

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION: Q. 282,
LET HEART BE A GOLDEN CUP TO RECEIVE GOD

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh welcomes you.

Q. 282:

We should be prepared to invite God into our hearts. In other words, we should become a golden cup, before we invite God to pour Himself into us. Therefore, we must enjoy, delight, and rejoice so that we can become capable of even higher rejoicing.

What I mean is this: a sad or tragic mood or seriousness is not at all required in order to draw the attention of the Divine. Instead, we should be rejoicing, delighting ourselves, enjoying life, because once God gets into the golden cup of our heart, there will be an even higher rejoicing.

Celebrate this shore so that you can learn the ways of celebration and so that you can be called to the other shore. Only those who are ready will be called. If you are sad, gloomy, masochistic, torturing yourself, you are pushing the other shore farther away, because that shore belongs to those who can penetrate deeply into their joyful self. The more you celebrate, the closer that shore comes to you. In fact, when your celebration comes to a peak, this shore turns to be that shore! When you are really at the peak of your celebration, when your dance is at the ultimate climax, immediately this shore is no longer this shore. You realize that you are already on the other shore and that you are no more in the world. You are in God.

What is needed is the appropriate container. If you desire to become a container for God, if you have invited Him to be your guest and if you want to be His host, then you will have to learn the ways of paradise. Here and now, in this very moment, you will have to live in such a way that your heart becomes a paradise. Only then, can you invite God into your heart.

Many people go on inviting God without ever thinking if they are ready to receive Him. So, be ready to receive Him! What I mean is, if He comes, will He find you ready? If He comes, will you be able to welcome Him? Do you have the golden cup ready if He pours Himself down upon you? Where will you collect Him? Is your heart ready and open to receive Him? Are you receptive, are you sensitive? Nobody asks these questions.

Many people come to Swami and ask, "Where is God?" as if it is God's duty to prove Himself, to prove where He is! If God does not prove Himself, then they cannot trust in Him. God is surrounding you here, now. He is within you and without." Nothing else exists -- only God is!" This is His reply.

But you are not ready. You are not ready. The golden cup is missing. You don't have the proper eyes to see Him. You don't have the proper ears to listen to Him and you

don't have the proper hands to touch Him. You are not ready and you can receive only that for which you are ready.

Once you are ready, not even a single moment will be lost. Immediately, without a single moment's gap, the very moment you are ready, He happens. In fact, God has already happened! Now only you have to become ready.

Even when we try to become ready, sometimes our efforts are only half-hearted. Let us understand this.

Sometimes, when people are seeking God, they are willing to go only to some extent, only up to a certain level and that's all. They don't try to travel any farther. They reach a certain point and then they would like to return. Why? Because they want to tell others that they are on the path of Divinity. They want people to know that they have gone in search of the Divine and that they have experienced the Divine. So they return, in order to say to the world that they have seen Him, they have seen God.

They don't want to go far enough, because if you go far enough into God, you will never come back. They don't want to take another step because if they go deeper then there may come a point of no return.

What they want is just to go a little further, so that they can come back into the world and say to people, "We have also seen God." But their whole interest is in the world and in the respectability that the world can give them. They have a big bank balance. They have a big palace and now they even possess God in their homes.

When you go to the temple, you are not really there. Your face turns towards the market place. Have you noticed this sometimes in yourself or in others? If you are alone in the temple, you don't enjoy your prayer very much because your mind is somewhere else. However, if there are many people watching, then you show great enthusiasm. Then you are full of spirit. Then your prayer is great and you feel very high. You feel high not because of the prayer, but because the whole town is watching you and they will think, "How religious! How virtuous!" They will admire how close to God you are! You would like them to feel jealous. So, this is just a performance!

But your performance is only before these people. God is not present, He is out of it because you are not contacting Him! It would be better to contact Him when you are alone, because then it will not be a performance. My friends, let me emphatically tell you that prayer or religion is not a performance. Prayer is what establishes contact with God.

