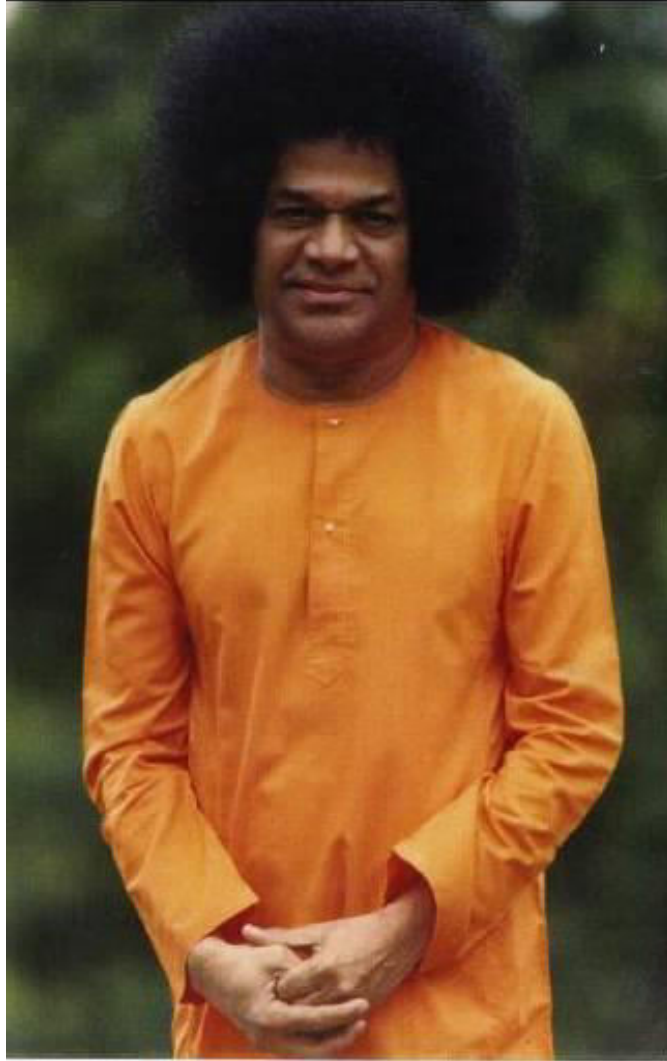


An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)

(from discourses given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during the years 1953-1982)



Quotations are from “Sathya Sai Speaks” (Vol. 1-15) “Revised and Enlarged Editions”
Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam, India

Given as a Gift to Those in Need

We are at a critical point in the evolution of spiritual understanding.

There is now a profound and critical need for as many people as possible to be exercising as much love, understanding, and forgiveness as possible—in as many ways as possible.

The compiler of this “arrangement of quotations” believes that Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1926-2011; main residence-- Prasanthi Nilayam, Southern India) has genuine insight into how to deliberately cultivate love, understanding, and forgiveness.

This book has been created for the purpose of providing one way among many for sincere seekers to discover and experience the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

A Note to Readers

(From October, 2006)

“Sathya Sai Speaks” is a series of books containing discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, and published by the Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust, Prasanthi Nilayam, India. There are now 35 volumes of “Sathya Sai Speaks”, which contain discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba from the years 1953-2002. (Sri Sathya Sai Baba is currently 80 years old, with a main residence called Prasanthi Nilayam, in Southern India.)

Since all of the quotations in this book are from the “Sathya Sai Speaks” series, the format used for citing the source of each quotation does not include an abbreviation such as SSS (for “Sathya Sai Speaks”). The quotations are referenced by citing the volume number, chapter number, and page number. (For example, 6.13 p69 refers to “Sathya Sai Speaks” Volume 6, Chapter 13, Page 69.)

This “arrangement of quotations” was originally completed in 1997, using the 1st U.S. Edition of “Sathya Sai Speaks”, Volumes 1-11 as the sources. After receiving permission to publish this “arrangement of quotations” from K. Rajan, Convenor of the Sri Sathya Sai Book and Publications Trust, in July, 2004, this compiler chose to update the references of each quotation, so that they corresponded to the current “Revised and Enlarged Editions” of “Sathya Sai Speaks” (instead of the out-of-print and not accessible by the Internet 1st U.S. Editions). There were two important reasons for updating the references: 1) to make it easier for readers to examine the quotations in the context of the discourses they are a part of and 2) to make it easier for readers to verify the authenticity of the quotations. For readers who would like to examine the context of the quotations, and/or verify the authenticity of the quotations, here are two suggestions: 1) they can refer to the current revised and enlarged “Sathya Sai Speaks” editions, which are available through Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust (see www.sathyasai.org) (or through other bookstores with links at www.sathyasai.org) 2) or they can refer to the website of the International Sai Organization (at www.sathyasai.org, specifically <http://www.sathyasai.org/search/default.html>). All volumes of “Sathya Sai Speaks” (“Revised and Enlarged Editions”) used in this “Arrangement of Quotations” are accessible at that address. (By this approach, however, the reader will have to rely on the chapter number, and search the whole discourse for the quotation, as the page numbers—in the documents accessible by the Internet—do not correspond.)

The original translations of the discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba used in the 1st U.S. Editions of “Sathya Sai Speaks” (translator-- Professor N. Kasturi) retained many Sanskrit words, but did not provide a glossary as an aid to readers not familiar with Sanskrit. In the current “Revised

(“A Note to Readers”, continued)

and Enlarged Editions”, “Sanskrit words (have been replaced) with English equivalents where they do not affect Baba’s original expression. Sanskrit words have been retained wherever it was felt necessary to preserve the essence of the original expression of Baba and where the English equivalents may not do full justice to the text in the particular context. However, in all such places the English equivalents have been given along with the Sanskrit words.” Also, “A Glossary has been added in these revised editions to provide comprehensive and detailed explanation of the more important Sanskrit words for the benefit of lay readers who may be interested in Vedic religion and philosophy.” (from “Publisher’s Note” to “Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 1 of the “Revised and Enlarged Edition”)

It will assist the reader to know that while this compiler did update all the quotation references in this “Arrangement of Quotations” (with a few exceptions) from the 1st U.S. Editions to the corresponding volume, chapter, and page numbers in the current “Revised and Enlarged Editions”, he did not also update the text of the quotations to the current text. While in many cases there is no difference in the text from the older edition to the current edition, readers who refer to the source of a quotation in the current editions may notice quotations which reflect the above mentioned editorial improvements.

A glossary has not yet been created for this “arrangement of quotations”. Readers who would like the assistance of a glossary can access the glossary which is part of “Sathya Sai Speaks” Volume 1 “Revised and Enlarged Edition” (accessible at the above website address). The glossary I have used most often is “Translations by Baba” compiled by Homer S. Youngs. [Note: The Sathya Sai Book Center of America (in Tustin, California) carries the title “Translations by Baba” (cost: \$4.00) (see www.sathyasaibooks.com for more information.)

Stefan Pasti
Fairfax, Virginia (USA)
October, 2006

**“An Arrangement of Quotations
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I. Sadhana

(“Spiritual discipline is the cultivation of love....”)

