

PODCAST 90: CONTENTMENT

Om Sri Sai Ram.

Prashanti Sandesh 90th episode.

Thank you for your time. We are so happy and grateful to you for all your co-operation and the deep interest you have on these topics.

In this brief talk today, let me share with you some of the ideas relating to contentment. The topic of the day is "Contentment".

We often hear elders telling us to be contented in life. All elderly people tell us that contentment is most important. The scriptures and also our *gurus* tell us, if you don't have contentment you can never be happy in life. So, contentment is most important. One should lead a contented life. Yes! Let us try to discuss on this topic, contentment.

There are two fields here. One is the world and the other is beyond the world. One is the world, the other is beyond the world. Rather I would put it this way, as JK, Jiddu Krishnamurthy, a very famous greatest intellectual of this century says, "You are the world." What does he mean by saying, "You are the world"? 'You' means your mind. You're the world. It is the mind that is the world. Yes! Therefore, the whole world and the experiences that we have are the effects of our mind.

So, the worldly experiences are within our mind, and it is the mind that creates the whole world. And certain features or certain situations, when we have frustration, of course pain or anxiety or anguish or pleasure for that matter, they are all out of our mind. It is only to say, it is the mind that makes the heaven out of hell or hell out of the heaven. These are all the mind projections. Yes! The mind projects itself on worldly objects.

It is the mind that makes you a close friend to a person and the same mind makes another person a total enemy to you. It is the mind that wants you to be very rich, very powerful, and highly prestigious. This is all the projection of the mind on the worldly objects. Sometimes mind is after solitude or aloneness or to lead a life of a recluse, *vanaprastha*. Whatever it may be, this is also the mind projection.

Therefore, here we come across a situation that we are very much discontented in this life. We don't have enough contentment here in this world. Therefore, some people say, the followers of some religion say, that if you are poor here on earth, after your death you will be rich for eternity. If you are rich here in this world, you will spend all the rest in being a beggar, in utter poverty. In other words, if you are poor here, you will be rich there. If you are rich here, you will be very poor there. That is one kind of reconciliation, a kind of solace offered to us.

And in fact, Jesus also said that, "It is easy for the camel to pass through the eye of a needle, but not for a rich man to enter the gates of heaven." So, it is also said even here that being rich is not enough.

Yes, we do understand the use and the necessity of being contented. We also realize that contentment is very necessary at one stage or other. But at the same time, in this competitive world, in this world of science, technology, agriculture, computers, space sciences, contentment means what? In this background, come on, think of contentment. Can you afford to be contented in this competitive world? If you don't put all your attempts to grow, to make yourself what you call 'highly accomplished', yes, contentment won't help you. You should struggle hard. Yes! This is another aspect.

Alright, I don't have anything to do. I am contented with what all I have. I don't want to do anything else. It means what? You'll remain mediocre. You will be dull and you will be a fool for that matter in the sight of others.

Therefore, in this world these two things are there, contentment and discontentment. Contentment is necessary, but we are discontented. We are discontented, why? Because the worldly situations, worldly possessions will never confer contentment. Alright, if I force myself to be contented, what happens? I will not grow, I will not improve myself.

Therefore, these are two shades, two aspects that we face in this world. While contentment is our objective, we have got to be active, dynamic, and enthusiastic so that we will be happy in this competitive world. So that we will be able to accomplish for our life, accomplish that what we want to. So, you can be competitive, you can be dynamic; while at the same time, try to be contented to the extent possible. Think that contentment is the key to be happy. This is what I would like to say in this aspect of the worldly life.

But there is another side of it. What is that? Is contentment necessary in the spiritual world? In the spiritual sense does contentment have any place? What is the place of contentment in the spiritual field? I should be very honest here. We cannot be contented in spiritual field. No! We cannot be contented.

A simple example: Let us take our own experience in Prashanti Nilayam. Swami, it is enough if we have your *darshan*. We come here, have His *darshan*. Oh! We are very happy. Is that enough? No! We still want to have *padanamaskar*. So, there is no contentment. Next day, because of His grace, we'll have *padanamaskar*. Is that enough? No! We continue to pray, look forward to present a flower to Swami. Keep a flower at His feet. Ok, lucky enough we get that chance. Is that enough? No! Swami, I see you giving *vibhuti prasadam* to somebody. I also saw here you were presenting a ring or a watch to some of the devotees here. Why not You give me, Swami? Alright, because of His Grace, you get it. Is that enough? No! Swami, why don't You grant me interview? Is that enough? No! Swami, when again will I be getting interview? When will I be getting a second chance to have *padanamaskar*? So, it is an unending desiring. The desiring is unending. It means that we don't have contentment in the spiritual field also. We are discontented. Yes!