You are carrying the seed within you. It is already treasured, cherished in the deepest core of your being, waiting and waiting for obstacles to be removed so that it can unfold. God is your intrinsic quality. God is your Divinity. You are the seed and God is going to be the flower, which will grow out of this seed.

As your awareness rises and sets, your innermost lotus opens and closes. It is just as the morning sun rises in the sky in the east and the lotus blooms, and then, when

the night comes and the sun sets in the west, the lotus closes again. So, this is a natural process. It's not a performance at all.

Just as the stains in your heart have to be washed away, similarly, all doubts also have to be dropped from your heart. All suspicions must be dropped from your heart. Once trust arises in you, then you are washed and you are clean. Trust creates a tremendous cleansing of the heart.

If you want to sow the seed of God in a very hard heart, it will not grow. Let your heart be soft, and let it become receptive. Then it will be like the soft soil of the woodlands where sandalwood trees grow. Then, when man plants the seeds and the sandalwood tree flowers, not only is he perfumed, but also all those who come in contact with him become fragrant with sandalwood.

Hence the glory of satsang! The glory of the presence of a Master! He has become sandalwood and so just coming in contact with Him, you will be perfumed and your own seed will start sprouting.

If the vehicle is not right, if the preparation is not right, then the whole effort will be lost. You can make a heavy boat but that boat will sink, it will not float on the sea as it is not the right vehicle. So, only in a boat of love, in a boat of soft feminine passivity, in a boat of songs and dances can one reach the other shore.

Become more feminine, become softer, like the soft soil and throw out all the hard stones from your heart.

Unfortunately, we usually do just the opposite. We go on gathering doubts and suspicions. We go on destroying our own soil.

Only the lover who loves wholly can reach the reality, while at the same time, comprehending the unattainable, the unreachable man.

Ordinarily, people love, but they don't experience the feeling of love. They exploit love. They even act like lovers, but their love is in the service of gratification. They don't have a feeling for love. In other words, they don't love, love. They don't have respect, reverence for love. Their love remains as lust. It never becomes worship or prayer.

If you can find a person who is wholly devoted to God, then devote yourself to that person because love cannot be taught, It can only be caught. Nobody can teach you the ways of love. You have to live in close proximity to a lover, a person who can truly love. Nobody can teach you how to pray. You have to live in close vicinity of one who is in prayer. Watching him, feeling him, moving around him, and tasting the flavour of his being, these things will show you what prayer is.

Then prayer will not become a ritual. Then prayer will be a flowering within you, a spontaneous arising with a new vision. That is the relationship between the Master and a disciple. So that is the actual relationship between Bhagavan and a devotee.

You see, whenever we find someone singing, dancing, and being prayerful, there is no intellectual reasoning for recognizing it. You just have to be with someone in order to know it, that's all. How do you know that person is in love? What is the criterion? All you have to do is just to be with him and see. See how he behaves, see how he responds, see his tears when he sings his songs, and watch his moods in different moments. In time, you'll be able to feel what worship, what love, what prayer is. Yes, all that cannot be taught. It can only be caught.

What I really mean to say is that by being connected to Swami, by being with Him and watching Him in close proximity, we will know what celebration is and what prayer is. We will know what love is, in its true spirit! As I said earlier, without that connection, our prayer is only a kind of performance, a sort of a craze for recognition and reputation. Therefore, let us be sincere in our prayer.

In this brief talk I only intended to let everybody know that we should be prepared to receive God. It is not that He is not there. He is already there, but you are not aware of Him because of dirt, because of pollution in the heart. So let the heart be cleansed! Let the heart become a golden cup! We should get ready in this way in order to receive Him.

I am aware of some instances when Bhagavan ignored a few people for a while. Later the merciful Lord granted them an interview and said to them, "You are not ready to know Me! You are not ready to understand Me!"

Therefore, the fault lies with us because we have not prepared properly to receive Him in our lives.

Prepare! Prepare! Be ready! Let our hearts be transformed into a golden cup!

We should not be merely desiring, but we should also be deserving!

Sai Ram.