A. Introduction (“A disciplined life is the best offering you can make”)

1) (“... the highest Sadhana is to follow the instructions of the Master”)

- a) “Spiritual discipline is the cultivation of love....” 13.24 p.142
- b) “If one has the yearning to reach the goal, one has to follow the path that leads to it.” 11.54 p.308
- c) “But in the field of the spirit, study and experiment and analysis do not take you a long way. What is required is inner experience resulting from actual practice.” 14.7 p.42
- d) “Every little point has to be taken care of, lest the benefit of Sadhana be lost... You will have to follow the instructions....” 4.31 p.180
- e) “Life has to be lived through the channel marked out by embankments that slow the raging flood and direct it into useful fields. Na sreya niyamam vina; no progress without rules and restrictions.” 11.32 p.193
- f) “To earn the good-will of the Master, there is one recipe: obey His orders without murmur.” 2.36 p.211
- g) “When you are eager to gain an end, you must be prepared for all the travail, all the obstacles-- or else you should not entertain the wish.” 8.20 p.105
- h) “... the highest Sadhana is to follow the instructions of the Master.” 4.5 p.29

2) (“The greatest joy springs from the utmost sacrifice”)

- a) “We achieve Peace and Joy, only through sacrifice. Giving yields more joy than grasping.” 12.1 p.2
- b) “Many do not realize the joy that can be derived from unselfishness....” _____
- c) “The greatest joy springs from the utmost sacrifice.” 11.28 p.158
- d) “Grace is the reward for Sadhana....” 4.5 p.29
- e) “Grace is showered on all who obey instructions and follow orders.” _____
- f) “As your Sadhana is, so will be the truth revealed to you.” 12.20 p.97

3) (“... Only the dedicated come by wisdom”)

- a) “Love is My highest miracle.” 13.21 p.116
- b) “A disciplined life is the best offering you can make to the country or to the Divine in you.” 13.36 p.210
- c) “‘Sraddhavan labhathe jnanam’ (Only the dedicated come by wisdom).” 14.7 p.50

B. Initial Considerations.... (“Begin....”)

1) Initial Considerations.... (“... have a clear understanding of the nature of the Goal....”)

- a) “You must first have a clear understanding of the nature of the Goal-- God or Goodness or the Universal Absolute, whatever the Name-- its grandeur, its beneficence, its magnificence. Then, that understanding itself will prompt and urge you towards it. The Universal of which you are a unit is pure, true, egoless, unlimited and everlasting. Contemplate on It and your innate egolessness, truth, purity, and eternity will manifest itself, more and more every day.” 8.24 p.127-128

2) Initial Considerations.... (“Follow the same rigorous routine every day....”)

- a) “Sadhana must be done in a disciplined systematic manner, in an atmosphere of virtue.” 1.26 p.161
- b) “... begin the first lessons of silence, prayer, and chanting the Name of the Lord.” 1.24 p.150
- c) “... practice at least the very first steps in Sadhana, like silence, reciting the Name of God, reading of the scriptures, etc.” 5.52 p.285
- d) “Follow the same rigorous routine every day: time, place, duration, method, pose-- all being unchanged. Then the disturbing factors can be easily humbled and tamed. As Ramakrishna said, do not dig a few feet in a number of different places and moan that you could not strike water. Dig in one place steadily and with faith. The boring drill goes down into the very underground spring of water; drill ‘Ram’ ‘Ram’ ‘Ram’ -- continuously, steadily, and you can get the rewarding result of Realization.” 7.4 p.23

3) Initial Considerations.... (“... making sure of one step before taking another”)

- a) “... one step in the right direction (leads) to another.” 11.2 p.13
- b) “You should eat only as much as you feel hunger for; more will cause disorder. So proceed step by step in Sadhana, making sure of one step before you take another.” 1.3 p.19
- c) “One step at a time, correct and consolidated-- that is the way this pilgrimage should progress.” 10.2 p.10

4) Initial Considerations.... (“... pray to the God within for illumination and guidance”)

- a) “Ascertain whether the train is the right one and then board it.... the best course (for this) is to pray to the God within for illumination and guidance. Then you will get guidance without fail.” 6.42 p.212

- b) “Pray to God and recite His Name or meditate on His Glory for some fixed period of time very day; you will find it amply rewarding. Don’t say, ‘Let me have a taste of the reward and then I shall start the Sadhana.’ Practice and the experience will follow, must follow.” 3.24 p.145
- c) “Have faith in yourself, your own capacity to adhere to a strict time-table of Sadhana, your own ability to reach the Goal of Realization.” 6.23 p.121

C. The Mind (“Once it discovers the nectar, it will not flutter anymore”)

1) The Mind (“... watch the thought and its ways”)

- a) “The thought manifests as word, the word manifests as deed; the deed develops into habit; the habit hardens into character. So, watch the thought and its ways.” 10.25 p.225
- b) “Train it to walk quietly on small stretches of road at first...” 1.20 p.119
- c) “... when an intention enters the mind, the waves it causes envelop the body and prompt many activities.... (so) As soon as an intention is formed in the mind, examine it to find out whether it deserves to be put into action or whether it is unworthy to be acted upon.” 15.36 p.199-200
- d) “Ideas, desires, cravings, yearnings-- these get concretized and so, the world is only the product of the mind.” 11.29 p.166
- e) “The mind decides and shapes things according to the decision. It manipulates external objects until the desired achievement is concretized.” 11.30 p.179
- f) “The vision-experience of the world is but a projection of our mind and the reflection of our own inner thoughts. As the thought, so the vision.... Pure thoughts make the world appear as pure.” 15.8 p.40

2) The Mind (“Utilize the mind to follow the Plan of the Lord....”)

- a) “If you examine the nature of mind, you will find that it is very much akin to the lens of a camera. The body is the camera, the mind is the lens, the heart is the photographic plate, the thought is the flash, and the intelligence, the switch. Turn the lens towards the source of happiness, not to the seat of anxiety and fear; then, you will be rewarded with a fine picture imprinted on your heart.” 12.7 p.25
- b) “The seeker has to be very vigilant about his point of view. The things he seeks to visualize, the things he longs to cast his eyes on. For, it is Drishti (sight) that decides attachment, sorrow, passion, etc....” 9.14 p.71
- c) “Assign to your mind the task of serving the Lord and it will grow tame.” 4.1 p.6
- d) “...utilize the mind to follow the Plan of the Lord to re-establish Dharma in the world.” 2.43 p.246

- e) “Sankara declared ‘Make your drishti charged with jhana; then, the seen will appear in its true light as Brahman.’” 9.14 p.71
- f) “The thought creates a desire. The desire creates a form through which it is expressed. Have good thoughts, you get good desires in good forms.” 10.34 p.216
- g) “By Samskar, steel worth half a rupee gets transmuted into a watch worth a few hundred. By utilizing the mysterious alchemy of the mind man can attain Jnana and visualize the Truth that satisfies and illumines.” 7.40 p.203
- h) “God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for.” 14.59 p.343

3) The Mind (... make the mind settle on God only....”)

- a) “You have to train the mind to take the better road....” 1.18 p.109
- b) “Learn therefore the discipline that can make the mind settle on God only and never waver therefrom.” 7.36 p.186
- c) “Like the bee which hums until it reaches a flower and starts drinking the nectar, the mind too will clamour, until it settles on the Lotus Feet of the Lord; and then it is silent, for it is engaged in tasting Divine Nectar! Once it discovers the nectar, it will not flutter anymore.” 9.29 p.156

D. Physical Health (“Purity of motive is the best guarantee....”)

1) Physical Health (“Sadhana requires regular habits....”)

