

The Sunday Talk Given by Professor Anil Kumar

“Do We Know?”

January 24, 2010

OM...OM...OM...

Sai Ram

With Pranams at the Lotus Feet of our beloved Bhagavan,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The topic for today is this, “Do we know?” You may be wondering what I mean by that. “Do we know?” is a question that we have to put to ourselves for two reasons: first, to find out whether we know or not; and second, if we do already know, in order to remind ourselves. So the purpose of this topic “Do we know?” is twofold, a sort of reminder and a kind of information.

We tend to take things for granted, to take them casually. Sometimes it happens that we don't know that we do not know, and yet we think we know—how ridiculous! Therefore, I thought it was time to either remind ourselves of certain things, or to learn them for the first time, and then to try to assimilate this knowledge and translate it into action in our daily lives.

WHY WE ARE ATTRACTED BY THE WORLD

First point: Do we know why we are attracted by the world? Worldly objects, worldly matters, worldly achievements, and worldly positions attract us and yet we are not attracted by God. Do we know why? No! And at the same time, we think that if some fellow is attracted to God, it is because he is a fit-for-nothing fellow, that he has no other alternative. No, no! He is not a fool—you are a fool if you think so.

A man is attracted to God for two reasons: one, because of his good *karma* in a past life. In a past life he was highly devoted to God, and this is brought him forward to his present life. That is the first reason. And the second reason is a deep interest in God—a deep yearning within, at the subconscious level—makes God direct your mind towards Him.

In other words, there are two reasons why we turn towards God, past *karma* and God's grace. And it is the same thing with the world. A person who has spent all his previous lives immersed in worldly affairs and mundane matters will be drawn towards them once again in this life.

Well, being the students of science and technology in the modern age, you may doubt me. “How can you say that?” “How can you say that *karma* or past lives are the cause for our attraction towards the world or God?” You may ask me these questions. The answer can be illustrated simply: it is just as a newly-born calf will draw the milk from the udder of the mother cow, not from the tail or the leg.

The calf goes straight to the udder and draws milk; it doesn’t go to any other part of the body. Who told the calf to go to the udder of the mother cow? Who told the newborn calf? No one. The calf has an inborn, inbuilt mechanism from a past life that guides it to the point where milk can be drawn.

Therefore, my friends, the aspects I am going to mention and share with you this morning are this: first and foremost, we are drawn either to God or towards the world because of our past lives. That’s clear. You have every freedom to escape the effects of *karma*, you can work for it; but it takes time to get out of the effect of the *karma* of past life.

How do you work to get out of this? Understand clearly why you are drawn towards the world. Analyse and be critical. Examine yourself and why you are drawn towards the world. What are the effects? What are the influences? What are the consequences? Then you start teaching your mind, “Oh mind! Get out of this. This is not the correct path in which you are supposed to move about. You are a monkey mind.” That is how we have to instruct, tame, and train our mind, so that it will leave off this worldly interest and turn towards God. We must use with understanding and analysis. This is the first point that we should know.

DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE JUDGEMENTAL?

Second, do we know that we often judge people? We say, “He is good,” and “He is bad.” Or “He is very pious,” and “He is awful.” We go on judging people. We are judgemental. Are we aware of this?

We should know that we don’t have the authority to judge anybody. We are not competent to judge anybody because we will be judged in return. If you judge others, they will judge you in return. Reaction, reflection, and resound.

What do you gain by judging others? Supposing you say that someone is a bad man. OK, he is bad—it doesn’t mean that you are good! You say someone’s an alcoholic—it doesn’t mean that you are a teetotaler. Therefore, judging others does not mean that we qualify ourselves as being virtuous. Certainly not!

Do we know that we are judgemental? Do we know that we should not judge? Do we know that if we judge, we will be judged in return? We don’t have the authority or capacity to judge anybody, but this element of judging others or this quality of judgement is within us.

What must we do? The quality of judgement is within us, we are judgemental, we judge others—what shall we do now? Do we know a technique? Judge yourself, don’t judge anybody else. Be critical of yourself. Be a judge of your own life.