And let us also examine the spiritual field. While the world is entirely because of the projection of the mind, the spiritual field is beyond the mind. Yes! How do I say that?

In this world you can say, "I have done it. I have got it. I am that. I am this." But in the spiritual field, this 'I' is a barrier. You cannot say, 'I', 'I' No! This 'I' should get out at the earliest opportunity. 'I' is the main thing in this world, while the 'I' should be lost in the spiritual field. But 'I'-ness is the mind there. If you go beyond the mind, there is no 'I' at all. And then what happens? When you go beyond the mind, there are no desires. You'll be desireless. You are no more ambitious. No! You will notice that there is a transformation in your life. And you begin to own responsibility for everything that happens.

Therefore, contentment is not a pre-condition in the spiritual field. You have that divine discontentment; I would put it this way, divine discontentment. Well, when does it start? The divine discontentment starts when you are disgusted with this world, utterly disgusted with all the money, with all affluence, with big family, positions, bank account, jewels. With all that, a stage comes when we are vexed with these things. We are tired of these things. We are so bored with these things that we don't want anything more. No! Enough is enough! So, until that stage, you won't develop this divine discontentment. Until then, your so-called spirituality is only for worldly gains, worldly purposes, worldly goals.

Therefore, in the spiritual field when you transcend the mind, when ego or I-ness is totally gone, when you are in fact desireless, there is individual transformation and then this divine discontentment. And this divine discontentment takes you to heights of excellence.

Take for example: a seed cannot remain as a seed throughout. The seed should germinate, it should sprout. It should grow into a tree. In a similar way, we should not stop at one level, even in the spiritual field. Why? The spiritual journey, the spiritual pilgrimage is a very long journey, very long journey. Because you travel from form to formlessness, from attributes to attributelessness, from name to namelessness. See that, so it is a long journey. How can you be contented? How can you be satisfied at one stage?

A simple example here. There is a woodcutter who doesn't have enough to eat. He cannot have a square meal a day. He came across a yogi and fell at his feet. "Swami! Please help me to be free from all this struggle, stress and strain. Show me the way to earn little more." And this yogi tells him, "Oh boy! Go into the forest. At one spot you will find the silver."

So, this man goes over there and finds silver and leads a happy life thereafter. Then one day he came to see this same yogi sitting under a tree. The yogi asks him, "How are you?" "Ok Swami! You have shown me the way to silver. I am so happy." The yogi smiles and says, "Is that all? No! I will show you the spot where you will find gold. Go deeper, deeper into the forest."

Accordingly, this man has gone deeper, deeper into the forest and at last found gold there. He brought home the gold and he becomes a very rich man. Oh ho! Golden life! A royal life! And then he wanted to convey thanks to this yogi and met him one day and this yogi says, "How are you with this gold?" "Swami! I am happy!" "Is that

all? You are mistaken. Go still deeper, deeper, and deeper into the forest I will tell you at that spot you will get diamonds.”

So this man has gone there. Oh ho! After a long strenuous travel with so much of strain, at last he could locate where diamonds are available. He could get the diamonds and then lead a richer life, yes, top level! One day he came to yogi to express his gratitude. And yogi asked him, “How are you?” “Swami! I am very, very happy.” “Ok.”

Then Yogi tells him, “It was only I who told you the way to silver, I only told you where gold is available, I only directed you to the spot where diamonds are at your disposal. You say you are happy. Though I know where these things are, though I told you where these are available, where do you find me? Sitting under the tree, totally relaxed, totally contented, peaceful and blissful. You understand this?” That's what the yogi tells him.

Therefore, we can put it this way. When we go beyond the mind, we'll be desireless, non-ambitious. You don't want anything more. Until then, you are discontented. Yes! And then what happens is this. This discontentment continues in spite of our movement and growth from one stage or step to another.

But when do you feel contented? When do you feel satisfied? Until you explore, until you investigate, until you comprehend the inner self or consciousness or witness or *sakshi* or *atma*. Unless you investigate, unless you make sufficient enquiry of your own self, the inner self, until then you are discontented. You are dissatisfied. In other words, true contentment lies over there in experiencing our true inner self, not till then.

Then the question arises what happens at that level? What happens? What happens at that level of contentment in the spiritual field? Having made a thorough enquiry of the self or the witness, what happens? You will know that mind is outside you. The body is outside you. Excepting your consciousness, excepting your true self, *atma*, everything is outside you. That will be your understanding. That will be your level of awareness.

