

PODCAST 185:

WAKEFULNESS, SAINTLINESS, RESPECT, LOVE

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh, 185th episode welcomes you.

Today's topic is on wakefulness.

What is wakefulness? Who is awake? What are the features of wakefulness? How is it confusing? How is it mistaken for saintliness? In what way is wakefulness different from saintliness? These are the aspects which will be dealt with in this episode.

A spiritual man and a spirit man and an enlightened person are awake. This wakefulness has got nothing to do with holiness, and nothing to do with unholiness either. Holiness and unholiness are both dreams. For dreams you have to be asleep whereas an enlightened person is awake. All dreams have disappeared.

For instance Buddha is not a saint. He is not a sinner either. Buddha is not God and he is not a devil either. All dualities are irrelevant in an enlightened person who is awake. In other words, he is simply a witness of all the mystery that surrounds him within and without.

Now we have got our own ideas about a saint and saintliness. We expect a kind of dress or lifestyle in a saint. We have certain ideas about how a saint should be. So there are a thousand and one expectations. Now coming to the point - a person who is awake or enlightened is one who lives to himself, simply being to himself. He is not here to be somebody else's carbon copy. No.

A Jain comes and thinks in terms of Mahavira and compares an enlightened person with Mahavira. But he is not Mahavira. The Christian comes with the idea of Christ and starts comparing this man who is in a wakeful state with Christ. Certainly he is not a Christ. He is simply himself. We can understand him only if we drop all comparisons, and if we forget all the ideas that have been imposed on our minds. If we simply look at this man in a wakeful state without any prejudice, things will be very, very clear.

Some people say, "How is it that I love a saint?" Here we have to be very clear. Some are to be respected and some are to be loved. The saints, as per opinion, are so high. They are in the heavens and we are so low. How can you love him who is up in the sky? Love means equality. Love means we are standing on the same plane. But saints are so holy and we are so unholy, yes. Respect is ok, but love seems to be impossible. So we should know the difference between respect and love.

Respect is an ugly word, please remember it. It has more letters than four. But actually it is a four-lettered word. Respect is bound to be ugly in two ways. If you respect somebody, you degrade yourself into inferiority. Unless you start feeling

inferior to somebody, you cannot respect them. Hence all your saints go on condemning you. Unless you are condemned, they cannot be respected. So the respect from your side is dependent on the condemnation from their side.

They call us sinners, so only then can you call them saints. They condemn everything that you do - your eating, your drinking, your living, your whole life in every minute detail also; every minute detail has to be condemned. All that is natural has to be condemned. So then unnatural lives become very respectable. Please think seriously along these lines.

All the saints, the so-called saints I mean, have been condemning humanity down the ages. So slowly, slowly, after hearing for centuries that you are sinners, you have become sinners. They have conditioned you into such inferiority that it has almost become a reality. You have started fulfilling what they have been saying about you. If you want a man to be a criminal, go on telling him that he is a criminal. Go on repeating it, and he will surely be hypnotized. So once a person accepts that he is a criminal, he becomes one.

This is a psychological issue that deserves our attention. Their saintliness depends on your being sinners. The greater you are in your sin, the higher is their saintliness. Therefore let us not run after these so-called saints because they have condemned your natural instincts.

They become unnatural, pathological. They start standing on their heads just to show they're totally different from you. If you enjoy eating, they hate eating. If you love beauty, they condemn beauty. If you are enchanted with the world, they call the world an illusion or *maya*. They say it does not exist at all. If you love your body, they destroy their bodies. Whatever you do, they have to do just the opposite because that's the only way to prove their superiority.

Our so-called saints have created a very insane humanity. They have turned us insane and they have turned themselves insane. Because they have to be unnatural, they are sitting on volcanoes. They have repressed all that is natural and now nature wants to assert itself. They are in a constant civil war. They are fighting with themselves so whatever they are fighting with is becoming stronger every day because the more you fight with something, the more you have to pay attention to it. Their minds become focussed.

So we have to think along these lines about how we are victimized. How do we fall prey into the hands of the so-called saints? These insane people, pathological people, have been very dominant in the past. It is because of these people that the earth has become a hell. They have performed, or I should say, they have transformed the whole of humanity into an ugly mess.