Baba has said, “You should know your own mistakes, your own faults, and others’ merits. Never judge anybody.” Baba has said this clearly. At one time He went even further and said, “Judging others is a sin.” So let us not be sinful by being judgemental. Let us judge ourselves. Let us be critical of ourselves, let us find out our own mistakes and weaknesses, and be determined not to repeat them. This sort of approach will improve the quality of our life.

DO WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE BECOME SLAVES OF THE WORLD?

The third point is, do we know that we have become slaves? Do we know that we have become victims, that each one of us has fallen prey to the attraction of possessions, positions, influences, status, dignity, and all that is honoured in society?

Status, dignity, knowledge, ability, and high-class are prized by society, and that’s what we want. Do we know this? We should know that this kind of decline or degradation in our lives, this becoming prey to worldly achievements and accomplishments, is non-spiritual and non-religious. It can never make you a devotee. If you run after these things, you are not spiritual, my friend. Let us understand it.

How do we overcome this sort of weakness, this wanting to be influential, to be men of status in society? The answer is simple. Let us be conscious that we have fallen prey to the allures of the world. Let us know that we have become victims to this sort of weakness.

First let us know what we are, that we are not masters, that we have become slaves to these attractions. Then, let us elevate our consciousness: we are sparks of the Divine, we are the sons of God; we are not simply sons of the soil or products of dust. We are something more.

So let us elevate our consciousness. Let us be aware of what we are, and that awareness, that elevated consciousness, will certainly prove that all these things for which we were struggling till now are not worth having. They are useless, and such a life is futile.

And what are the suggestions to overcome these weaknesses common to people all over the world? These desires such as to grab power, to occupy chairs, to unseat others, to gain influence, to be VIPs? How can we overcome these weaknesses?

First, by prayer. Prayer will help us elevate our consciousness because prayer is an act of humility. Prayer is an act of submission and discipline. So the sensitivity and humility contained within prayer will help us to come out of this attraction for power and other things.

Two, by good company—*satsang*. Good company is very necessary. To give a simple example: if you are in the company of businessmen, you are attracted by business deals. If you are in the company of lawyers, you will be thinking of litigation, court, and laws. Join the company of pious people, the company of devotees, the company of wise, noble people so that you can elevate your consciousness. Consciousness can be raised when we join good company.

My friends, I think all of you are familiar with another way to raise consciousness: the practice of reading the Holy Scriptures. Muslims read the *Q’ran*, Christians read the *Holy Bible*, Hindus read the *Bhagavad Gita*, and Buddhists read the *Dhammapada*. So let us read any sacred book, it doesn’t matter which. The contents mentioned therein will elevate and raise your

consciousness so that you will rise above these silly objectives. They will no longer be targets to you because you are now at an elevated level of consciousness.

HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TO LIFE

Next point, to have an elevated consciousness is to have positive attitude to life. Let us have a positive attitude, let us be hopeful. If you don't have a positive attitude, you can never energise, you can never activate, and you can never raise your consciousness. You will be caught in mundane thoughts and imprisoned in worldly thoughts and matters. Therefore, have this positive attitude that 'I *can* win over these things,' that 'I *can* overcome these attractions; with an elevated consciousness, it is possible.' This is the positive attitude that we have to develop and cultivate.

THE TWO PATHS, PREYAS AND SREYAS

And do we know there are two paths lying in front of us? It is for us to choose one or the other. One path is the path of *preyas*; the second is the path of *sreyas*. *Preyas* is the worldly path, while *sreyas* is the spiritual path. *Preyas* is sensual, while *sreyas* is transcendental. *Preyas* will make you a prey; *sreyas* will lead to the uplifting of your consciousness. *Preyas* will take you to doom and ruin, whereas *sreyas* takes you towards liberation and redemption. *Preyas* is *priya*—that which is dear to you, which thinks of immediate returns—whereas *sreyas* will show you results in the long run. The results of the *preyas* are temporary, whereas the consequences of *sreyas* are everlasting and eternal.

