

Part 09 | Experiences with Swami | Prof K Anil Kumar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHRZkGK96rA&t=2s>

Highlights

When I turned around, there was Swami. "What a stunt!" Swami suddenly opened the door and came into the room.

"Who is this for?" He asked. When Swami says something, you should do it thoroughly.

You will not hear the words "Don't have," or "Not that."

When I opened the door, all the vessels were full.

Everywhere I see Your compassion, Swami!

He went to them. Swami said, "Hello, how are you?"

Kodaikanal was a training camp.

Swami buys cotton candy and straw hats

When He asked me to come to Bengaluru, I remember the words Swami said to me.

"Go to Bengaluru. I am very free there," He said.

What He means by being free, I understood over time.

In Prasanthi Nilayam, Swami is busy with organisations, responsibilities, and activities.

In Kodaikanal He is leisurely. That is why He said He is very free there.

There are only a few people there. So we go up on a hill, and then on another hill, is where Swami's residence is.

Its name is Sai Sruthi. Sruthi means Vedam. We talked about the daily routine there.

I must tell you one thing. Bhagawan's life history itself is the Bhagavatam.

To remember that life history itself is our practice of Sadhana.

So learning about Swami's life history is a true Sadhana, a true mythological text.

I still remember when I was in high school, they used to sell cotton candy.

There is a stick, and there's cotton like candy around it, in the colour of ice cream. It's sweet.

During recess, we would go out and buy those. They call it puff candy in English, but we didn't know it then.

We know what cotton candy is. In Kodaikanal, some kids sell this puff candy on the road.

Now and then, Swami goes out for a drive in the car.

In those hills, even the trees are awaiting Him. They say, "Lord Sai, when will You come?"

"When will we have Your Darshan?" Since they are also awaiting Him, Swami goes to bless them.

That's how I feel. Why? Because as His car approaches, the trees start waving.

As His car approaches, the flowers bloom in ecstasy, "There He comes, Lord Sai!"

"Come, come, O Lord, You have come after so long!"

"Deliver your gifts of love to Swami, because He is coming after so long," I feel nature says in anticipation.

While Swami is in residence, many people make their way to Kodaikanal.

Many people travel to Kodaikanal while Swami is in residence there. So that they can get Swami's Darshan, as well as enjoy nature's beauty.

So they sell some things during those times. One time, Swami stopped His car.

One person was selling cotton candy. I was right next to Him. He called that person.

"How many do you have?" He mentioned 20 or so. "How much?" He said how many paises it cost.

"Put them all in the car," He said. Cotton candy in Swami's car.

When he put them, He said, "Anil Kumar, give him money."

Swami's money bag used to be with me. I gave him a 500 Rupee note.

Altogether, they would not have cost more than 50 Rupees. Why is He giving him 500 Rupees?

Swami said, "I'm not buying them, and he's not selling them."

"This is My gift of love, and his joy. That's all." "In that case, Swami, why did You buy them?" I asked.

It was His grace, but He always answered all the questions I asked.

He would give me the freedom to ask, and He would also grant me the opportunities to ask.

It was all His grace. He said, "Look Anil Kumar, all these people are dirt poor."

"Their parents are ill and bedridden. They must be maintained, so they sell these things to live."

"They will feel happy when I buy them." Although this was an incident, I feel that Swami's every act

is for the benefit of others. His mercy, His compassion, and His love are demonstrated.

Similarly, in our lives, whatever we do, we must do them with love, compassion and selflessness.

When I saw that ideal, I was thrilled. Another day, as we were driving, someone was selling hats made with palm leaves.

Someone might buy them. "Come here. How many do you have?" The seller mentioned 25 or so.

"How much?" and he mentioned the cost. "Put them in the car," He said. All those hats were placed in the car. "Who are these for, Swami?" I asked.

"For you all," He said. We are not the kind of people to wear hats.