- a) “Sadhana requires regular habits and moderation in food, sleep, and exercise... The body, the mind, and the spirit, all three must be equally looked after.” 3.5 p.37
- b) “... efforts to achieve health, comfort, etc. must be just enough for the purpose of sustaining the Sadhana, no more, no less.” 5.44 p.245

2) Physical Health (“... a keen appetite... and strenuous work”)

- a) “The craving is now for the easy life, the smooth life, the life with less and less of physical hardship; but, health can only come through a keen appetite and strong limbs and deep hunger and strenuous work.” 10.12 p.76
- b) “You should eat only as much as you feel hunger for; more will cause disorder. So proceed step by step in Sadhana, making sure of one step before you take another.” 1.3 p.19

- c) Eat at regular intervals, according to a well-established time table. Move about and fill the day with activity, so that the food is well digested. Develop biting hunger, before sitting down for a meal. Now, many do not know what it is like to be hungry or thirsty. Wait until you get the call, before you load the stomach again.” 9.21 p.111-112
- d) “...fast one day in the week. This is good for the body as well as for the country.” 9.21 p.111
- e) “Drink milk or yogurt; eat fruits and nuts. They generate constructive, virtuous, spiritual thoughts.” 11.7 p.44

3) Physical Health (“... determined by the vibrations that it is charged with....”)

- a) “The quality of the food is determined by the vibrations that it is charged with, through the thought processes of the persons who handle it, prepare it and serve it.” 11.8 p.47

b) (“... a very serious matter for Sadhakas....”)

“To purify the mind and the intellect for the correct reflection of the Truth, the first caution is in regard to food. Indeed, this is a very serious matter for Sadhakas....

“There lived in Malur, Mysore State, a pious Brahmin who was a great scholar. He had an equally pious wife. He was always intent of Puja and Japa-dhyana and was known far and wide for his virtuous character.

“One day, a Sanyasin called Nithyananda came to his door seeing alms; so, he was happy beyond measure. He invited the monk to take dinner with him the next day so that he might honour him with due hospitality. He hung green festoons over his doors and made elaborate arrangements for the reception. But, at the eleventh hour physical impurity rendered his wife unfit to prepare food for the honoured guest, or for any one else. A neighbour volunteered to cook the meal, and she was brought in and introduced into the kitchen.

“Everything went off well and all were as happy as they could be, under the circumstances. Only, the Sanyasin was wrung during meals by an overpowering desire to steal the silver cup which the host had placed near his plate. In spite of his best efforts, the evil idea won and the Sanyasin hurried to his abode with the cup hidden in the folds of his robe. (...But) He could not sleep that night, for, his conscience pricked him so. He felt he had brought disgrace on his guru, and on the Rishis whom he invoked by the mantras he recited. He could not rest, until he ran back into the Brahmin’s house and, falling at his feet, restored the article with tears of repentance trickling down his cheeks.

“Everyone wondered how such a saint could stoop so low; then, someone suggested it might be the fault (was) transmitted to the food he ate, by the person who cooked it. And, when they examined the history of the neighbour, they found that she was an irrepressible thief! The thieving tendency had by subtle contact affected the food she prepared.

“This is the reason why Sadhakas are advised to live on fruits and tubers only, when they reach a certain stage of spiritual achievement.” 5.10 p.62-63

- c) “The food must be clean and pure and derived through pure means; and the strength derived from it must be directed towards holy ends.” 2.35 p.205

d) (“... subtle influences....”)

“Remember that Thyagaraja kept such rules rigorously in mind. He never dined outside his home or ate unconsecrated food. Many thought that he was a conceited fool who was needlessly strict. But there are subtle influences that pass into food from the persons who prepare it and handle it and are absorbed by those who eat it. Food is the basis of character. The state of the mind is conditioned by that of the body.

“I shall tell you now of an incident that happened eighty years ago....

“There was a great Yogi, Hamsaraj by name at Badrinath. He was always immersed in singing the Glory of the Lord. He had a disciple who was equally earnest and sincere. That young man was pestered for a few days by a dream which gave him no peace. He saw a fair young girl of sixteen weeping in great agony and calling out pathetically, ‘Can no one save me?’ The disciple was amazed at this strange dream; he could not shake off that doleful figure and that desperate cry from his mind. He recited his woes to the Master. Hamsaraj, I can assure you, was a true Hamsa, the Bird of Paradise. That bird can discard water from milk, is it not? Hamsaraj, by his Viveka, analyzed the situation and discovered the cause of that horrid experience.

“He prodded the young man with such questions as: ‘What did you do the first day?’ ‘Where did you go?’ ‘What did you eat?’ etc. It was revealed that he had gone with a friend to a feast and eaten some puris and chappathis. It was discovered that a poor Brahmin had prepared the feast. Well, Hamsaraj sent the disciple to find out why and with what resources that Brahmin arranged the Feast for the recluses of Badrinath. The young man cursed the day when the dream started haunting him, for he was now being sent by his Master on purposeless errands to investigate irrelevant issues; he wondered how his Sadhana could be helped by all this.

“Nevertheless, he went and pursued the inquiry about the Feast and its origins and the wherewithal out of which it was prepared. It came to light that the funds were supplied by a sixty year old moneylender to whom a Brahmin had given his daughter in marriage and received in return a sum of ten thousand rupees. She was now appealing to the holy men for a bit of human kindness towards a forsaken child.

“Hamsaraj thus demonstrated to his disciple that one should examine the source of the food, the motives for the gift and the passions that surge and sway the giver before accepting such an intimate gift as food.” 2.35 p.205-206

4) Physical Health (“Righteous action will leave no bad effects....”)

- a) “Illness, both physical and mental, is a reaction on the body caused by poisons in the mind. An uncontaminated mind alone can ensure continuous health”
14.51 p.287
- b) “I also agree that it is wise to adjust one’s living so intelligently that there is no need to approach any doctor.”
2.15 p.66-67
- c) “Purity of motive is the best guarantee that you will have Peace. An uneasy conscience is a tormenting companion. Righteous action will leave no bad effects to disturb your sleep or health.”
10.1 p.5
- d) “The Hospital is for those who believe in the doctor and in drugs. It is faith that matters, that cures.”
9.21 p.113
- e) “... for when the mind is immersed in Ananda, the body will not suffer from illness.”
5.38 p.211

5) Physical Health (“... a sacred instrument....”)

- a) “The body... is a sacred instrument.... keep it in good condition, so that it might serve that high purpose... and always preserve that conviction that it is an instrument, and nothing more. Use it for just the purpose for which it has been designed and given.”
4.3 p.17

E. Bhajan (“... establish the feeling of the constant presence of God....”)

1) Bhajan (“... devotional singing is of four types....”)

- a) “Samkirtan or devotional singing is of four types: guna-samkirtan, leela-samkirtan, bhava-samkirtan, and nama-samkirtan....
 - i) Guna means ‘attributes’ (of God). So guna-samkirtan is the adoration in song of the manifold attributes of God-- omnipresence, omniscience, compassion, majesty, etc.

