

Podcast 115: THE BEST WAY

Om Sri Sai Ram.

Prasanthi Sandesh, 115th episode.

As we grow and as we are mature enough, we'll understand that real life is spent in the midst of danger, and is a constant challenge and adventure. That's what real life is. On the other hand, we want to 'settle' in our lives as early as possible. We tell each other often, "We are settled, we are settled." We are also worried about some of our children who are yet to settle.

But actually speaking, there is nothing like 'settling' at any point of time. That is not in our nature because if we settle it means we get stuck there. On the other hand, the more you work, the more you are goaded, the more potential you show, then the more tests you have to go through. That is the actual real life. But, be that as it may, we have somehow excluded from our life experience all that is unknown and mysterious from our world. We have not thought about it. And moreover, we don't have time to think about it.

Therefore, it may be very clear that the joy of living lies in learning to live in danger. Yes! But on the other hand, I say I want to live in convenience, with no danger and no threat at all. This is almost a slow suicide. As I mentioned earlier, real life is full of danger, challenges, and it is an adventure. And though such a kind of life may not be secure and comfortable, our life grows. Life grows in spite of that. On the other hand, if we wish to settle once and for all, with no danger, no threats, nothing, well it's almost a comfortable grave.

So, what happens in spiritual life is we have to come out of this comfortable grave. We have to face all kinds of risks, and be ready to stand and be exposed to the sun. We should be ready to be exposed to severe winds and also stand in the rain for that matter. Then we also come to understand that in insecurity life grows. That's how life grows! Yes, that's what it is. That's why I said in the beginning itself that with growing experience and maturity, we'll understand these things.

Take for example a potted plant in a room. When it is kept in a golden cage or in a golden frame, it is nicely kept there. But it loses its luster when it's kept in a room. It may be within a golden cage or an iron cage, or kept in a beautiful well-furnished room, but the plant loses its luster. It loses its joy, it loses its life; whereas the potted plant kept in a garden grows joyfully, accepting all challenges, fighting all odds, rain or shine, wind and all sorts of weather, yet there is growth. That's why we have to conclude that life should be an adventure.

Now then, what is the solution then? If we rest in our Master or relax in Him, things will happen on their own accord. With no worries, all the rest will happen effortlessly in the presence of the Divine Master. Let there not be any ego trips at all. Let us all be ordinary, yes, natural, enjoyable, so that the whole thing will be a beautiful garden of life. And in fact, all activity is beautiful if done out of love. And that is symbolic of surrender.

And one very important thing is when we accept somebody as our Master, we should stop judging Him. A disciple never judges his Master. Who are you to judge Him? You accepted Him as your Master; then why do you judge? Whatever the Master says, the disciple has to do, that's all. And in that very doing, the surrender grows.

That is the secret: let all your work be a kind of worship or meditation. The whole work is worship. That's what is said. Don't listen to your mind. No! Listen to your Divine Master. Listen to Bhagavan, not to your mind. And all this is possible by *sadhana*, by reaching that thoughtless state, the no-mind state.

In that no-mind state, you will decide to listen to that which is against the mind. And it is quite contrary to your whole past. You will experience stillness. In that state of listening to our Divine Master, we'll reach that no-mind state. In other words, the no-mind state, N O, will make us listen to all that which is against the mind, which is just contrary to our past life and experience. We will be still, listening to the Divine Master and continuing to live in that no-mind state.

We are only used to listen to our mind so far. Therefore, we are full of anxiety, anguish, sadness, boredom. What to do? The whole life has become like that, most unfortunately. So, there is a gap between past and future. Past is irrelevant, and when you think of the past you miss the present; you miss that which is new, that which is fresh. It needs courage, love and trust to leave the past and to live in the present.

Being with the Divine Master is a trust because it is only the Master who will help us to move into the unknown. We just love Him, trust Him, and follow Him so that our spiritual journey into the unknown realm is safe and secure. And as I said, we develop the spirit of surrender and love towards the Master. By that, small things turn into great things. Small things turn into great things. For example, cleaning the floor will turn into a prayer, cooking will turn into worship, typing or editing Master's letters or Master's discourses, whatever it may be, or guarding as a security person, or gardening.