So let's not go for a saint; let's go for a man just like any one of us. Say Bhagavan Baba, He is like any one of us. He doesn't declare that He is a saint. He will never consider us inferior to Him. Further He says that He and you are one. That's what I want to bring to your attention.

Sleeping and waking are as much your potential as they are the potential of anyone. Sleeping and waking are the two sides of the same coin so how can one side be superior to the other side? Both sides are of the same coin. Yes. You are asleep and awake. But this does not make me superior in any way.

Therefore, the day he became a Buddha, the day he became enlightened, the whole universe became enlightened with him. What does he mean? That's what Buddha said. What does he mean? He means the day he became enlightened, he became aware that everybody can become enlightened. There's nothing special. It is an ordinary quality of every being.

We may not use it. That's our choice. We may not actualisz our potential. That's our decision and we are free to decide that. We may choose to remain asleep, but we are not committing any sin. We are not doomed just because we are asleep. Any moment you can decide to wake up. So it is left to you to be a Buddha or not, to be a Buddha. If you like to sleep and dream, it is perfectly okay. That's how our freedom has to be respected.

We can love. You cannot love the saints because they are too far away. Baba is so near, so close to us, so we can love Him. He is standing just by our side. He is not sitting on a golden throne somewhere high in the heavens. He was walking on the earth with us so He is as earthly as anyone else. There's just a little difference. It's nothing to do with superiority. The difference is that Swami is no more asleep, no more dreaming. We can come out of our dreams at this very moment because dreams cannot hold you. They cannot keep you imprisoned in them. You can burst forth from them. You are an imprisoned splendour but you are imprisoned through your own choice. You have gone into the prison through your own choice. This is your decision.

Therefore, there's a small story of a Zen monk who used to steal small things. He was a great enlightened master and yet he used to steal small things. Somebody's cigarette case or somebody's shoes and then he would be caught and he would be sent to prison. His disciples were very much puzzled. He had many disciples and they asked him again and again, "Why do you do such things? We are here ready to help. How many cigarette boxes do you want? How many shoes do you want? We can bring as many as you want for you to steal."

Then the Zen master would laugh and never say anything. But he continued in his own way. In the end when he was dying his disciples asked, "Now tell us what the secret was. There must be something."

Then the master said, "There's nothing much in it. It is a simple phenomenon. I wanted to go to jail again and again. I wanted to go to the jail just to help the people who are inside to come out. That was the only way - stealing something then getting caught. I had to manage both first stealing things and then getting caught. So then the magistrate would send me for six months to jail. During those six months, I would try to help people who were inside to come out. And I am happy, tremendously happy that it has helped many to come out of jail.

So now this man is going to jail knowingly and consciously. It is his choice. Even in jail, he is a free man. He is not imprisoned by anybody. He has imprisoned himself for a certain purpose. So is the case with you. You have imprisoned yourself. This simply proves your freedom. Any day you want to get out of it, you can get out of it. So everything is given to our choice. We should not forget that.

You have chosen to be asleep; so you can choose to be awake. You have lived in sleep for many, many lives. You have seen all that sleep makes possible. Now please see what awakening can give you.

In fact some have seen both sides. Sleep cannot give you anything. It only promises but never delivers and does any good. Sleep can give you only dreams, hallucinations. Sleep cannot fulfil you. So those who have known both sleep and also being awake, let us listen to them. If we come close to them, we are bound to fall in love with them.

Therefore friends, it is not a question of respect. Respect is a formality. Your respect, you respect the Christian priest, you respect the Hindu Mahatma, you respect the Jaina Muni, you respect the Catholic monk, and you respect the Pope. But you don't respect Christ or Buddha or Krishna, no; you love them. You love them.

Respect is very ordinary. It brings no revolution in your life. It's a trick of the mind. The mind says, "Look how much I respect the holy people." There it is finished. Now what more can you do? You can respect them and sometimes you can go and touch their feet. It becomes a formality. Therefore in India, touching the feet is just a formality. It means nothing.

So respect means nothing. It is dangerous too because when you respect somebody, deep down you start imitating them because you would also like to be respected. The ego wants to be respected. So whomever you respect, sooner or later unconsciously, you'll start imitating him because you think that's the only way to get respect from people. So, respect creates in you a desire to imitate, to become carbon copies.