- ii) Leela means ‘sport’, therefore leela-sankirtan is the adoration in song of the various expressions of these attributes as evidenced by the accounts of sages and seers of all faiths.
- iii) Bhava means ‘attitude’ (of the mind). So bhava-sankirtan means the adoration in song of God pictured and contacted under various relationships. Some may prefer to adore Him as the giver of equanimity, others as a friend, guide, and guardian, still others as the child one loves and tends, and yet others as the lover whom one loves with sovereign love.
- iv) Nama means the name of God, and so nama-sankirtan means the adoration of God, calling upon Him by various names, each describing His glory, His achievements, His relationship with the individual.”

13.24 p.135

2) Bhajan (“... Love is the keynote....”)

- a) “Twice a day, morning and evening, if you spare some time to sing the names of God, with like-minded persons, all in unison, with full awareness of the deeper significance of each name as it sweetens the tongue, it will be of considerable help to establish the feeling of the constant presence of God, within you and without.”
9.27 p.146
- b) “Let those with a good voice and musical talent lead; the Keertan must be pleasant, it should not jar on the ear. If your voice is grating or out of tune, do not disturb the melody, but, repeat the Namavali in your mind.”
9.34 p.178
- c) “Do not monopolize the time in Bhajan, by singing one song for six or ten minutes, repeating the same line often. Repeat each line twice and no more. Have only two speeds: one slow and the other, fast. In this way, you can have in the hour of Bhajan, more songs on more Forms, more tunes and more variety, giving more people the chance.”
11.3 p.20
- d) “Bhajana and Namasmarana are fine cleansing processes. Only, the mind must dwell on the sweetness of each name, and become sweet as a consequence. They must be done as a regular discipline, with the awareness that they will yield good results.”
12.13 p.56
- e) “... it is only when the feeling arises in the heart that the song will appeal to the hearts of others.... Bhajans where you quarrel and compete, and revel in putting down others and raising yourselves might give you satisfaction; but, let Me announce here, they do not please Me at all. I am pleased only when Love is the keynote, when the feeling of unity prevails, when the melody comes from a cleansed God-loving heart.”
12.54 p.299-300
- f) “When the mind is engaged in the recital of God’s Glory and the names of God, there can be no temptation to stray into the rake’s highway of insane desire.”
9.27 p.146

3) Bhajan (“... charge the atmosphere with Divine Adoration....”)

- a) “Namasmarana can be elaborated also into Nagasankirtana. This has both individual and social consequences. When you inhale foul air, your health suffers. The air is polluted by unwholesome vibrations when people shout hateful, lustful slogans or even talk, without love and reverence. In order to purify the atmosphere, vibrations that are holy, healthy, happy have to be circulated, even before the citizens come out into the open with the break of day. When a group of good men and women move from one end of a street to the other singing aloud the Names of God, each Name redolent with fragrance and resonant with Love, it clears the air and renders it pure for all to breath. It also calls people living in the houses on both sides to begin their daily round of duties, with the Sweet Name of God in their ears and the charming Form of God in their hearts.” 10.35 p.229-230
- b) “Sing aloud the glory of God and charge the atmosphere with Divine Adoration; the clouds will pour the sanctity through rain on the fields; the crops will feed on it and sanctify, fortify the food; the food will induce Divine Urges in man. This is the chain of progress. This is the reason why I insist on group singing of the Name of the Lord.” 8.24 p.129
- c) “When the environment is clean and free from evil vibrations, the food too is pure, and the person develops a tendency to be loving and simple. It is to ensure such an atmosphere that this spiritual discipline was initiated the world over.” 13.24 p.134
- d) “The 24-hour-long, nonstop devotional singing will purify the air by Divine vibrations, and those who breathe the pure air will be healthier and more upright in behavior.” 13.26 p.151
- e) “When people ask you whether you are going to Puttaparthi for example, and whether you too are doing Bhajan, say ‘Yes’ proudly, for there is no shame in walking on the right path!” 1.21 p.131

4) Bhajan (“... shout full-throated... with the extreme desire to be saved....”)

- a) “When a man falls into a well, of what use is it if he controls his voice and his emotions and whispers quietly, ‘I have fallen into this well, I have fallen into this well. I am in great danger. Please save me? No one will be able to hear or save him. He must shout full-throated, with all the anguish he is experiencing and with the extreme desire to be saved, “I HAVE FALLEN INTO THE WELL! SAVE ME! SAVE ME SOMEONE! Only then can he hope to get succor.” 13.24 p.134-135

5) Bhajan (“... saturate the air with sounds full of reverence....”)

- a) “The purpose of this type of loud, congregational prayer is different from the silent individual prayers. It is a joint, concerted, and mutually helpful effort or spiritual discipline to overcome the six internal foes of man: lust, anger, greed, attachment, conceit, and hatred. These dark birds infest the tree of life and foul the heart where they build their nests. When we sing aloud the glory of God, the heart is illumined and they cannot bear the Light.” 13.8 p.35-36
- b) “Man today is forced to breathe the air polluted by sounds that denote violence, hatred, cruelty, and wickedness. Therefore, he is fast losing the high attainments that are in store for him. The vibrations resulting from singing the glory of God can cleanse the atmosphere and render it pure, calm, and ennobling.” 13.24 p.134
- c) “You are sitting quietly there, listening, but if someone merely says, ‘scorpion’ you get frightened. Or when someone says, ‘the juice of a lemon’, your mouth starts watering.... When we saturate the air with sounds full of reverence, humility, love, courage, self-confidence, and tolerance, we benefit from those qualities ourselves.” 13.24 p.137-138
- d) “There are beneficent and maleficent sounds, and they produce corresponding echoes in the atmosphere.... Use only such sounds as will cleanse the air.... Praise the Lord, recite His Glory-- that is the duty you owe yourself and others.” 9.27 p.144

F. Study of Scriptures (... Love... the essential teaching of all scriptures....”)

1) Study of Scriptures (“Read the sacred books....”)

- a) “Read the sacred books of your religion and of other religions. Read the Mahabharatha, the Ramayana, the Bhagavatha, the Bible, the Quran, and other sacred books. In some families, reading of such books is done daily; so, the children know something about the sages, saints and Divine Persons of the past.” 9.9 p.46
- b) “You heard the Bhagavath, portions of it-- today. All the teaching you need for liberation from grief and worry you can get from that one book. Read it every day bit by bit, page by page and ruminate over the lessons you find there. Gradually, you will earn detachment from worldly sense objects; the book will take you in hand and lead you Godward.” 4.30 p.173

2) Study of Scriptures (“Saturate yourselves with the spirit of those texts”)

- a) “... the one single object that the Vedas have in view is to make man Divine, through a series of spiritual exercises.” 12.46 p.252