Then the whole experience becomes holy, holy. That is a turning point. There's nothing that is stupid in this world. We are full of energy and radiance and we should follow love and trust just like a shadow that follows a man. This is the way, or how we have got to live with the Divine Master.

The no-mind state will help us to develop a positive attitude. And we will remain in that positive attitude. So, let us surrender to our Divine Master unconditionally. Don't cling to your mind. If you prefer your mind, it gets strengthened more and more. Further, you become a slave to your mind, so don't allow yourself to be dictated to by the mind. Bypass it on your own. Don't go by the dictates of your mind. All this is a great learning, a great discipline.

Drop all sorts of attitudes. Function as a vehicle, a passage and everything changes. If I consider myself as a vehicle, as a passage, I'll notice change in my life. Drop working on your own. Staying with the Divine Master, drop the idea of working on your own. We may face many troubles; but on the other hand, if we do it on our own, we get tired, we get fed up and bored. It's tiring.

Therefore, let us allow our Divine Master to do it, so that you are not burdened. So in that case what happens is, if you succeed, it is not yours. If you fail, it is not yours either because you are absent, as you have submitted to the Divine Master completely. Therefore, in this spiritual life, it is not about collecting a psychological memory. No! Each work is repetitive if you do it on your own, and that's not the way anyway.

Creativity will be released when we go by the guidance of our Master, whereas the ego is non-creative. Let us understand, creativity springs like a fountain when we surrender to our Master. At the most, ego is constructive, but never creative. It's constructive. It may be after some innovations, but it can never be creative. It can never proceed in the direction of discoveries. No, because these are all only possible in the non-ego state. To be more emphatic, let me tell you that ego is constructive but not creative. Ego is not capable of making discoveries. These are all made in the non-ego state only.

Then what is an innovation? Innovation is just redecorating the room. You've got your own room there. You want to redecorate it, put some more posters or hang some beautiful pictures on the wall. You have redecorated the same room where you have been staying. That's what innovation is. In other words, it means putting things in a new arrangement. That's what innovation is. All things over there are rearranged or readjusted.

But creativity is different. It's not innovation, no. Creativity is utterly new. It is discontinuous with your past. Ego is in continuity with the past. Ego is just the continuation of your past, whereas creativity is something new. It is discontinuous with our past. That is really wonderful indeed.

We may find it very difficult to drop the ego, but it is possible when we sing the glory of our Divine Master, *sankirtana*, so that creativity will develop within us. We have new experiences, and we'll face spontaneous happenings. There is a thrill, excitement and ecstasy when once we drop our ego with the Divine Grace.

But unfortunately, there is another tendency among most of us. We begin to accept anything, even inefficiency. I wonder how you accept your inefficiency. "I am inefficient, therefore I accept it." What a foolish statement it is!

Acceptance, in one sense, makes you more capable, helps you to grow, makes you more intelligent, and does not make you dull. You are not stuck. Inefficiency is not to be accepted, inefficiency is not to be accepted. We have to fight it out. So, inefficiency and acceptance are opposite. When you accept inefficiency, then you remain as you are.

But, on the other hand, the spirit of acceptance will make you very capable, and make you grow in intelligence. That's what we should always keep in our mind. Acceptance does not mean accepting inefficiency, no. Acceptance is against inefficiency. So now, do whatever you can to fight your inefficiency. Then acceptance is for relaxation, and it also gives you an opportunity to face challenges, and to develop creativity.

Suppose there is no challenge at all in life; then life is death. If there is no acceptance, then a challenge leads to madness. So, challenge and acceptance both should go together; one should not operate at the expense of the other. Challenge is necessary. Why? So that we don't turn mad. Acceptance is necessary to be prepared to face life's challenges. It's really worthwhile repeating the wonderful statement: If challenge is lost, acceptance is death. If acceptance is lost, challenge becomes madness. In other words, there is nothing to be dropped. There should be a synthesis of both challenge and acceptance.