After returning to Swami's bungalow, each student took a photo with Swami, wearing one of those hats.

It was very charming taking photos with Swami on the terrace at the top of the house, on top of the high hill.

There were crowds of people outside. They could see us. So the demand for those hats went up in Kodaikanal.

Everyone bought all of them, so that even if you wanted one you couldn't find a hat to buy. You could not buy cotton candy. Everyone thought it was Prasadam and bought them all.

That's Baba. It must be useful to all, and everyone must earn a little bit more.

That's how Swami's entry is. Swami's arrival is not only joyful, it also grants monetary help, as well as thrills us physically, and enlightens us spiritually. That's how Swami's activities impact us.

I thought both of these incidents were wonderful. When we returned, He called all the students.

"Buy something for your brothers and sisters and parents."

Gifts for family from the Tibetan shops

"They will feel happy that their son went to Kodaikanal and bought something for them."
He gave out money to everyone. He called me too and gave me some money.
"Why do I need it, Swami?" I asked. "You too buy something and say Swami gave it to you." I thought, "Alright Swami, very good." He called the students and said, "Go into the town."
"Beyond the lake, and before the town, you will see some tents laid down."
"Those are Tibetan people. They set up Tibetan shops. Go there and buy something," He said. Because of Swami's arrival, demand goes up. They set up temporary tents to sell their wares. They have all kinds of things there. Then He said, "All of you don't buy from the same shop."
"Everyone should be able to sell something. Each of you buy from different shops."
"Anil Kumar, you look after them. Just because one shop looks good, don't all go to the same one."
"Go to all the shops," He told them. "Anil Kumar, you too go along with them," He said.
"What should I buy, Swami? I never bought anything for the house with these two hands." She looks after the household all by herself. I was involved in Swami's speeches and Swami's activities and tours.
That's how I spent my life. I never bought anything for the house. I don't even know what to buy.
"Don't talk. You're talking too much. Go!" He said.
So I went along with the students. They are young men so they know. They bought sweaters, shawls, and bed sheets, but I didn't know what to buy. I didn't know. I called one student and asked, "What would be good to buy for Aunty?"
He said, "Sir, the sweaters in Tibetan shops are really good. Buy a sweater for Aunty."
"What colour? I like all the colours. If I buy one colour and she doesn't like it, what should I do?" So they selected it themselves. I bought a sweater and had it wrapped.
We all returned. Swami was standing up there. He asked each one, "What did you buy? A bed sheet?"
"How much did it cost?" "200" He said, "200? It should only have been 50."
"Hey, what did you buy?" "I bought a shawl, Swami." "How much?" "150" He said, "No, just 50." In this way, Swami was joking with them and enjoying it. "You got tricked properly!"
"You getting tricked makes Me happy. Because they're all poor people." "They have been waiting for the Sai season. So it's good," He said.
I had already suspected that something like this would happen. So I did not go straight to Swami. I took the back passage and went upstairs.
Swami called, "Anil!" It's impossible to escape. "Yes, Swami?" "Come!" "Coming, Swami."
"Bring what you bought too," He said. I thought I would die. But it's unavoidable.
I brought it with me. "What did you buy?" "Something, Swami." "Something? Take it out. Open it," He said. What could I do? I couldn't escape.
All the students were there. "Don't embarrass me in front of everyone."
"My Sai is not coming to me." Have you decided to embarrass me in front of everyone, Swami? I opened the package. "Who is this for?" He asked. "I bought it for my wife, Swami," I said.
He laughed out loud. "Why do you need sweaters in Guntur? Guntur is extremely hot."
"Do you need a sweater for that? Chee Chee! What would she think?"
"How is she living with you? Chee!" There used to be a person called Radhakrishna with Swami.
"Radhakrishna!" He came. He brought two Coimbatore Saris.

Coimbatore is famous for its textile industry. He brought those two Saris and packed them. "Take these to your wife. What will you say? Tell her that you bought them. Don't mention My name."