- b) "... unfortunately, the Vedas have been riddled with commentaries which endeavour to parade personal predilections. Each scholar interprets them as his fancy dictates...." 15.26 p.142
- c) "The Vedas reveal things that are beyond the reach of the intellect." 3.11 p.67
- d) "The Veda is Apurusheya or 'Not ascribable to human skill or authorship'.... Veda emanates from wherever you yearn for it." 2.44 p.250
- e) "You must have intense faith in the Vedas, the sastras and the Puranas. They are the repositories of the ancient wisdom, the wisdom that has stood the test of ages. They teach humility, reverence and tolerance. Saturate yourselves with the spirit of those texts. Then, you will be free from the illnesses of sloth and covetousness, lust and gluttony, envy and pride." 9.32 p.168
- 3) Study of Scriptures ("Experience is essential for... confirmation... of what is learned")
- a) "As you go on reading and ruminating, the inner meaning will flash on you when the mind is cleansed by the elevating ideas therein." 2.7 p.30
- b) "... Love, which is the essential teaching of all scriptures, the goal of all varieties of Sadhana, the best use to which all opportunities can be put and the most profitable way of utilizing the precious capital, time." 12.36 p.199
- c) "Experience is essential for the confirmation and consolidation of what is learned from books." 14.47 p.267
- d) "Scanning a map or turning over a guide book will not give you the thrill of the actual visit, nor will it give you a fraction of the joy and knowledge of a journey through that land. The Upanishad and the Githa are only maps and guide-books, remember." 1.5 p.28
- e) "The Sastras are only like road maps; they are guide books at best, describing the road and giving the directions for the journey. It is the actual journey that will reveal the hardships, the delays, the landslips and the potholes, as well as the beauty of the scenery encountered and the magnificence of the final goal. No second hand account can equal the first hand experience." 1.20 p.120
- 4) Study of Scriptures ("One must put into practice, what one has learnt...")
- a) "... scholarship is a very dangerous thing for it makes you aware of your ego all the time, instead of helping you to overcome it. If you notice serried ranks of bottles on the shelves of a man, you can conclude that he is a chronic invalid, addicted to drugs. So too, if you see on a man's shelves, serried ranks of books, you can conclude that he is a chronic invalid, suffering from doubt and despair and confusion, and addicted to the drugs that he believes will cure them. Like all long-standing invalids, both these will start giving, at the slightest provocation, tedious accounts of their illnesses and the methods by which they tried to cure themselves." 4.17 p.94

- b) “Spiritual Practice is essential for realization of the Divine. Whatever books you may read, you cannot realize the Divine merely by intellectual effort. One must put into practice, what one has learnt from books and other sources. Without spiritual practice and discipline, it is futile to read books or listen to discourses or meet persons, however great.” 14.56 p.318
- c) “... always have before you the goal of putting what you read into practice....” 12.30 p.167
- d) “Why are personages like Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhwacharya, the Buddhas, Jesus, Zoroaster and other such religious pioneers revered in human hearts until this day? Is their scholarship the reason? No. Their virtues and lives reflecting those virtues-- these are the reasons.” 15.30 p.161
- e) “If you acquire Prema, then you can dispense with the Sastras, for the purpose of all the Sastras is just that: to create the feeling of Sarvajanasamaanprema, equal love for all; and to negate egoism which stands in the way.” 1.20 p.120-121
- f) “Man has written and studied countless texts on spiritual discipline and discovery, and confounded the confusion, indulging in dialectical rivalries and argumentation. But, he who has put at least a page or two of these tomes into practice is rendered silent, innocent of any desire for fame or victory. He is happy in the depths of his being. He ploughs the inner field, sows the seeds of love and the plants yield the flowers of fortitude, which fructify as Santhi or Equanimity. This is the message of the rishis of this land.” 9.27 p.143
- 5) Study of Scriptures (... reach the sea and merge....”)
- a) “Skills are for shaping material things so that they cater more for the comfort of man; studies are for shaping attitudes, feelings, desires, emotions and impulses of man, so that, they may confer more peace, more joy, more fortitude on man.” 8.26 p.140
- b) “The path of spiritual discipline which is most beneficial to man is laid down in a simple and sweet manner in the great scriptures of Ancient India. They explain through example and precept the Divine Principle inherent in the Universe, and inspire mankind to gaze with awe and reverence at the handiwork of God and His inscrutable Leela (sport). They prompt man to march along the pilgrim road of sacrifice, in the happy company of sages so that, ere the body falls the Vision of the Eternal can be gained and enshrined in the heart for ever.” 8.35 p.190
- c) “The Sastras warn you of false steps; they console you in times of stress; they strengthen you in distress; they give correct interpretations of moral dilemmas. They prescribe the dress, the food, the manner of speech, the methods of social conduct, the mode of mutual behaviour, the lines of onward march. They are the conscience of society.” 3.1 p.8

- d) “Just as a river’s flow is regulated by bunds and the flood waters are directed to the sea, so too the Upanishads regulate and restrict the senses, the mind and the intellect and help one to reach the sea and merge individually in the Absolute. Study the Upanishads with a view to act accordingly, to put the advice into practice.” 1.5 p.28

G. Meditation (“... witnessing Light, being Light, everywhere, for all”)

1) Meditation (“... filling oneself with the Light....”)

- a) “... meditation is a function of the inner man; it involves deep subjective quiet, the emptying of the mind and the filling oneself with the Light that emerges from the Divine Spark within.” 10.34 p.222
- b) “Meditation is not mere sitting erect and silent. Nor is it the absence of any movement. It is the merging of all your thoughts and feelings in God.” 14.27 p.149
- c) “If you break away all the worldly attachments-- all the routine attachments in the world-- then you will enter the region of contemplation. When you have completely broken away ALL your attachments, you break through this area of contemplation and you get into the area of meditation.” 13.6 p.30
- d) “The Gita describes genuine meditation as ‘those persons who adore Me without any other thought or feeling.’” 14.27 p.149

2) Meditation (“The Grace of the Lord is a subject dear to every one”)

- a) “The Grace of the Lord is a subject dear to every one. It is a subject that is within the grasp of all. The Lord also can be addressed by any Name that tastes sweet to your tongue or pictured in any form that appeals to your sense of Wonder and Awe. You can sing of Him as Muruga, Ganapathi, Sarada, Jesus, Maithreyi, Sakthi, or you can call on Allah or the Formless, or the Master of all Forms.... He is the beginning, the middle and the end, the substance and the source. So, any story that brings into your consciousness, His Glory, His Grace and His Beauty must performe appeal to you.” 3.18 p.104-105

b) Meditation

(“Japasahithadhyana... the best for beginners”)

“First, when you sit for meditation, recite a few slokas on the glory of God, so that the thoughts that are scattered could be collected. Then gradually, while doing Japam, draw before the mind’s eye the Form which that Name represents. When your mind wanders away from the recital of the Name, take it on to the

picture of the Form. When it wanders away from the Picture, lead it on to the Name. Let it dwell either on that sweetness or on this. Treated thus it can be easily tamed. The imaginary picture you have drawn will get transmuted into the Bhavachitram or the Emotional Picture, dear to the heart and fixed in the memory; gradually, it will become the Sakshathkarachitra when the Lord assumes that Form in order to fulfill your desire.

“This Sadhana is called Japasahithadhyana and I advise you all to take it up, for it is the best for beginners. Within a few days, you will fall in line and you will taste the joy of concentration.”

1.5 p.30-31

c) “That picture must... be imprinted on the heart....”

(“... with the brush of your emotion and the hand of your intellect....”)