If we really love the Divine Master, we will be able to love the place where He lived, where He spent His life. I mean the ashram. The one who loves our Bhagavan forgets about the ashram, and then starts accepting it. There's nothing to know about it, no; but learn to accept the ashram with the understanding that the ashram is a part of the world. Don't expect anything different from the ordinary community. The Divine Master has created this ashram and the people around who are helping Him, doing His Divine work and making Him comfortable by taking care of all the needs, requirements and responsibilities. In other words, the ashram is just an organization. But don't think too much about it; forget about it. You should constantly remember Bhagavan, the Divine Master. Do not concentrate too much on the ashram.

And to be with our Divine Master, we have to drop all our prejudices and ego trips. There is no other way. And life is not going to be that easy. It may be uneasy and it may annoy us at times. Ashrams are not meant to give consolation or to offend, no. So, if they go on giving you consolations, what will happen? They give you all the comfort. But an ashram full of comforts is not a place of correct *sadhana*, no.

But we have understood Swami. We have recognized Bhagavan and we are feeling Him in our heart. Then we'll receive His help. Then we'll receive help, there's no doubt about it. All other things drop on their own. This is essential; otherwise we will be disconnected: If we go on bothering about every silly thing, we will be disconnected from Him.

So, no matter what you feel, whatever you feel, all these matters are trivial. You don't understand your potential, yes. Bhagavan will make us realize our potential. In what situation you will face the challenge which is waiting, you do not know. When you explore, when you stand integrated, you do not know. All these things will be decided by our Divine Master. We have got to follow, follow the company, the community in an ashram. And if you go on deciding one thing, the Divine Master may say something else. It's not possible. It's not possible or desirable to go by your mind's way..

Once you become a part of your Divine Master, you forget everything else. That's it. You become a part of Him, and the decision of the Master is your decision. Suppose there may be small traces of antagonism and you may feel that you are apart, away from Him, so you'll be missing something definitely. Our faith should be so strong in Him, in Bhagavan, that when He says, "It is night" in broad daylight, we have to say, "It is night." And so, if it is night when the Master says, "Oh, there is a lot of light," we say "Yes."

In other words, follow Him, that's all, in full trust. It is a non-argumentative mind that's fit for the spiritual path, which goes beyond the mind. Non-argumentative mind is beyond the [ordinary] mind. That has to be realized and recognized.

Ashram is a laboratory. It is a process of experimentation, while moving towards the inner journey. What do I mean by ashram? What I mean by ashram is this: It is not a simple place where a Divine Master lives, where all like-minded people live and stay together in harmony. It's not merely that. Ashram is a psychological attitude. Ashram is a mental makeup. Ashram is a way of life.

If you are detached while at home, then the home is an ashram, yes. When you have that full faith in the Lord with a spirit of surrender, you may be in the market and then that becomes an ashram. So I mean ashram is a place of inner journey. Don't identify with a particular place. It's not that. It is beyond space and time.

And so, this kind of spiritual attitude will make you even face the worst tests of life, like death. Death is viewed as an opportunity to grow. If you die in the mind, you'll be able to live in the mind. If you die in the soul, you'll be able to live in the soul. If you die totally, you'll become God. You'll become God.

So, we have to pay the price for everything. And when we come to Bhagavan for the first time, it will be a matter of fun, and you'll enjoy it. But it is all a Divine trap. Slowly, slowly you are caught and you see that you cannot turn back. And then the real work of our Divine Master starts. You'll feel hurt many times, and feel like running away in different directions. You may have some injuries even.

But unless our Divine Master is hard, we cannot evolve spiritually. Swami loves us so much that He can't help but be hard [tough] on us. That's very clear. Therefore, let us not take this as a matter of suffering or pain, no. It is a divine device of Bhagavan that makes us evolve and grow. So, we have to be more particular about the work given.

Let us not avoid work at any stage. When we avoid the allotted work, it means we are avoiding our Divine Master. And working for Him is the only way to show love. What do you mean by working for Him? Is it by living in an ashram? No! Whatever work you do in His name, offering the fruits of your work, *karma phala*, when you offer that, that becomes His work. When you are the doer, it is your work. When you feel you are instruments in the Divine hands, it becomes His work. That is the way to show our love. Therefore, Swami is here to take care of us. Swami is primary for all of us to think about, and everything else is secondary, whatever else is secondary.

Therefore, in this brief talk, I could present to you the best way to be with the Divine Master.

Sai Ram. We'll meet again.