And then, in the world, this satisfaction can be estimated, this path of acquiring all that you want, of accomplishing whatever you desire, of attaining all that you have been trying for so long. But how do you measure, how do you know the spiritual contentment?

The spiritual contentment does not lie within your mind. It is beyond. You begin to see the whole of the creation, the entire creation. At this moment I recall, one astronaut visited Swami when he was in Bangalore, Whitefield. Swami called him and wanted him to give a talk there in Sai Ramesh Hall. That astronaut, while addressing the audience said, "Man walking on the moon is not that important. More than that, God walking on Earth is important."

Man walking on the moon is not that important; more than that is God walking on Earth! That's still ringing in my ears though 35 years or 40 years passed. I also

remember another statement that astronaut made. "From the moon, as I look at this planet earth, it was so beautiful, so beautiful, excellent, tremendous, fantastic, so beautiful." And then he started congratulating, congratulating himself. "Oh God! You are so great! You made me live on this planet earth which is so beautiful."

And therefore, true spiritual contentment lies in being grateful to the entire creation, to the entire existence. You are so happy looking at the stars. You are really blissful when you watch the beautiful flowers in your garden. When you go close to the ocean, as you watch the waves, yes, your heart dances. When you look at the mountains, you feel the majesty in this creation. How beautiful it is! So, this is spiritual contentment. This is spiritual satisfaction.

And so, I would rather say what experience you will have at that time. At that moment, what will be your experience? Your experience in divine contentment is this. You will be more silent. You will be more peaceful. You will be more balanced. You will be more alert, aware. You are highly conscious of what is happening around. And this is what the divine contentment is! And when you start enjoying the whole of the creation, the contentment follows you like your own shadow.

Therefore, in this brief talk, I would like to impress upon you that mind is in between two stages -. one, below the mind, and one, above the mind. Below the mind is the world. Above the mind is the spiritual world, the spiritual dimension. So below the mind, the world, is nothing but all this: positions, possessions, power, riches, friends, enemies, prestige, knowledge, ability, dignity, what not - and also suffering the pain, anxiety. That's the entire world within the jurisdiction of the mind. Here we try to be contented, but we are never contented.

Therefore, elders everybody advises us to develop this spirit of contentment. While at the same time, realize the fact that we have to be dynamic, quite active in this competitive world. So, there is a mixture of contentment and discontentment. Contentment is supreme, discontentment helps you to proceed, to pursue, to come up in life in this competitive world, in this scientific world, space age world. Therefore, we have to realize the mixed situation here: contentment is ultimate, and discontentment is also there to establish yourself in this world.

And then above the mind is what we call the spiritual realm or spiritual domain, where there is nothing like 'I'-ness, where silently individual transformation takes place. And this is born out of discontentment, out of total disgust with this world, utter disgust, vexed. Then there begins divine discontentment. And there in the spiritual realm, we'll also experience discontent. Until we investigate, until we experience the *chaitanya* or awareness or the self or consciousness, we will never be contented. We will never have true contentment in the right spirit. So, we should continue, beginning with discontentment and reach to the state of contentment where we experience the real self.

It is at this stage you delight, you dance in joy, in a state of gratitude and thankfulness to God for the creation of this beautiful world which is nothing but His own image, His own reflection. And we are grateful to God for making you a participant here in His divine sport or divine *leela*. Thereby, we'll be silent. We will be

silently enjoying, silently smiling within ourselves, and we find the peace adorning the entire field of our hearts. We see that consciousness everywhere all over around us. And that is true state of contentment.

Bhagavan speaks of these things, contentment and discontentment and that triggered my mind to share with you a couple of my thoughts in this direction. Why?

Yesterday somebody came and met me. "Anil Kumar, did you meet Prema Sai?" What shall I tell them? I said, "Why do you want Prema Sai? You have already Sathya Sai with you. Then why do you want Prema Sai?" Somehow, I convinced them and sent them away. Later, on enquiry I understand that discontentment with Sathya Sai made them wait for Prema Sai, spending all the time in total laziness. That is not what I mean (by contentment).

Contentment means full awareness, total realization. It is factual and also actual. The factuality should turn into actuality, and that potential is lying in every one of us. We have got that potential to earn the divine contentment of bliss, of holy communion with the self. Yes! That potential is within us. In the name of contentment, we should not snub it or ruin or totally destroy that earnestness.

If we just crush the seed, make it into a powder, you cannot expect any plant or a tree out of it. So, the seed has got the potential to grow into a seed. Like that every one of us here has got that potential to be with the self, of the self, in total awareness of where lies the true contentment.

Thank you very much for your time. We'll meet again.

Thank you.