“... if you have Me as the object of meditation, sit in a comfortable pose, which is neither irksome nor flopping, let your mind dwell for some time on some good stotras or incidents from the sacred stories, so that the senses escaping into the tangles of worldly worries may be quietened and subdued. Then, with the Name on the tongue, try to draw with the brush of your emotion and the hand of your intellect, a picture of Swami, slowly, from the cluster of hair to the face and neck downwards, spending time in contemplating each as it is getting drawn and when the picture is full, start from the feet up to the head again, so that your attention is never for a moment diverted from the Form you love to meditate upon.

“By this means, it can never go astray.... Every part of the picture drawn is Divine. That picture must, by this process of deep concentration, be imprinted on the heart, so that like a picture printed on paper, it cannot be peeled off or erased.

“Do not change the pose in which you have started picturing; do not draw today a Swami sitting and tomorrow a Swami standing or walking or talking. If it is Krishna, do not change from a Toddler-Krishna with butter in His palm to a Cowherd-Krishna with a Flute, or with the Govardhanagiri raised over His head, or a Githacharya as the Charioteer. Have one Form; that is ample help.”

7.3 p.14-15

d) “Contemplate on that Form, picture it in your mind, spend time slowly and with full attention is that holy picturization.... (Your attention will wander far in the initial stages, but do not lose heart).... Oh, you can spend hours painting Him on the canvas of your heart.”

7.4 p.21-22

3) Meditation (“Try to sense the commands of God...”)

- a) “... spend a few minutes every morning and evening in the silence of your own shrine or home, spend them with the highest of all the Powers that you know of. Be in His Elevating and inspiring Company; worship Him mentally; offer unto Him all the work you do; you will come out of the silence nobler and more heroic than when you went in.” 3.38 p.217-218
- b) “The faults you see in others are but projections of your own; the good that you see in others is but a reflection of your own goodness.” 7.20 p.117
- c) “When you fill your mind with the idea of God and yearn for Him and pine plaintively for Him, all lesser desires and disappointments, and even achievements will pale into insignificance. You will forget them all; they will be submerged in the flood of Divine yearning and very soon, in the Ocean of Divine Bliss.” 7.20 p.118
- d) “Try to sense the commands of God, which will set your feet on the path of silence and steady Sadhana.” 10.14 p.90
- e) “... examine each act of yours on the touch-stone of My Preference-- will Swami approve of it? 8.33 p.185
- f) “Listen with faith; reflect with discrimination; meditate with one-pointed devotion. Then the truth will be revealed and doubts will disappear.” 6.33 p.164
- g) “... practice will equip you with a concentration that will sustain you in the densest of surroundings and the most difficult situations.” 14.41 p.231

4) Meditation (“... let it spread from you, in ever widening circles....”)

a) Meditation

(“...the most universal and the most effective”)

“As regards the technique of Dhyana, different teachers and guides have different methods. But, I shall give you now the most universal and the most effective.

“Set aside a few minutes, every day, in the beginning for this; later, you are sure to extend the period, when you experience the thrill of peace. Let it be the hours before dawn. This is preferable because the body is refreshed by sleep and the peregrinations of daytime have yet to impinge on the senses and distract physical and mental energy.

“Have a lamp, with a bright little flame, steady and straight, or a candle, before you. The flame does never diminish in lustre, however many lamps may be lit therefrom. So, the flame is the most appropriate symbol of the eternal Absolute.

“Sit in the padmasana or any comfortable asana, in front of the flame. Look on the flame, steadily and closing your eyes, try to feel it inside you, between your eyebrows. From there, let it, descend down into the lotus of your heart, illumining the path. When it enters the heart, in the center of the chest, imagine that the petals of the lotus bud open out, one by one, bathing every thought and feeling and emotion

and impulse in the Light, and removing darkness. There is no space now for darkness to take refuge; it has to flee before the flame.

“Imagine that the Light becomes wider, bigger, brighter. It pervades the limbs; They can no more busy themselves in dark, wicked suspicious activities. They have become, you are conscious of it, instruments of Light, that is to say, of Love. The Light reaches the tongue. Falsehood, slander, bragging, spite vanish from it. It reaches the eyes; and the ears. All dark desires that infest and infect them are destroyed, by the brilliant Light of Wisdom and Virtue. No more puerility, no more poisoning of the ear. Let your head be charged with Light; all wicked, vicious thoughts disappear, for, these are denizens of darkness.

“Imagine that Light in you, more and more intensely-- and it will be so. Let it shine all around you, enveloping you in the brilliance of Love; let it spread from you, in ever widening circles, taking into its fold your kith and kin, the loved ones, friends, companions-- nay, strangers, foes, rivals, enemies-- all men all over the world, all living beings-- all Creation.

“Do this every day, without break; for as long as you enjoy it; do this deeply and systematically; a time will certainly come, when you can no more relish dark and evil thoughts, no more yearn for dark and sinister books, no more crave for toxic food and drinks, no more handle ugly demeaning things, no more suffer infliction of infamy or injury, no more formulate evil designs. You are then in the realm of the Divine, of Peace beyond words.

“Stay on in that thrill, witnessing Light, being Light, everywhere, for all.”

8.24 p.129-131

b) “You can have other things besides Light to overcome the Darkness. Anything that awakens the awareness of the Universal, the Infinite, the Immanent, the Transcendent, (Brahmam, all pervasive, vast, immanent) is beneficial.”

7.4 p.21

5) Meditation (“Who is this I...”)

a) “Whatever has a form and name, definite and distinct, has also a cause, a creator, a maker. Every deed involves a doer.”

15.12 p.63

b) “Who is this ‘I’ that is doing, going, acting, reading, enjoying, being pleased?”

10.39 p.258

c) “This chance you have of a ‘lifetime of mental and physical activity’ is a letter encased in an envelope, which you have to drop into the red box, called Nature (the Universe, Creation); but, you have to write thereon two lines, about which you do not know one bit now! You have to write on the envelope: who you are!-- your real address! And, more than this, where it has to go, which destiny this life has to attain, the address to which the envelope is to be delivered! About life, the two fundamental questions are: From? To?”

10.3 p.12-13

- d) “When asked where you have come from, you quickly reply, ‘From Delhi’ or ‘From Calcutta’ or ‘From Trivandrum’; but, those are the places from where your bodies have come to Bombay. Within the body, as its source, sustenance and support, there is the Embodied One, the Dehi-- distinguishable from the Deha or body; where has it come from? That is beyond your ken. Investigate into that; discover the answer; that is the task of man.” 8.17 p.76
- e) “Of what avail is all the long years spent in this body if you have not discovered the answer to the essential question: ‘Who am I?’” 5.27 p.149
- f) “Meditate on such a Mahavakya as ‘Thath-thwam asi’ (Thou art That; There is no other; There is only One), and as you go on revolving it in your mind, meanings will dawn upon you, without the help of any commentary.” 3.32 p.189
- g) “God is love; so, all things created by God are filled with love.” 15.15 p.82
- h) “... He is the I in all beings.” 10.39 p.259
- i) “When we investigate into the problem ‘Who am I?’ and find that everyone is I, love expands limitlessly.” 15.15 p.82

6) Meditation (“It is a current that flows over all”)