"Swami, even if I said that, would she believe me? I will tell her, certainly."

"Does she not know about my buying capabilities and selection?" "Shut your mouth and do what you're told." I said, "Yes, Swami."

What this tells me is His love is not just for the one in front of Him, but for the students' parents and siblings as well.

Swami is distributing love because He is thinking about the welfare of their families as well.

What kind of love is that? Unceasing love. Eternal love. Divine love. Genuine love.

Selfless love. Nectarine love. I still remember it to this day.

Saris for Prasanthi Bhajan singers

That was a beautiful sight to witness. Another day, there was a person named Srinivasan garu.

He had served as the All India President. He was a resident of Madras.

He had a house as well in Kodaikanal. Swami would take us to his house on each visit.

One day, when we were all in the Mandir at Sai Sruthi, He said, "Srinivasan, come here," and gave him two Saris.

He put them in a bag and said, "Go and give them there. There will be three women there."

"Go and give it to them," He said. No one is bold enough to ask Swami for details.

He somehow figured out where they lived. At the bottom of the hill where Swami resides, there lived a dentist named Abraham. Next to his hospital, on the road, there were these three women.

He went and we don't know what he did, but he returned by tea time in the evening.

"Hey Srinivasan, did you go see them?" "I saw them, Swami." "Did you give them?" "No, Swami."

"Why not?" "You said three women, but there was only one woman, Swami."

"I didn't know what to do with them, so I brought them back," he said. "Oh, there were three when I told you about them. When you went, there was only one."

"Two of them got on a bus and went to Madurai. Go back and give it to them," He said.

Then he went back and gave them. There is a proverb, 'Curiosity killed a cat.'

I have a lot of curiosity to know. Who might they have been? What was the bag?

And He would always tell me too. He never said, "Why do you want to know? Shut up."

I just needed to know. I didn't need anything else, except His miracles, His incidents, His messages.

And to spread them. Other than that, I don't need anything else in my life. He said, "Back in those days, those two girls used to sing in Prasanthi Nilayam."

"They used to play the Suprabhatam on the Veena in those days. Now they live in Madurai."

"I sent them Saris and some money," He said. What a marvellous incident!

I felt that Swami never forgets anything. It's a great quality.

Sai does not know forgetfulness. On top of that, His attitude of gratitude that they sang back then.

They used to sing Kirtans and Bhajans in the Mandir, and He remembered that.

After so many years passed, He still remembered them and gifted them those Saris.

How can we describe the wide expansive heart of Lord Sai?

Swami's compassion is endless. It's not something we can talk about.

In the same way, whatever help we may have received from anyone in life, whatever wonderful experiences we may have enjoyed, we should not forget it, is the moral that I understood.

I feel that Swami's every word, every act is exemplary, a teachable moment.

That's how I look at it. I saw where they lived. We used to go walking everyday by that area.

Some students would be with me too. I wanted to talk to them and find out a few things.

Because I had people with me, I came back alone after lunch.

Swami would be resting during that time, and the students would also be resting.

No one would bother me. So quietly, I came walking down. I came to the place where that one woman was.

"Mother, are you the one who Swami sent to?" "Yes, child."

"We used to live there in those days. Our days have passed, so we came here."

"What is your name? How long have you been coming for?" the elderly lady asked me.

She mentioned one thing. I felt that God made her say it. All incidents are willed by God.

They are not what we think. She said, "When did Hanuman come in the story of Ramayana?"

"He came during the Kishkindha Kanda. He was not in the first chapters."

"When did Vishwamitra come? During Sita's wedding. After that, he is not seen."

What did she mean? That God gives each of us an opportunity.

We are present during that opportunity. We must not rue that it passed by.

We must not feel saddened that we have been distanced. Our role in the epic story of Sathya Sai, has been given to us by Him for a time.

