God is everywhere but you will feel Him where there is good company. We should search for Him where His glory gets ignited, illumined and expressed That is what is meant in this episode.

Baba in His childhood was in the company of His brother and other friends, who had been to visit the *Virupaksha* temple near Hampi. All the people left their luggage and baggage at one place. Somebody needed to take care of the belongings, but all were in a hurry to see the God in the temple - *Virupaksha* Swami. The child Baba said, "I will be here and will take care of your luggage. You go inside and have *darshan*." All of them went into the temple. At the altar, in the place of the idol *Virupaksha*, they saw Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba standing with a smile. His own brother could not believe it. "What? Sathyam was at the entrance; I asked Him to take care of all the belongings. How is it that I find Him in the temple?" Totally disturbed, he came out of the temple and he found Sathya Sai Baba taking care of the baggage. This is possible only for the Divine. I find the same situation in both incarnations.

Jesus always laid emphasis on faith. Baba also always says faith is important.

*Nammakamamu Rendu Nayanambule Leni*

*Andhulairi Avani Andu Januku Nedu*

*Samsayattmuni Veedi Sai Sannidi Cheraroyee*

Baba says that people are blind, having lost both their eyes. The vision is gone because of loss of faith. "So it is time to cultivate and develop faith in God and come closer to Me," says Bhagavan Baba in His Divine composition.

#### ***HAVE FAITH IN HIS COMMAND***

Jesus always laid emphasis on faith. Simple example: one day Lord Jesus was passing by and he saw a few fishermen who had spread their net in the river. Some of them came and prayed to Jesus, "O my Lord, right from the morning we have been waiting. We could not catch a single fish. What shall we do my Lord?" And Jesus said, "Don't worry, you come with me". He took the fishermen along with him to another spot along the river bed and asked them to spread the net there. At that spot they caught plenty of fish.

Here there are three points my friend. There were fishermen who were in a helpless situation and who could not catch fish from the morning. Two: They prayed to Jesus. Three: They obeyed the command of Jesus and followed him and spread their net where Jesus wanted them to do it -- obedience to His command. Similarly, we have to act like fishermen. We are helpless. Correct; but we don't turn to God like those fishermen. We turn to our fellow men. We should turn to God like those fishermen. Third: fishermen followed Jesus and followed his advice. So having gone to God, we should also act according to the instructions of the Divine. This was a miracle then and a lesson now for all of us.

In Brindavan, when people wanted to have a borehole, they were searching everywhere. There was no water anywhere in the vicinity. Baba said, "Come on, bore here". They got a spring of water immediately. He knows what is to be done. He knows and we have to follow Him. There are many instances like this. Baba says, "Come on, have your house here in the middle of the forest."

What happens in due course of time? It became the heart of the city. Long ago, a close relative of mine in Bangalore approached Swami, "Swami, I want to buy a plot here." Swami said, "No, buy the plot somewhere else" – it was almost wilderness there. And today it is worth a couple of crores of rupees. That is the wisdom of past and present and future of the Divine. That is what I am reminded of here.

#### *FAITH LEADS TO GOD*

Baba further says, have faith. 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. So you begin with faith and you will experience God towards the end. That is the message of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Then I would like to draw your attention to some outstanding devotees whose names figure in the Holy Scripture, the Bible. I am a student of a Christian college, of which I am very proud even to this day, because I believe that what I am today is because of my Christian background and because of my *alma mater*, Andhra Christian College at Guntur in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India. The college is sponsored by the Lutheran church in America. We had a number of visitors from the United States. Many pastors visited our college. I was exposed to Christian messages and gospel for a long period of three decades. I used to attend church also. I necessarily attended the Christmas celebrations, the midnight functions on New Year's Day. Therefore I love the Bible. I love Jesus and I have full faith in the gospel, so today as I see Baba and see His discourses I find parallels and identity. Those who believe in Jesus will easily recognise the second coming of Christ in the name and person of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Those who believe in Sathya Sai Baba can easily understand and develop faith in Jesus automatically, effortlessly. That is what I want to share as a personal note this morning.