So do we know that these are the two paths? Do we know that the path of *sreyas* is certainly better than *preyas*? Do we know that *sreyas* is a slow and silent process, and that it will be for our gain in the long run? Do we know that? We must know this, and then decide which path we are to tread.

DO WE HAVE STEADY FAITH?

Then, do we know what sort of faith we have? Do we have unshakeable faith? Do we have strong faith? Are we staunch devotees? Do we have stable faith? Do we know that we lose our faith any moment? Do we know that faith does not remain for long unless it is supported by spiritual practice or *sadhana*? Spiritual practice or *sadhana* will make our faith firm, steady, and strong. Without it, our faith may vanish at any time.

That is the reason why we sometimes find people who have lost their faith, who at one time had strong faith. Why does this happen? Because their lives are not supported by *sadhana* or spiritual practice. We should know this.

"All right," you may question me, "Why have faith at all? Why? I may have faith in you today, and in somebody else later. Why should I have faith at all? I can get along very well all by myself. What is it I get out of this faith?"

The first thing is this: you can develop faith if you rise above irritations and frustrations. Those that get irritated at the slightest disturbance or delight lose their faith. So irritations, provocations, and frustrations will lead you to a state of faithlessness, a point where you lose faith altogether.

“So what shall I do now?” you ask. You can do one thing, my friend, you can say, “Oh God! You know better than I. You have designed a life which is good for me. Therefore You do as You see fit. I will not exercise my choice.” This is one way to have strong faith.

If you exercise your own choice and preference, you may lose faith any time. To have steady faith, we have to be choice-less and non-preferential, and have the conviction that God has a design for us and that the Divine plan is for our own good. This is one way of knowing reality.

And then, my friends, there is another point to having strong faith. You go on doing your duty, you go on acting in the way you are supposed to, you behave and work as per your set patterns, as per your own plans. Just go on like that, and leave the rest to God. Leave the rest to God. “Oh God, my job is to do, while Your job is to decide. You do Your job, I am not bothered about it. And I do my job of pursuing my own path, of doing my own work while leaving the rest in Your Divine hands.” This is one way of strengthening our faith.

Next, another point to having strong faith is about taking risks. A businessman, for example, has to take risks; and in our own humble way, at one time or other, we have to take risks. But let us risk in a calculated way. Let us calculate the consequences and take the risk in a small measure so that the faith is not lost in taking the risk. If the risk takes you to a point of losing faith, then don't take it.

In life you have to take risks, because without doing so there is no gain. Gain is always there when you take a risk. What is the result if you don't take risks at any stage? Pain. It may not be gain, but pain is certain. Therefore, my friends let us take risks in life in a calculated way so as to have firm faith. OK. What else?

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GOD

Our faith must prompt us to believe that nothing is impossible to God. Yes, that is strong faith. My faith tells me that nothing is impossible for God, whereas my mind questions this. My mind asks, “Is that possible?” “Will it ever happen?” “Will it be a reality?” “Can it be done?” These are the questions of the mind. Forget them!

The bottom line to be established is that everything is possible for God. Nothing is impossible for Him. That is the strong faith we should develop and cultivate.

Why? We should know that God is our Father. Jesus always prayed to Him, “Oh My Father!” This kind of relationship will take you closer and closer to Him. You will never fear Him. You should be a God-loving man, not a God-fearing man. You should be God-loving, not God-fearing.

Then how does faith help you? You know how things happen as per the laws of nature: rains in the rainy season, cold in the winter season, and heat in the summer season. This is the natural sequence of events. But faith will change the natural design—faith can even change the laws of nature.

How? You see Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, at this age of 85 with all the problems this age brings. Yet He is pulling on, yet He is active, yet He guides, He inspires, and motivates. How is this possible? Because He has full faith in His Self, which is totally Divine. That Divine Self in Him made Him declare, “I am God! I am God!” emphatically and repeatedly.

