

## PODCAST 121: THE DIRE NEED

Om Sri Sai Ram

Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh 121st episode.

As we look around and observe the people with whom we mingle day in and day out, we easily come to certain conclusions. Life is not happy anyway, in spite of all the luxuries and comforts. We also notice many of the people projecting their personality by way of their status, dignity, education, wealth and influence in the society. This constitutes their whole personality. This is really very dominant today in the community.

On the other hand, we also see endless desires, as we have no ceiling on our desires. With the growing science and technology, we start doubting everything to such an extent that one doubts for one's own self. These are all the things that all of us know pretty well. Plus we feel some kind of emptiness in our lives at some stage or other. So what is to be done?

The dire need is this: we need a *guru*, a Divine Master. This concept of a *guru* is quite new to many from other religions. But the concept of a *guru* is age-old in Sanathana Dharma. The followers of other religions may question, "What is this relationship between a disciple and a Master. What is there? Is it necessary that you should have a Master?" So they all ask these questions because the concept of a *guru* is not there in their faiths.

So let me share with you a couple of thoughts on this subject. Let me be very clear at the outset that the relationship between the Master and the disciple is not at all bondage. No. Others may feel it is bondage; others may attribute this to be bondage for you. But in reality, it is not bondage. In fact, two free individuals are meeting with all their freedom. Then a question arises: if by any chance they separate, if one departs, what will happen?

No Master ever curses his disciple for going away from him, and no disciple speaks against the Master when he leaves him because this relationship is not at all political. When one changes to another political party, he goes on praising the party into which he has newly come and he'll go on condemning the party he left. This *guru* relationship is not like that. This is not political or social. The relationship between Master and disciple is completely spiritual.

Well coming to the point, even if they had to depart or go away from each other, they just depart like fellow travellers, walking on down the road with no bondage, no promises, no expectations. They travel together for some time and then they depart. That's it. There are no complaints here.

Then, what is necessary for this Master and disciple relationship to sustain itself for a long time? What is the secret behind the true relationship between the two? That is love and trust. The disciple loves his Master immensely and he trusts him totally. Yes, because till now the disciple had travelled all alone all by himself, facing all the pitfalls and crossroads. He has not found any correct path. But it is his *guru* who shows him the right road. The *guru* or the Divine Master always cautions him to be a little more alert, be a little more alert. Why? Because anything may happen as he travels along the road of *sadhana*. It is here that the Master tells, "Be careful, be alert."

We cannot say it is a belief in the Master, no. It is not having faith either. It is trust based on experience. The disciple will have all the clarity and validity in due course of time. It is a very interesting relationship between the Master and disciple. We can sum it up in a sentence, saying that the relationship between the two is existential, experimental and scientific. Yes.

It's never based on any imagination. It is not any fiction. It is not anything to be carried away by the opinion given by others. It is a relationship that has grown out of your own experience.

All these concepts are not known to many people of other religions so they may begin to have questions about the relationship between a disciple and the Master. Some will say, "Will the Master allow you to open your mouth? Will he tolerate it when you express your doubts?" Why not? Doubts are always welcomed. You can ask any genuine doubts out of curiosity or inquisitiveness in order to learn and grow. In fact, doubt is not a negative feature as many feel. No, it sharpens our intelligence.

But one point is important here: you have to doubt the imagination and opinions, all of which are fiction. But in respect to the spiritual field, there is no chance to doubt the truth. Doubt the fiction - yes, others' opinions, imaginations, dreams, nothing wrong about doubting that. But don't doubt the truth.

Your Master is the truth all by himself. Therefore, the relationship between the Master and the disciple is created out of immense intelligence and, as some others feel, it will not make a disciple into a slave, no. A disciple will never be mentally dependent on the Master. The disciple will hold on to his individuality and is quite happy to give up his personality. So a disciple is quite free to express his doubts now. Yes, why not?

Thus, what others feel is quite different. Without being a slave, being an individual all by yourself, and yet able to doubt, the trust develops there. The trust develops there. He is the real Master who really encourages you to express your doubts.

Don't you know that Swami asks everybody in the interview room, "Do you have any doubts? Ask some questions." He always asks this whenever He calls a group for an interview. "What are your questions? Express your doubts." The real Master encourages your doubts. In that sense, doubt is nourished. Then you accept the truth naturally, which is quite spiritual. It is never slavery. You remain independent. Therefore, what is the result that happens? We drop all that makes us proud. We drop everything that makes our personality. When you drop that, you feel very light and easy.

As I said already, the relationship is scientific. The place where the disciple and the Master communicate with each other is a scientific laboratory. What is the conclusion? What is the result in this scientific laboratory? Here the false is burned and what is original is discovered. That is the outcome of this experimental experience in this scientific laboratory.

As you know, the Master knows the road because He has walked down the road already. He knows the ups and downs completely. He is thoroughly acquainted with the path. Therefore, the Master is always right in giving us indications, in showing us the correct path, and in cautioning us to be a little more alert. In this way, trust grows naturally. So this is certainly not, by any standards, a belief. All this develops out of our experience.

Sometimes we also feel that if our Master was not there, we'd have gone astray from the spiritual path. We'd have been different people altogether. It is our good fortune that we have come to know a Divine Master. Otherwise, we would have gone somewhere else. Today we have all the validity and clarity that we experience, and this creates trust. There is no doubt about it.

So, the point has to be made very, very clearly as we begin to understand the true relationship between the two, the Master and disciple. We will come to know the truth. What is original is discovered. The original is discovered not out of the Master's capacity to

articulate, no. It is only because of his intense love for you. His teaching is an art in itself. It helps us to come out of this insanity, yes.

In fact, sometimes we also come across mad people. And I wonder if there is something close between madness and meditation. Oh, what is that? Madness is just below the mind, while meditation is above the mind. Madness is a breakdown, while meditation is a breakthrough. Let us understand this.

So, it is the Master's art that will prepare us to face the risk at any time. And it is the Master's art that will help us remove all false identity or the mask we have put on, while retaining our own intelligence. Finally, what happens? The darkness of the soul vanishes and the dawn is very close to us.

But today, particularly in these modern times, it is easy to become a disciple. Just watch people all around. What kind of life are we leading? Everyone feels emptiness, meaninglessness, anxiety, anguish, confusion and darkness. One would finally say that life is a misery. This has been the situation across the globe. We are not short of electronic gadgets. We are not short of comforts and conveniences. Yet we find emptiness and deep lacuna in our lives. So, it is absolutely necessary to drop this misery. Where to drop it? At the feet of the Master. And as the Master looks at you, you will see rays that go beyond darkness, indicating the path to blissfulness and benediction.

Finally, I would say Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is a step above all that I stated and placed in front of you. As He guides, as He takes you along, catching hold of your hand, He is a Guru. He is a friend, a very close, intimate associate. But as you walk alone along the path of your *sadhana*, the road ends where you find Swami Himself. As a leader, as a guide, He is your Master. But as you proceed further and further, you will find Him as your God.

Thus, Bhagavan Baba is both the process of *sadhana* and also the aim or objective. He's Divinity itself. Therefore, let us be convinced of the dire need to have a guru in order to enjoy the bliss and benediction.

Thank you very much.