#### *LET US GROW TO BECOME LIKE ST. PETER*

Let me mention a few outstanding characters. One: Peter. Peter came to Jesus for some fish and for his living. Later Peter said, "What a shame it was. Should I go to God for my living, for my body, for my maintenance, for my food? No! God has come for some higher purpose. Jesus will give me that which I should know - which is above this mundane world, above food, raiment and shelter." Peter grew from the body to the soul, from food to the spirit and subsequently became St. Peter. Those of us who have come to Swami will, after listening to Him and being in constant thought of Him, certainly grow beyond the mind, body and intellect and experience the spirit and Divine consciousness within. There are several Peters amongst us, but Peter has grown. It is time for all of us to grow in the spiritual path.

#### *RISE ABOVE OUR VOCATION AND GROW SPIRITUALLY*

The second character: Matthew. Matthew was a tax collector or a revenue officer. Observing Jesus Christ, listening to his message, he started noting down all the messages of Jesus Christ. He started practicing the message of Jesus and then what happened? Then Matthew became an outstanding disciple. So those of us who are doing our jobs should never complain that we are engrossed in our official work and in professional life. No. Matthew could rise, so why not you and I? We can also rise above our vocation, avocation and profession like Matthew.

#### *LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE REFLECTIONS, REACTIONS AND RESOUNDS*

And now I come to a third character in the Holy Bible, Paul. Paul had bitterness for Jesus. He hated Jesus. Why? Times were not favourable to Paul. Things were totally negative to him. So he didn't have any faith in Jesus. He hated him. But Jesus appears in the dream of Paul and tells him, "Paul, why do you hate me? I love you, my dear son. Don't blame me for all the difficulties you have. Your actions are responsible. I have nothing to do with it, Paul. I love you." Paul later had no hatred for Jesus. He developed intense love and devotion and later became Saint Paul. Similarly, we should recognise that our difficulties and problems of life are only the reactions, reflections and resound that Baba always mentions. Therefore for every action there is a reaction. So I am facing my reaction as a consequence of my actions. So we should understand that suffering, joy, pain or pleasure are only reactions, reflections and resounds, and God has nothing to do with it. There is no point in blaming Him. That is the lesson from St. Paul.

### *AS YOU THINK, SO YOU BECOME*

I will give you another example: St. John practiced his teachings that were totally Divine. The body, the head and the heart were full of Jesus. Therefore you know what happened? He started looking like Jesus. John's face started appearing as if it was the face of Jesus. *Brahmavid Brahmaiva Bhavathi*. As you think, so you become. As you sow, so you reap. Therefore John had risen to that state. As Baba explains, the brother of Rama, Bharatha, in constant thought of Ramachandra, in constant integrated awareness following his command, looked exactly like Rama. Swami mentions another example: Samartha Ramadas looked exactly like Ramachandra. Therefore you will be a replica of the Divine. That is what the holy Bible says. God made man in His own image. Therefore we should understand that we are the sons of immortality. Therefore the characters of Peter, Paul, John, Matthew represent each and every one of us who have risen and have gone to heights, which are incomprehensible and beyond our estimate and imagination.

### *DON'T BECOME A DOUBTING THOMAS*

Now I take to another character of the holy Bible. A person doubted Jesus, so we call him doubting Thomas. Doubting Thomas is exactly our representative. We have faith in the morning, we lose faith in the afternoon and become faithless totally by night – bumps and jumps. We are not steady. Baba always looks at people and says, “You are unsteady, you are not steady.” Therefore doubting Thomas is in each and every one of us. He could not believe or accept Jesus.

There is another character in the Holy Bible. When Jesus was sent to the crucifixion, the people decided that other followers also should be crucified. Everybody said they didn't know who Jesus was. Everybody disowned him. The closest disciple Judas also disowned him. At the time of crisis and crucifixion, all those who were close to Jesus disowned him. And Judas allowed himself to be bought for a pittance. He allowed himself to be sold for money. Baba comments here, “If it is a choice between money and God, it is a pity, a matter of shame if you prefer money in the place of God.” You are Judas.