He has repeatedly said, "I am God!" Yes. That kind of faith, that "I am God," that sort of faith as to declare openly, "I am God," made Him transcend the laws of nature. In the life story of Baba you will come across many, many events where Swami stopped rains; many, many events where Swami stopped fire havocs, where Swami helped devotees in times of cyclones and floods. He is quite free to go beyond the laws of nature because of His strong faith in His Self, that He is totally Divine, and nothing less than that.

Faith helps us to improve ourselves at three levels. At the physical level, if you have faith, you will be healthy. At the mental level, if you have faith, you will be wise. And at the intellectual level, if you have faith you will be correct in your decision-making. Therefore, the health of the body, the sharpness of the mind, and the alertness of the intellect are all because of faith in one's own Self.

We should then understand another basic point. If I want to be more energetic, if I want more energy to do His work, what shall I do? Shall I swallow vitamin tablets? Shall I take Calcium Sandoz? Chicken essence? What shall I do to be more energetic? Rather than swallowing these capsules, let me go to the source of energy so that I can draw some more energy from there.

And what is that source of energy? God is the only source of energy. Let us know that. Transformers are not sources of energy, nor are generators. The source of energy to the generator, the source of energy to the transformer, the main source and resource is God Himself and no one else. We should know this.

DO WE KNOW WHAT IS COUNTLESS?

And then, my friends, for the next point, do we know what is countless in this world? What can we not count in this world?

When I ask this question, some will answer that the stars are countless, because we cannot count all the stars. Some will say air cannot be counted, or water cannot be counted, or sand cannot be counted. These things are beyond count. Air is everywhere, beyond all measure. Water is plenty, beyond all limits. So these are all countless. You cannot count them.

There is another important thing, my friends, which is countless. It is very unfortunate that we have forgotten this. What is it? The countless blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba! His countless blessings! It is because of His blessing that we can turn to Him, because of His blessing that we can see Him; it is because of His blessing that we can listen to Him, that we can touch His Feet, and participate in His activities.

Therefore, let us bear this point in mind: the countless blessings of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

DO WE KNOW WHAT REALLY MATTERS?

The next question is, "Do we know what really matters in life?" Do we know this? When this watch is broken, I am disturbed. When a ring is lost, I am perturbed. When glasses are broken, I am depressed. Because glasses matter, I am depressed when they are broken. This ring is very precious; therefore when it is lost, naturally I am down in my spirits.

So what are the things that matter to me? Material objects, social relationships, and various jobs. Well, I'm sorry. They should not matter to you at all!

A very long time back, when Swami was here in Puttaparthi, a student took His car from the garage and drove to the city Bangalore. That boy was very close to Swami, and he knew how to drive. He opened the shutters, took the car out, and drove it to some place in Bangalore.

Bangalore is a busy city, as you know. There are many cars there in Bangalore, and there are traffic jams as you might have experienced. There in Bangalore this car met with an accident. The car was severely damaged. This boy started shivering and shaking. This was Swami's car, and now it was damaged. How to face Swami? How to tell Him? How to see Swami with this problem? It is understandable that he felt like this.

Totally grief-stricken, utterly sorrowful, and with a grim face he goes to Puttaparthi. Swami calls him by name and talks to him, "How are you?" He asks. The other fellow did not open his mouth. Swami started telling him, "My boy, don't worry about the car. You are important to me. Nothing happened to you. I am very happy about it. Anything may happen to My car; I am not bothered. What matters to Me is you, not My car."

This is an example, my friends, for all of us to learn what it is that really matters. "The one that matters to Me is you," He said. The one that matters to me is my true Self. Others should not matter.

When everything becomes a subject for discussion, you will end up in worry, and you will be leading a meaningless life. So what is it that matters? The one that matters is your true Self; the others don't matter at all. They are just like passing clouds. They are like shadows and you should not be affected by them.

GIVING THANKS

Then, my friends, do we know the word 'thanks'? Yes, we know it. We say 'thank you' to everybody. When I drop my handkerchief, if you pick it up and give it to me, I say, "Thank you." If you give me a glass of water, I say, "Thank you."

We give thanks for these things, but do we know that we don't give thanks to God every time? Do we know that we do not thank Him with a real depth of feeling? We don't do that. We don't say thanks to God because we take things for granted.