That's how we must think, and not worry about our time passing. Nothing is over. We were given an opportunity. The elderly lady said, "What does a sculptor do with stones?"

"He carves a beautiful statue out of each stone. When he completes a statue, he sets it aside."

"Then he picks up the next one. He does not keep carving the same stone his whole life." "In the same way, Bhagawan came to redeem mankind. He gives each one an opportunity."

"We should not think that I'm not near Him, I'm not close to Him, I have become distant to Him."

She told me that, unsolicited. I didn't ask why she said that.

I asked her, "Mother, why are you telling me these things?" "I heard that you are being familiar with Swami, and that He is showering you with His love."

"I'm telling you ahead of time, in case you are distanced tomorrow, for some reason," she said.

"Mother, I'm grateful. Ramabrahmam garu had told me this earlier, and you are telling me now."

"You are my Guru, no one else. Ramabrahmam garu said to have my suitcase ready."

"We never know when we may have to leave. Have the zipper open, pack your things and leave."

"When He tells you to come back, close the zipper and come back." "That's it. Don't think you are permanent," Ramabrahmam garu used to tell me.

These are some of the incidents I observed in Kodaikanal. The land around Swami's residence was given by someone.

Swami takes a letter in someone's pocket

When he gave that land, Swami accepted it, blessed him and asked to start digging to lay the foundation.

This was additional land around the building. All the Sevadals started digging.

I felt that it would not look appropriate if I didn't dig. I was not used to digging pits. I had never done anything. But why did I feel like digging?

Because wherever His work is being done, Swami comes there. I thought I could have Swami's Darshan when He comes. Someone gave me a crowbar.

I sat, ready to dig with it. When I turned around, there was Swami.

"What a stunt! You working? And I should see you? Be careful not to drop it on your foot," He said.

"Swami, I'm just acting because I thought You would come here." "Ah, I know," He said smilingly and walked on. Next to me was an Argentinian, called Martin.

He has an automobile factory in Buenos Aires. He wore shorts and an undershirt, and was digging.

He had not even looked at Swami. He was working away. His undershirt had a pocket.

Swami went to him. He signalled, "Look at him," meaning that I should learn from him.

He was telling me to notice the dedication with which he was working.

He went to him. "Hello, how are you?" Swami said. You should have seen how he jumped with joy.

His face lit up like a thousand candles. His hands were covered in dirt.

Swami went close to him. He did this to show his pocket. Swami put His hand in his pocket and took the letter.

He wrote a letter and put it in his pocket to give it to Swami. He had dirt on his hands, so he did this. Swami took the letter then.

I still remember it today. Martin is well known to me. What was the meaning of this?

I should give it in an envelope, I should touch its edges with turmeric, I should write the complete address,

I should plan it for an auspicious date and time, none of these stupid plans work in front of God.

Only devotion. I saw Swami pick up a letter from someone's pocket!

If we are fortunate, whatever we give out of devotion, I saw that Swami accepts it.

One morning He sat where there was a high cliff, there was a valley at the bottom, which was not deep, so devotees could sit there. There was also a shed where devotees could sit.

Swami was in the Mandir, and was yet to come out. There was a person named Bosani.

Bosani is a president of the Sathya Sai Organisation. "Bosani, come here."

"There is a devotee there (He mentioned a name). Call him," He said.

He said, "Okay Swami," and he went. He came back and said, "None of them came, Swami."

"Tell Me that you didn't see them. Go back, and on the left they will be sitting by the slope."

"Call them," He said. When he went back, they were there by the slope. He called them. Swami told Bosani, "When Swami says something, you should do it thoroughly."

"You should look completely. You should find out everything. Swami knows everything."

He knows where you looked. If you just looked around and came back that's not right.

We must do Swami's work with a pure heart, completely, with a sense of dedication.

That was the lesson I learnt that day. Swami also performs Narayana Seva there.