The Bible recognised only one Judas then. Today we have many Judases. Let us not be doubting Thomas or Judas. Let us follow the examples of Paul, Matthew, and John. That should be our aim of our life. Christians do this (*Anil Kumar gestures to show prayerful cross*). We think Christians show the cross, the sacred cross on which Jesus was crucified – Father, Son and the Holy Ghost. Baba explained this prayer - head, heart and hands. There should be unity of thought word and deed. There should be a sacred thought, feeling and action – head, heart and hands. Three H V – three H values. That is what the Christian humanity prayer signifies as explained by Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

### *DIVINE WILL IS INSCRUTABLE*

Matthew made a statement in the Holy Bible. “The whole world, the space or earth cannot change My will or command.” It is reported in Matthew's gospel. Baba said, “I can transmute earth into sky, sky into earth. No one can change My will; nothing can come in My way.” A village, a hamlet like Puttaparthi, had a population of hundreds - today thousands and thousands of people have settled here. A village which was totally illiterate then, has a university now. A village which had no housing facility is now full of multi-storied buildings today. A village with no medical care has a super-specialty hospital today. Why? “When I will, it will happen,” says Bhagavan Baba. He willed that this Puttaparthi should be a global village and he has shown what God can do if He wills. If you just go through the history of Puttaparthi -- what it was about seventy years ago and what it is today -- no lectures or books are necessary to have faith in Baba. There has been a U turn, a paradigm shift, a total metamorphosis and a total change in the lifestyle, the infrastructure, socio and geographical conditions in the hamlet of Puttaparthi. Because His will is inscrutable - that is what Matthew said.

### *FOLLOW THE SPIRIT AND NOT THE BODY*

Matthew, chapter 25, in the holy Bible clearly says: Since you do not know when God would incarnate, when He will come down, be alert.

Baba says:

*Poyina Chikkadu Parthisu Paada Seva Yandi.*

Understand this, my boys: "Don't take things for granted. Because I look like you and move among you, and because I am just like anyone with a body, don't mistake Me. Don't take Me for granted because you will have to regret and repent later. Be alert." That is what Baba said. "Come, examine and experience the Divinity here." That is the declaration of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Then I would like to draw your attention to what is said in Romans, chapter 8, verses 12 to 15. It clearly says if you follow the body, you will be committing sins and will be sinful and you will face death. But if you follow the spirit, not the body, you will never die. You will be immortal. That is what Baba said.

*Pasyatheeti Pashuhu.*

*If you follow the body, you are animal.*

Therefore, don't be an animal. Follow the spirit, not the body.

*Panchabhautika Dehambu Kulakadeppa Deppudan*

*Body is, after all, temporary; it is bound to fall.*

*Dehi Niraamayundu*

*That indweller is eternal, immortal, changeless, the witness.*

So, live in the spirit, not merely in the body. That is what Romans says. If you live according to the sinful nature, you will die. But if you go by the spirit and put to death misdeeds of the body, you will live. Those who are led by the spirit of God are the sons of God.

After all, as Baba says:

*Brahmameriginantha Brahmamabe Agunayya*

*Sathyamaina Maata Ee Sai Maata*

You are the product of the Divine. You cannot be otherwise. Therefore understand it. Do not commit sinful deeds. Don't limit yourself to the body; live in the spirit. If you live in the body, you have to perish with the passage of time.

***JESUS AND BABA ARE THE SAME CONSCIOUSNESS***

In John, chapter 14, verse 12, Jesus says: "He that has sent me will come again, will do greater deeds and will do greater things than these because I am going to the Father." Please understand this. "I am going to the Father" means Jesus is back to the Father. He is back to that source, consciousness, and He says He will do even greater things in the second return of the cosmic Christ. "He that has sent me will come again. That God will come again. He has sent me; He will come again and will do greater things." That is what John said here. Please understand this. Jesus' work was rather at a limited scale in the beginning, while later it spread widely. Jesus was not recognised by everybody then; he was even disowned by His own disciples. Later the gospel of Jesus spread like wildfire all over the world. Thank the Lord. Blessed be the Lord.

And today Baba's Divinity is known right from His childhood. Today his Divinity is accepted and realised all over the world by crores and crores of people. You don't have to wait for the passage of time. That is what Jesus said: He will do greater things. So the second return or He who has sent me, God, will come back and do greater things. That is what is meant in John, chapter 14, verse 12.