- a) “It is not enough if you believe that God is everywhere and at all times, and that you are yourself no different from Him. When you are God yourself, to whom are you to surrender what? Think over this deeply and attain to that realization.” 11.12 p.75
- b) “...Prema is all-embracing, it cannot be confined to one item and denied to another. It is a current that flows over all. Meditation on the Lord and His Prema will help you to tap it from the depths of your heart.” 3.21 p.128
- c) “... Niddidhyasana, meditation on the truth that you have garnered, planting it deep down in the consciousness, to be made part of your spiritual make-up.” 6.23 p.122
- d) “A tree is held and fed by the roots that go into the silent earth; so also, if the roots go deep into the silence of your inner consciousness, your spiritual blossoming is assured.” 5.28 p.153

7) Meditation (“Practice gives you the golden harvest of blissful experience”)

- a) “What exactly is the aim and purpose of all the Sastras, the Bhagavatham, the Puranas, these discourses, the Harikatha? Just try to answer that query.” 4.5 p.27
- b) “Live in the consuming conviction that you are the Atman. That is the hard core of the Sanathana Teaching. The Atma, it is, that sees through the eyes, hears through the ear, handles through the beginners, moves through the feet. That is the basic ‘you’!” 4.9 p.50

- c) “Concentrated meditation on the meaning of the thing heard gives you the fruit of the teaching as intended by the Teacher.” 4.9 p.50
- d) “The magnifying glass draws the rays of the sun on a single point and can set fire to paper or grass. So too, concentration of attention can destroy the seeds of wanton desire.” 7.35 p.183
- e) “Reflect and put into practice what you recognize as beneficial in what you have listened to. Practice gives you the golden harvest of blissful experience.” 7.19 p.109
- f) “You sit in Dhyana for ten minutes, after the evening Bhajan sessions; so far, so good. But, let Me ask, when you rise after the ten minutes and move about, do you see every one in a clearer light, as endowed with Divinity?... Do you love more, do you talk less, do you serve others, more earnestly? These are the signs of success in Dhyana. Your progress must be authenticated by your character and behaviour. Dhyana must transmute your attitude towards beings and things; else it is a hoax.” 9.1 p.7
- g) “The Universe is the Field where God sports. Be aware of this fact, every moment of consciousness, and there is nothing more you need for a happy existence. For, you will then contact God in every thing through every thought at every place and at every moment. His Leela is evident in the smallest flower and the most distant star. The joy that you can derive from the contemplation of these proofs of providence is indescribable.” 13.16 p.80-81

8) Meditation (“... and Love will... guide all activities along fruitful paths”)

- a) “... meditate on Him and you are filled with Prema for all beings; dwell on His Story and you find all the agitations of your minds quietening in perfect calm.” 3.10 p.64
- b) “Ananda too grows when you dwell on it in silence and recapitulate the circumstances which yielded it.” 6.17 p.88
- c) “Like the child (who) throws off its toys and starts crying, you too must realize the paltriness of the toys of fame and fortune and call out for the Mother. The child feels that all else is trash before the love of the Mother and the blessedness of Her Presence. One should not aspire for anything less.” 6.17 p.89
- d) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p.164

H. Speech (“The object is to utter holy words”)

1) Speech (“... quiet talk, sweet talk, and little talk....”)

- a) “In order to promote harmony, the first rule you must follow, is control of the tongue. Do not give all thoughts immediate expression; select, ponder, and then, speak out. Speak softly, sweetly....” 5.15 p.87
- b) “Of course, everywhere and every time, it is best you curb your tongue; that is the very first exercise that I prescribe for spiritual progress.” 1.13 p.74
- c) “Silence helps you not to entangle yourself in the affairs of others; that is why it is encouraged as a preliminary.” 9.19 p.104
- d) “That is why I always insist on quiet talk, sweet talk, and little talk: the sathwic talk; no anger, no heat, no hate. Such talk will cause no quarrel; no blood-pressure (problems), and no factions. It will promote mutual respect and love.” 1.28 p.175
- e) “Practice moderation in speech. That will help you in many ways. It will develop Prema, for most misunderstandings and factions arise out of carelessly spoken words.” 1.10 p.59
- f) “... seek to speak only that which will be conducive to peace and harmony.” 14.11 p.71-72

2) Speech (“... the life force plays upon the strings and words emanate....”)

- a) “The spinal column, from the lowest point of the column, to the mid-brow spot, is like a veena (an Indian musical instrument), the strings of which when drawn and played upon produce resonance.... When the mind decides upon an idea that is to be communicated, the life force plays upon the strings and words emanate....” 13.33 p.194
- b) “There are beneficent and maleficent sounds, and they produce corresponding echoes in the atmosphere. Words that emanate from faith in God and the humility it fosters will render the atmosphere pure, while those trumpeted by vanity and execrated by nihilism and atheism will contaminate it. Use only such sounds as will cleanse the air.” 9.27 p.144
- c) “The spoken word, though it may be short and appear to be only a sound, has in it the power of an atom bomb.... Words can confer strength; they can drain it off.... They can elevate or lower the individual. One must learn the habit of making one’s words sweet, soft, and pleasant.” 15.20 p.110-111
- d) “Be conscious that every word we utter or hear will leave an impression on our consciousness, and provoke reactions which may or may not be beneficial. This is the reason why the company of God and godly people is to be sought.” 15.42 p.238-239

- 3) Speech (“Do not proclaim great truths aloud....”)
- a) “Transact all dealings with minimum speech.” 6.28 p.143
 - b) “Be sincere; talk only about your genuine experience; do not distort, exaggerate or falsify that experience.” 4.40 p.237
 - c) “Profess only as much as you can practice; do not blabber more than you are prepared to fulfill.” 8.10 p.42
 - d) “An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of preaching.” 13.8 p.36
 - e) “Do not proclaim great truths aloud; show by your conduct that you attach value to them and that you are guided by them.” 1.8 p.48
- 4) Speech (“... speak to comfort, to console, to transmit joy”)
- a) “The Lord has said in the Gita: ‘Speech that does not offend, that is truthful, pleasant, and beneficial has to be practiced.’” 14.46 p.263
 - b) “Speak the truth, but, speak pleasantly.... Both unpleasant truth and pleasant untruth have to be avoided.” 7.46 p.233-234
 - c) “... ‘speak without malice or hatred or envy; speak the truth; speak to comfort, to console, to transmit joy.’” 2.34 p.199
 - d) “Have a tender heart and a sweet voice. Do not shout yourselves, while reprimanding others for speaking aloud. Be examples for others, not simply castigators! Examples are the best instructors. Be deaf to the harsh words that others may in their ignorance use against you. They too will soften if you explain to them the why and wherefore of the restrictions and regulations that are prescribed here, by Me.” 11.10 p.59
- 5) Speech (“... talk only when there is pressing need”)
- a) “You feel the presence of God when silence reigns.... That is why I insist on silence, the practice of low speech and minimum sound. Talk low, talk little, talk in whispers sweet and true.... Examine each act of yours and see that you execute it with minimum noise.” 6.28 p.143
 - b) “Let Me tell you what the first steps in sadhana are: Practice silence. Then, you can more easily recognize the galloping of the mind behind worldly happiness.” 11.16 p.93
 - c) “Dost thou know why you have a tongue? To dispatch tasty foods in? No! No!..... The prime purpose is not to enable us to swallow our meals. The object is to utter holy words.” 15.45 p.253
 - d) “The tongue must be sanctified by the repetition of the Name. It has also to use sweet expressions which will spread contentment and joy. Be very careful about your speech.” 4.21 p.118
 - e) “Talk little; talk sweetly; talk only when there is pressing need; talk only to those to whom you must... such control will improve health and mental peace.... You may be laughed at as a kill-joy, but there are compensations enough for you. It will conserve your time and energy; you can put your inner energy to better use.” 8.45 p.241

I. Duty (“... pay attention to the task for which you have come....”)

1) Duty (“Each has his particular duty....”)