My friends, let us thank God. Thanking God is prayer. Giving thanks to God is an expression of gratitude. When you give Him thanks, you have respect and reverence for Him. When you give thanks, you are worshipful and humble. So let us repeatedly thank God for everything: "Thank You, My Lord! Thank You, My Lord!" Why? Because everything is His gift.

But we don't do this. When Swami gives you a ring, you say, "Thank You, Swami." If He does not, you don't thank Him, do you? If He gives you an interview, you thank Him. If He does not, you don't thank Him. Unfortunately our thanks have come down to the level of a business transaction: if you bless me, I say 'thank you'. If you favour me, I say 'thank you'. When my desire is fulfilled, I say, "Thank You, my God."

No, my friends! Even if your wish is not fulfilled, say, "Thank You, God, for not fulfilling my desire." Why? "You have not fulfilled my desire for my own good, because if the desire was fulfilled, I might get into danger tomorrow. Fulfilment of this desire may not serve my interest. Therefore, you have not answered my prayer."

A simple example, if a child wants to play with fire, she will ask, "Daddy, pass that fire to me, I want to play with it." Will you? No! Or when a diabetic patient wants to eat sweets, the doctor will say, "Nothing doing." So I thank the doctor because, being diabetic, if I eat more sweets I will fall sick.

Therefore denial, refusal, or non-fulfilment of desires also calls for thanksgiving. "Oh God! I thank You for all You have given. I thank You for all You have not given." Thanksgiving is continuous.

The positive and the negative are gimmicks, reflections of your thoughts, that's all. After all, your thoughts are selfish, and they are for the time being. But Divine thought is Divine will. Whatever arises in me is thought, but whatever happens is His will.

Let us know the difference between Divine will and human thought. Human thought is manoeuvrability, manageability, seeking gain, advantage, and profit in the moment; whereas Divine will is for a lifetime. Divine will foresees the future, Divine will can look into the present, and Divine will can go to the past. Even Divine will transcends time; while human thought, on the other hand, is bound by time.

Therefore, do we know that everything happens as per Divine will? Do we know to thank Him when our desires are not fulfilled? We should know this particular aspect, my friends. Life has no value if we don't thank God, because He gifted this life to us. He gifted us this body. He has given us opportunities to serve; He has given a number of chances to come closer and closer to Him. So we should thank Him for all the chances, for all the privileges, and for all the opportunities in life.

This thankfulness will make our lives rich. When we don't give thanks, we remain in poverty. We are so poor that we cannot even thank God, because we are suffering from inner poverty. But if we are rich enough, we will thank God for every little act, for every incident of our life.

And when we thank God, what happens? We are open. Our lives are like open books. People can know what we have done. People can learn from us. People can see through us. People can read in between the lines of our biographies. They can study.

Therefore, thanks will make our lives transparent, radiant, vibrant, and as crystal-clear as an open book ready for scrutiny . . . something like an accounts book ready for an audit. We will get this by giving thanks. So let us be thankful to God to be open-minded.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE THANK GOD?

When I say thanks to God, what happens? I know what I am, I know that God is Supreme while I am very small, and that everything happens as per His grace. Therefore, thanksgiving will help me to know my true Self, my inner Self.

You must have come across the passage in the *Holy Bible* where Jesus goes on thanking God, even as He is on the cross. Did you know this? Even in periods of extreme challenge and difficulty, Jesus prayed to His Father in heaven. That's why Jesus could rise to that level of worship. Jesus could rise to that level of Divinity because of thanksgiving.

In the *Mahabharat*, the *Pandavas* are highly respected because of their thanksgiving. So thanksgiving will put you on a high pedestal because you are in the hands of the Supreme. That's what thanksgiving is.

And what is another thing that happens when we thank God? Those tasks which are so difficult, which are tough and rough, can be handled easily. Difficult tasks become easy by thanking God, because God, in His compassion, is very happy with your thankfulness. So He feels like conferring countless blessings on you, and thus by your thankfulness, you easily cross over difficulties.