Food becomes Akshayam during Narayana Seva

One time, Easwaramma's anniversary ceremony was performed. They thought some 500-600 people would attend. They brought Saris and Dhotis.

Food was being cooked. Mrs. Ratanlal was overseeing all the cooking for a long time. All the cooking happens under her oversight. The next day was Narayana Seva. If the Narayana Seva, our breakfast would not happen until 7:30 anyway. I woke up later, and did not yet brush my teeth. I did not have my bath. I wasn't able to change my clothes. I only had a towel wrapped around me. I had an undershirt on top. If anyone saw me they would be disgusted. I was in that state in my room, since breakfast wasn't until 7:30. Suddenly the door opened, and Swami came into my room. "Chee Chee Chee, what is this Anil Kumar? Thousands of people are waiting for My Darshan outside," "I'm getting your Darshan here. Chee! Get dressed." "But Swami, breakfast is at 7:30, isn't it?" "Not at 7:30. Don't you know? Today there is Narayana Seva for Easwamma's anniversary ceremony." "They're cooking since early this morning. Can you not hear the noises of the vessels?" "You have become like the brother of Kumbhakarna. Chee! Get dressed," He said. It made me very happy, that He came into my room and commented on having my Darshan. And me being in that state at that time. It makes me laugh, but makes me happy too. Swami came into my room. "I am always waiting for You." Millions of people are awaiting Swami, "I am waiting for You with so much love." "I am always waiting for You. Don't betray my desire. Come into my heart." "O Lord of my life, make it Your home. Come into my heart." Swami, please come, O Lord of my life, make my heart Your home. You might ask why. Because I have been waiting for You for so long. I remember that song. As I have been familiar with these great poets' writings since childhood, probably because of listening to Hari Kathas, and Puranas, they have become like the blood in my nerves. In my joy, I'm sharing them with you. The main thing here is that I'm not eccentric, please don't think that. Swami's compassion is in everything. Everywhere we see is Swami's grace. Don't think I'm saying this out of eccentricity. One woman came away from her work and said, "Swami," "I'm in a hurry. I set the milk to boil. Can You please watch it?" she said. If her milk boils over, Swami should set it aside, because she was on a different task. Meaning, even household chores are also in Swami's realm, for some. Even household chores. "Swami, I can't find my papers, what happened to them?" "I can't find my pen. I can't find my car keys." Swami is within them all. So there are people who look upon Swami in that way. In this way, Swami made arrangements very nicely, and the cooking was going on. As Swami said, I got dressed and came downstairs. As I was looking around, Swami came. Narayana Seva was started. Everyone was seated. All of them were being served. Swami called me and said, "You go and check if the serving is going well." "Our students are serving. They should learn. So go and supervise how they are serving." I started watching. But they are all great devotees of Swami. They fear Swami and have devotion. What do we say?

All of them were post graduates, not children, great people. Don't they know how to serve? They do.

Just as the people were supposed to come in, Swami came in.

"Anil Kumar, come here. Is the serving completed?" "Yes, Swami." "Did it go well?" "It went well." "Was it our students who served?" "Yes, Swami."

"Is everything perfect?" "Perfect, Swami." "Go and check there in the 11th row, at the 8th place setting."

I thought I was going to be caught for something. I went to the 8th place in that row.

It was fine. Pongal and tamarind rice were served, and it was fine.

"It's fine, Swami." "What's fine? Lift that leaf," He said. So I folded it slightly.

A lump of Pongal was dropped there. "Someone did that, and thought I would scold him."

"So he covered it up so that I would not see it," He said. "You didn't notice it either. You think it's perfect, and he thought it was perfect too."

"Only God is perfect, remember!" Then He called the students, "Who served there?"

"Will you own up to it respectfully, or should I show you up?" said Swami.

An MBA student came forward, "Swami, it was my fault. Please forgive me."

"I was the one who covered it up," he said. Then Swami said, "You made two mistakes here."

"Firstly, you were careless. Secondly, you thought you could hide it from Me."

