

OM SAI RAM

Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh

PODCAST 258, "THE STATE OF 'TRANSCENDENCE'"

September 12, 2024

*The following text contains excerpts from Prof. Anil Kumar's book
"Sai-Chology," pg. 79-84.*

THE STATE OF TRANSCENDENCE

Even if we have certain specific requirements, when we go into the state of transcendence one feels, "If I have all that I need, it is very good. Yet, thank God, that even if I don't have it, I will be able to manage." This happens when we go beyond the senses. Transcendence is possible when there is perfect understanding. When we are unable to go beyond limitations, it implies a lack of understanding. With proper understanding, one will be able to transcend.

When Baba is of prime importance to us, the inconveniences in food and accommodation in Puttaparthi are secondary. When we have this attitude, we have truly understood the very purpose of coming here. To serve Bhagawan is primary. Out of this understanding, we get into the state of transcendence, which is nothing but going beyond obsessions. This is possible because of the grace of the Lord, out of total acceptance and sourced from the sublime silence.

Total acceptance is the reason why some people are happy. Bhagawan always refers to many of the devotees coming from far away over long distances, particularly referring to foreigners. He always says, "Look at the faces of all the foreigners. They come with smiling faces. They are very happy. Even if I call only one or two people for an interview, all the members of that group are happy. If I say, "How are you?" all of them are happy. When I say, "When did you come?" All are happy. In fact, they shake the hands of the person who gets an interview because that Divine vibration will also get into them! That is the state of their happiness; whereas you people are not happy, though I am in your midst, move amongst you and talk to you every day. What is the use?"

So, we are not happy because of our discontentment, lack of understanding, expectations, obsessions, and our false image and personality. We may not be anxious whether Bhagawan would talk to us or not, but we are worried about what others may think about us.

When others question us, we have to concoct a story. Hence, we are afraid of public opinion because our image may be dented for some reason. We apprehend that our false personality may be totally shattered, affecting our vanity and ego. Such worry is even more than the benefit which the interview would have conferred! This is the

experience of many people without exception. The point is that happiness disappears because of this false image and all its accompanying attributes.

SADHANA OR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

We do spiritual practice in two ways: One is with the mind and the other is with the heart. How does one do spiritual practice with the mind? There are some people who can recite poems at a stretch and others who can chant mantras non-stop. All this is exercised by the mind. Spiritual practice undertaken by the mind is useless, futile and leads us to failure. This is because spirituality is beyond the mind.

We are not the mind! Bhagawan says, “Mind is like a mad monkey. Body is like a water bubble”. So, spiritual practice done with the mind is in vain. God and spirituality are beyond the mind and mind is nothing but the ego.

People who claim that they have done such and such are, in fact, still within the limitation of the mind. All claims of ‘doing’ arise out of the mind – like doing worship, reciting prayers, etc. By doing that, we are not contributing to the world’s welfare! All this arises from the mind.

Once the mind begins *sadhana*, (spiritual practice) it first drowns itself in the state of memory. It will recall events and objects of earlier years. The mind is nothing but memory and that memory expresses itself in words or letters.

Recitation, chanting and singing are only born out of memory. Also, repetition is boring, mechanical and routine.

Everything done with the mind comes down to the level of a machine. In such a mechanical and routine activity, there is no freshness, beauty, thrill or wonder. It was the same yesterday and continues to be the same today.

When our lives become mechanical, life is not worth living. Whether it is family life or professional, religious or social life, it should not be mechanical. Such existence is death. A life that goes according to schedule has no charm and needs to be changed.

SADHANA (SPIRITUAL PRACTICE) WITH THE HEART

When we do *sadhana* with the heart, it is not the memory that matters; **it is the meaning that counts**. We should want to **feel** the very meaning, not simply to remember the **Name**.

When we sing bhajans, we should contemplate on the meaning of ‘Krishna’, which means ‘the one who quenches or fulfils the thirst of desire’. Then it is much more meaningful, when we sing, Krishna, Krishna! Such feelings come straight from the heart and bolster our devotion.

We can draw on the true meaning and feeling when we make the heart the foundation. This is different from the mind, which works only by memory. What happens when we

dwell on and identify with the meaning? Then whatever *mantra* we recite becomes a song. Whatever we read, hear or do is poetry and music. It imparts charm, beauty, attraction and dynamism to life, since the heart has become the foundation, the screen or backdrop. We dance on that stage of the heart.

When we discard the mind, what happens? Anything that we do is not simply an end by itself. We sing *bhajan* for the sake of *bhajan* alone. Singing *bhajans* is a means to an end, the end being bliss. We worship and read books only to be blissful.

Hence, all spiritual *sadhana* is a means to an end, not an end by itself. It is just a vehicle.

A car is only a means to take us to a destination. Thus, it is only a means and not an end by itself. The heart will view everything acting as a vehicle, to take us to that state of bliss.

We should now get out of this becoming and get into being. We can do this by undertaking a heart-oriented *sadhana*, not a mind-oriented one. This orientation by the heart will make us truly alive and make our lives exciting, thrilling and worth living. Then life will never be boring.

LISTENING WITH OPEN-MINDEDNESS

Spiritual activity requires three important things: The first is listening or *sravanam*. One has to listen patiently. Unfortunately, we don't do that. We listen as we think. We think and listen. Therefore, neither do we think nor do we listen. We listen in order to contradict the speaker and we do so with prejudice and bias. Our process of hearing is totally negative, without any receptivity. In such a situation, we are not benefited.

Listening with open-mindedness, in total silence and with a spirit of acceptance, is spiritual.

So, when we hear Bhagawan, we should not just hear Him. We have to *listen* to Him. Certain trivial things said to us can be heard and forgotten But there are other things, which we have to listen to, and remember for life!

Prof. Anil Kumar shares more spiritual gems with us, in the next session.

Thank you for your time.

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