And not only that: by being thankful to God, in difficult times, in deep misery, what happens is that unknowingly there is inner, spiritual growth. There is an inner spiritual growth by thanking God every day for everything.

Further, when I pray, which is certainly giving thanks to God, it will help my fellow men. "Oh God! Thank you for what You have given me. I pray to You to bless all those people who are poor and needy." Their life will also be lifted. It is not only you who will be elevated and lifted, but your brothers and sisters, the poor and needy, will also receive help from the Divine.

Do we know these things about thanksgiving, my friends? We say thanks as a matter of routine. We say thanks as a mere matter of courtesy, as a matter of etiquette; but we should know that giving thanks is a meaningful thing. Thanks to God it is something meaningful and purposeful, with spiritual implications. That's what we should know today.

BEING AND NOT SEEMING TO BE

And then, do we know that we should *be* and not *seem to be*? We have to be, not appear to be. I should *be* good, not merely *look* good. I should *be* honest, not merely *look* honest. So be, don't seem to be. Be, that's all.

Don't appear to be, because then the appearance may not be in agreement with the true nature; the appearance and the reality may not be one. You see many politicians, who *seem* to be good. Are they good? No! If they really were good, there wouldn't be corruption in this world. There wouldn't be any maladministration.

So, a hypocrite, a man with double standards, will seem good; he will look good, but he will not really be good. Therefore *be* good, don't merely *seem* good. That's what we should know now.

DO WE KNOW LOVE?

Well, my friends, we often speak of love, but do we know love in depth? Let me now share some things that we should know: love is *not* possessiveness. This feeling, "I want to possess," is not love. Possession and possessiveness are not the qualities of true love.

Suppose a man says to a woman, "I love you, my dear." He wants to possess her. This is not love; it is only infatuation. If that lady says, "I love you, my dear," it's only attraction, not love. Attraction and infatuation are different from love. Love is neither possessiveness nor possession. Let's understand this point.

Then what is love? Love means to give. It is not about receiving. That's what you find in Sathya Sai Baba. He goes on giving without end, giving and giving. He gives *saris*, *dhotis*, and garments for gents, T-shirts, gifts, fruits, and sweets. Giving and forgiving is the nature of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, who is the very embodiment of love, the very personification of love.

To love means to give, to renounce, and to sacrifice. Do we know this? And then, to love means not to forget God, because He will never forget you. When He does not forget you, how can you afford to forget Him? True love will never allow you to forget God, who never forgets you. Let's understand this.

Do we know the way to love? Do we know how to love? Being a man of ego and arrogance you cannot love, because ego is an obstacle for love. What is the way to love? The way to love is to be very humble. The way to love is to be very simple, available, and humble. 'After all, I am the least. Oh God! I am the last. Oh God! In front of You, I am minimal, I have nothing. If I am really what I am today it is only because of You, my Lord!'

If you have that feeling, you will be humble and simple. That is the way to love. The way to love is humility and simplicity. Why is this? Is it possible to love without being humble and simple? No, my friends! It's not possible. You need to empty your heart of all ego and arrogance so that God's spirit and God's grace will fill it.

And then, what is love? Love treats everybody equally—the man with a position, and the man without one, the young and the old, men, women, the rich and the poor, the saint and the sinner. When you are alike to everybody, it means you love people, and you are simple.

Take Baba: He loves children, He loves students, He loves peons and attendants, He loves the President of India. His love has no conditions and no boundaries because He loves everybody. The way that He showers His love on the President of India is the same as His love towards a child of the primary school. Let us understand true love from the life of Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba.

AMBITION AND BEING AMBITIOUS

The next point, my friends, is about ambition in life. You can have an ambition but do not be ambitious. Being ambitious is different from having an ambition. You may have an ambition, but when you are ambitious it means you are caught in a chain of ambitions, one after another. Ambitiousness is a trait of character, whereas ambition is a target, aim, or purpose.

Have an ambition but do not be ambitious. To be ambitious is wrong because the ambitious mind will run after desire after desire, and ultimately you will be caught in the cobwebs of the world. We should know the difference between these two points, ambition and being ambitious.