"Hiding it from Me is not even possible for your grandfather," said Swami. That student completed his MBA, received a gold medal, and gets tears in his eyes on the mention of Swami's name.

Hearing Swami's name brings tears to his eyes. He becomes thrilled. I was there when he had that experience.

What does this tell us? We cannot hide anything from Swami.

Nothing happens without Swami's knowledge. That was the lesson I learnt.

As I mentioned to you in the beginning, Kodaikanal is like a training camp.

There are many aspects that we must learn from Him. The time afterwards, when you're on your own, what can you learn?

You will learn nothing, other than emptying your pockets. You cannot learn anything.

If you go with Swami, you will learn a lot. You will understand many things.

This is something I observed. At one time, He came in after people started eating.

Swami started calling each person that was walking on the road.

They prepared the food for 500-600 people, but around 2000 people showed up.

Where will the food come from? That year, I was still new, and a lot of my mistakes should be forgiven.

Those were the sweet times when Swami saw, but pretended not to see. So I used to be free. Mrs. Ratanlal called me, "Anil Kumar, Swami is inviting everyone."

"We are almost running out of the food we cooked. Where can we get more from?" She closed the door and stepped out and said, "Tell Swami that there is no more food."

What to do? She asked me to say that there is no more food.

What do I know? I thought it was an opportunity to talk to Swami. I went running to Swami, "Swami, they ran out of food." "Huh?" When Swami says that, you are out of luck.

Otherwise, is there anything He cannot hear? He wants to make you say it a second time,

so that you're trapped. "Swami, they said they ran out of food." "Remember, with Swami, there is never a question of running out of anything."

"You will never hear the words, "Don't have," or "Not that," out of Swami's mouth."

"Remember that. No "don't have," "not that," or "ran out"." "You say we ran out? Go back and check now," He said.

I went. The doors were closed. I said to Mrs. Ratanlal, "Swami said to check again."

She said, "Let's go in." When we opened the door, believe me, all the vessels were full.

Before, they were nil. Now they are full. Why? Because of one word.

That was a divine miracle that I witnessed, a wonderful miracle.

I had read in the bible before that Lord Jesus Christ was invited to a meal by someone.

He went. They had prepared food for 10 or 15 people, but 500 people went with Him.

How to feed them? "Lord, we don't have anything for them," they said. "Is that so? Let's go in," said the Christ, and went inside.

He touched all the barrels there. As soon as He touched the barrels, I read in the bible that they were all filled.

Because I was a student of a Christian college. I believed it to be true then, but now?

Truth of all truths. Not just true, but truth of all truths. Absolute truth, as I saw it myself. I witnessed with my own eye, the food multiplying to infinity.

I was thrilled with joy. I was still young. I was unable to control my joy.

I was still immature. I went running to Swami. "Why? Why are you running?"

"Swami, everything is there inside." "You said the food ran out?" "Where did they all come from?" "I don't know, Swami."

"You don't know? You don't know who is here? Don't ever say "Don't have" or "Not that," understand?" He said.

This marvellous miracle taught me that Swami is infinite. Swami is the bestower of food.

There is no lack or deficit, ever. I saw that myself in Kodaikanal.

An extra sweet ice cream Prasadam

I was overjoyed with that experience. Another time, Swami was distributing ice cream in the Mandir.

To the college students. Some ice creams were sent outside.

Outside the Mandir in Kodaikanal. They gave me a cup too, outside. I ate it. The ice cream was first class. After that, I went inside.

I held my hand out. "Hey, you already ate outside," He said.

"Swami, I didn't say that I didn't have it." "Then why did you hold out your hand?" "Because You are giving it out here, it is Prasadam, Swami. That's why I want to eat."

"Is that so? Give him two," He said. That is Swami's compassion. Such experiences are divine experiences, sweet experiences.

To share these memorable experiences with you makes me very happy. Sai Ram.