Jesus also says that, "If you love me, I can tell that you love my Father. If you follow me, I can tell you that you love my Father." Who is the Father of Jesus? Sathya Sai Baba Himself. So those Christian brothers and sisters who love Jesus, understand you love Baba equally. Those who love Baba, understand that you love Jesus equally. That is why we love Jesus, we pray to Him, sing His glory and are proud of Jesus, the Lord. Why? I love Jesus, I love His Father. When I love His Father, automatically I love His son. John, chapter 14, verse 23: If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. That is what Jesus said and that is what we have to do.

### *RECOGNISE THE DIVINE BY HIS ACTIONS*

In Matthew, chapter 1,1 verse 4 to 6, somebody asked, "O Lord, You are going to come again, your Father is going to come again. How are we to know Him or you? How are we going to recognise you?" Here the Lord says, the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear and the dead are raised. "By these acts you will know Me and My Father."

What is happening today, my friends? I saw right in front of my eyes, a very fat lady from Ireland on her wheelchair that was pushed by two or three persons. She went into the interview room and I saw her coming out of the interview room walking. She was in the wheelchair for 12 years and out of the interview room she starts walking. That is what is said, the lame walk. Another person living twenty kilometers from my native place, a very old man, had lost his sight. Swami put his hand on his eye balls, and now he could see. He started shouting, "Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaji ki." Blind receive sight.

I also know another boy from Venkatagiri in Nellore district who had a skin problem. Swami simply touched him and the whole psoriasis was gone. Skin disease was gone by His touch. That is what is said. Those who have leprosy are cured. The deaf hear. The dead are raised. Radha Krishnappa Chetty of Kuppam was declared dead for three days. Baba came there and asked him, "Radha Krishnappa get up". He was brought back to life. How about Cowan from Los Angeles, United States? Cowan was declared dead. The body was kept in the coffin. Swami came there and ordered for the opening of the coffin. Cowan got up. Lazarus rose from the dead by the touch of Jesus. By the touch of the hand of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, we find many coming back to life.

I should also mention to you, Baba always says, "*Viswasame Nee Svasa*," which means, "Faith should be your breath." It is of highest importance. You may wonder how to develop faith. My friends, you should have faith in yourself. First have faith in yourself, and then you can have faith in God. Unfortunately we have faith in everybody today. We have faith in a washerman, a doctor, a barber, the hairdresser, but no faith in God. This is very unfortunate. That is the reason the word faith is mentioned hundreds of times in the gospel. Not only that, Jesus telling that His Father will come is mentioned twenty-six times. The mission of Jesus is the same as the mission of his Father – this is mentioned eighteen times according to interpreters of the Bible volume 8, page 438 and 442. So the Divine mission is the same. The Divine mission of today was taken up by Jesus then. He acted as per the instructions and will of His Divine Father in heaven.

### *GOD IS CONSCIOUSNESS, TRUTH AND LIGHT*

I will also tell you a very important statement in John, chapter 4, verse 24, where he said: "God is consciousness. God is spirit. Worshippers must worship in spirit and truth. God is the spirit or Divine consciousness."

Again John, chapter 1, verse 4: "God is our life." It is clearly said, "In Him was life and that life was the light of men." It means that the Divine is light, consciousness is inner light. That is why every religion has got light. Some may light a candle or a lamp or fire – light, the consciousness, and the spirit.

*GOD IS THE ETERNAL WITNESS*

In John, chapter 5, verses 17 to 24 it is clearly said that His Father always works. God is the eternal witness in every one of us. He works and inspires and commands, cajoles and consoles, doing His eternal work. That is why Baba says, "I don't take rest. And I don't sleep. I just toss on the bed. I switch off the light so that you are not disturbed. I don't sleep." He is always on duty. He has no holiday and no Sunday. That is God, who is the eternal witness.

*OM...OM...OM...*

*Om Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu*

*Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu*

*Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu*

*Om Shanti Shanti Shanti*

*Jai Bolo Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Babaji ki Jai*