THE IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF BABA

Do we know the important aspects of Baba? We say that He is God. Why? He fulfils our desires. You say you love Him. Why? He loves you. But do we know Baba also represents these points? Sathya Sai Baba is a forerunner of the Golden Age. Sathya Sai Baba is a thinker and a revealer of the truth of life. He reveals the truth of life. Sathya Sai Baba promotes and motivates everyone by His own example of selfless service and sacrifice. He inspires everybody to serve.

And Sathya Sai Baba is a centre of spiritual illumination at the international level today. He is a centre of illumination, just like the sun from which light spreads all over the planet. It is as if Baba is a sun from which the light of wisdom shines all over the globe. This is what we have to understand.

DO WE KNOW HOW TO BE CLOSE TO GOD?

And then, how can we be dear to Baba? How can we be close to Baba? Do we know how? No. We think we know, but we don't know. We should know how to be close to Baba. Here are a few points, a few suggestions: let us be silent. Let us be unseen though we are doing everything. You may do any number of things, but be in the background. Baba does so many things but He does not advertise. He will never tell you, "I have done this for you." No!

Baba's example is the best example from which we can learn to be silent, unseen, and remain behind the screen, because He does things, being hidden within us. God hides Himself within us. He is hidden and He also wants us to hide from publicity and propaganda.

Second: to be close to Baba, let's not run after shouts, applause, appreciations, tributes encomiums, and praises. Let's not clamour for recognition. No! When you want recognition from the world, the matter ends there.

The *Holy Bible* says never to pray openly, never to pray in the middle of a street. Why? Because praying to God is an absolutely personal activity, not a public one. Similarly, don't run after praises, tributes, and all that. That is one way to be close to Baba.

How do I say that? There are some students here who won gold medals to be awarded to them by the President of India. Do you know what they said to Swami? Swami said, "Oh! You got gold medals from President of India? Very good." Do you know what these boys told Swami?

"I have not done this to receive a gold medal from the President of India. To be in Your Presence is more than the award of a gold medal by the President of India. To be in Your Presence, to talk to You, to touch Your feet is more than receiving a gold medal from the President of India." That is the kind of attitude that should be there.

And then, let us all be a witness to things as they happen. Just as in a movie, watch what is taking place. You can also see things going on in your mind; you can also see what is taking place in your own life. Be a witness to the movie of your own life. That is another way of coming closer to Baba.

To give up our vanities is to be closer and dearer to Baba. Avoid all kinds of vanity. Vanity is not important; charity is important. Therefore, let us be the devotees of charity and not of vanity.

And then, when you love poor people, God loves you. Understand that. Blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek, for they will be rewarded. Therefore, when you love poor people, God loves you; when you serve poor people, God serves you, He will bless you. Let us understand that.

DO WE KNOW TO RESPOND IMMEDIATELY?

Finally, do we know that we have to respond and react immediately? Do we know that? We don't do it. When Swami says, "Do this!" do it immediately, without a second thought. That's what He expects from us.

But we don't react immediately; we don't take immediate steps in response to His call. A simple example: here is a mother crow and here is the little offspring of the crow. This little offspring, the baby crow, is in the nest, and cannot get up and fly. Mother crow, sitting on a branch of the tree tells him, "Oh child, get up!" The child cannot, because his wings aren't free. This baby crow is afraid that he may lose his life if he tries to fly. But mother crow says, "Come on, get up, jump!" Suddenly the child jumps, and the baby bird starts flying.

Baba is our Mother. Baba is our Father. When He says, "Come on, get up, jump!" it is the Divine call, the clarion call, the command of God! Let us be ready to jump into action and earn His blessings. May Bhagavan be with you forever and ever!

Jai Sai Ram!

OM...OM...OM...

Asato Maa Sadgamaya

Tamaso Maa Jyotirgamaya

Mrityormaa Amrithamgamaya

Om Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu

Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu

Samastha Loka Sukhino Bhavantu

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