Therefore, you will see that respect always has a 'because': 'I respect him 'because'. But love has no because. Love is simply there for no reason at all. Respect is logical. You can say why you respect a person. He eats only once a day. He has renounced the world, his wife, children, family, everything. He sleeps only for three hours, or maybe he remains awake the whole night. He is continuously chanting the name of God. Things like that. Or he serves the poor, how he goes to ill people and he serves them! This is how we respect people because of these reasons. Let us be very clear about this.

Socialism also advocates that there should be equality. But because of our charity, if all become equal, then we are against socialism because in that case you are left with nobody to serve. So socialism will destroy poverty. It will create equal distribution of property and possessions. Then there are no more poor people.

Then whom do you serve? And without service, how can you be saintly? Without service, there will be no virtue. This is the art in it. This means poverty is needed,

very essentially needed. It is needed for the existence of all the so-called saints. Ill people are needed. Lepers and blind and lame and deaf people are needed; otherwise who will the missionaries serve? And without serving we cannot reach heaven. Service is the ladder. So let people be poor. This is urban psychology.

Let us examine critically the same missionaries are able to convert poor people to Christianity. In India not even a single rich person has been converted to Christianity - only poor people, very poor people and they are converted to Christianity not because they love Christ but because they love bread and butter. The Christian missionaries can supply them with a little food, clothes, shelter, a school, a hospital. That's what it is.

Therefore, people are poor according to Hindu arguments because of the past *karmas*. If you make them rich, if you distribute the property and the like to the poor, you'll be interfering with their past *karmas* and this is not good. This is a sin to interfere in somebody's *karma*. So let them suffer. They deserve suffering.

Helping the poor to become rich is almost breaking the walls of the prison and letting the prisoners escape. You'll be doing something very illegal. The poor people are suffering and the rich people are rich because they were virtuous in their past lives. Any effort to take their money from them is going against the law of life, the law of *karma*. You are going against God. This is the way Hindus think, see this.

Socialism is against religion and so-called saints. Therefore saints need psychological treatment. They are repulsing all their desires. Sooner or later, they start living a double life. They start living two lives together - one on the surface, the saintly, and the real underground or from the back door. We see in newspapers how many saints and pseudo-saints are caught by the public and the government and they are in prison. We know that. But we go on respecting the masks.

So don't expect your respect from anybody. No, not at all. Love is enough. Love is right because love gives you equality within. Quality love gives you quality. So Swami always treats all as equals. Not only that but the trees, the birds and the animals and even the rocks are given equal treatment. The whole existence is a brotherhood - nobody is higher and nobody is lower. There is no hierarchy. There's only one God expressing itself in millions of forms. So how can there be a hierarchy?

Awakening is just the other side of the coin and very far because awakening takes you totally to a different world from sleep. Sleep takes you to dreams, while awakening is to reality. To be awake is the door to God. It is the door to God.

Respect is a poor substitute for love, a plastic substitute for the real rose. It may look like a rose but it's not. It has no roots in the earth, no juices flowing through it. It has no contact with the sun and the wind and the rain. It is disconnected from existence. It is simply a plastic flower. Looks like a rose, but it's an imitation. Respect is a plastic flower. Love is a real rose. Joy never arises out of respect because out of respect a little sadness arises.

If you have observed closely, whenever you respect somebody, you feel humiliated. You may have to look at your humiliation because it hurts. So whenever you respect somebody, there is humiliation because if somebody is superior, you are inferior and inferiority hurts.

Respect cannot give you joy, but love certainly gives you joy. Joy is a by-product of love, the aura of love. Wherever love is there, there is joy, there is silence, and there is benediction. All those who do not know real roses have only always known the plastic ones. If you bring them to a rose bush, they will even think these are plastic flowers attached to the bush. That's what it is.

Many lives of longing to find a Buddha, or to find a Christ have brought us to Swami. We are ancient pilgrims. Now we have found the opportunity, this opportunity. We are fortunate to love, fortunate to feel the joy of love, fortunate because this love is going to become a door to the Divine.

Sai Ram.

Thank you.