- a) “What exactly is your duty? Let Me summarize it for you. First, tend your parents with love and reverence and gratitude. Second, Sathyam vada, Dharman chara: Speak the truth and act virtuously. Third, whenever you have a few moments to spare, Repeat the Name of the Lord, with the Form in your mind. Fourth, never indulge in talking ill of others or try to discover faults in others. And, finally do not cause pain to others, in any form.”
5.24 p.135-136
- b) One’s duty is to act; act well; act in love; continue acting; act within the bounds of morality; act in love; continue acting; the consequences will naturally follow as the fruit follows the flower.”
8.14 p.59
- c) “And, what is the best he can contribute? Each has his particular duty, task, role as an individual and as a member of a society to which he belongs. Do that duty, carry on that task, play that role, as best as you can...”
11.38 p.225
- d) “This he had to do in a spirit of dedication and surrender to the Will of God, irrespective of his own likes and dislikes and the consequences that might flow from his unselfish activities.”
8.1 p.1
- e) “If even the tiniest screw thinks, ‘I am just a small screw; what does it matter if I am not cent per cent efficient?’, a fatal accident can easily happen! Do not neglect your duty wherever it lies.”
11.23 p.124-125
- f) “Therefore the Gita advises that service to the Sangha or community is the highest Seva, as well as the most beneficial Sadhana. You cannot run away from this obligation; you have to use the community of men wherein you are born for sublimating your egoism and saving yourself.”
8.1 p.1-2

2) Duty (“The center of every home must be the shrine room....”)

- a) “The Vedas are the very roots of Bharathiya Culture. So, it is the bounden duty of every son of India to observe the rites and rituals, the injunctions and instructions, laid down in the Vedas.”
12.46 p.252
- b) “The ancient teachings require you, therefore, to ‘prostrate before every activity that you do,’ praying that it may not bring harm to any one or to yourself.”
13.39 p.227
- c) “The center of every home must be the shrine room; the fragrance of flower and incense emanating from there must pervade the home and purify it. The mother must set the example in making the shrine the heart of the household. She must enforce discipline over the children in personal cleanliness, in humility and hospitality, in good manners and acts of service. She must persuade the children by example and precept to revere elders and to allot some time both in the morning and evening for prayer, and for silent meditation.”
9.13 p.68-69

- d) “In every home, a certain length of time must be fixed every day in the morning as well as the evening for readings from spiritual books and namasmarana. Parents and children must join in singing the glory of God...” 8.22 p.117
- e) “Gratitude to the parents is a basic virtue; reverence to the parents is reverence to the past, the traditions of the past, to the great treasure of wisdom that the past has garnered and preserved.” 11.43 p.256
- f) “Nourish your aged parents: revere them. If you honor your mother, the Mother of the Universe will guard you against harm. If you honor your father, the Father of all Beings, will guard you. This is as true as the fact that if you honor your parents, your children will honor you.” 4.28 p.160
- g) “Think of all those who are dependent on you for food and shelter and the love that you alone can offer them. Examine each item of expenditure with reference to these noble tasks. That is the sign of a wise man.” 3.38 p.219
- h) “Resolve today to sacrifice everything you have for the sake of the purehearted children who rely on you for your guidance...” 14.6 p.40
- i) “For it is the duty of the elders to show the rising generation by their lives that spiritual Sadhana and study have made them more joyful and courageous in the adventure of life.” 1.8 p.50

3) Duty (“Try to console, encourage, strengthen, and enlighten....”)

- a) “Duty is God-- that is the lesson the Ramayana teaches..... Duty is the responsibility you have to respect and revere others and to serve them to the best of your ability.” 13.11 p.50
- b) “... the task assigned to you-- to be instruments dedicated for advancing the mission on which the Divine has come.” 12.41 p.225
- c) “It is your duty to recognize all men as your kin and to share your skill with others so that the maximum benefits accrue therefrom.” 7.47 p.237
- d) “Whatever information, instruction, or inspiration man has gained, or whatever wealth, riches or material possessions he has earned, he should share them with others in an unselfish manner. This is his primary duty.” 14.39 p.216-217
- e) “Try to console, encourage, strengthen, and enlighten those who are miserable, downhearted, weak or ill-informed.” 5.6 p.42
- f) “When one is devoted to his duty, one is surrounded by such powerful protecting influences that no injurious forces dare approach. That is the way Grace operates.” 11.23 p.123

4) Duty (“... promote love, sympathy, and compassion towards all beings....”)

- a) “Love all religions and all nations. Recognize and accept all religions as paths leading men to the same destination. All of them teach love and compassion, humility and forbearance. I bless all of you and ask you to promote love, sympathy, and compassion towards all beings; God is present in every one of them; and it is your duty to revere God in each of them.” 11.40 p.240

- b) “The mean tactics of vicious pens that appear in the gutter papers serve to separate the husk from the grain.... Of course, there have been such traducers in all ages, for all who came down to help mankind: Rama, Krishna, Sankara. Do not develop hatred towards them, for, sooner or later, they are bound to repent and make good.... Pray for their transformation into Sathwic souls, for their blindness to be cured, and for their becoming attached to Truth rather than to sheer untruth.... hatred leads to the casting of mud; Love leads to mutual understanding and sympathy. Have love even for these misguided people; they will join the pilgrim path soon.” 6.35 p.176-177
- c) “Your thoughts, words, and deeds will shape others, and theirs will shape you. It is your duty to be good, do good, and see good. That is the way to make the world good, and be good yourself.” 12.8 p.29
- d) “Every one must be immersed in Santhi, derived from dedicated work, detached work, work offered as worship, work done with no desire or attachment for the benefit therefrom.” 5.19 p.107
- e) “If each does his duty, in the spirit of dedication, the Light can illuminate all....” 11.54 p.310
- f) “The Peace of the World depends on peace and amity between nations; the peace of nations depends upon the peace between the concomitant units, the villages, the families, and finally, the individuals of each family. So, every individual has a responsibility to love others, have faith in them, and revere them as sparks of the Divine.” 11.38 p.227

5) Duty (“Let the will of the Lord prevail....”)

- a) “You can gain bliss the very day you decide on dedicated service. Whether you get or do not get the comforts you desire, you should pay attention to the task for which you have come, and cultivate the means for realizing the inner God.” 14.6 p.40
- b) “You have the duty to stand witness in your lives to the courage, the joy, the strength, the generosity, the humility that true spirituality and faith can impart to man, while faced with disappointment, distress, defeat, defamation and other calamities against which the atheist has no such shield.” 12.45 p.246
- c) “You must equip yourself for this task of service by some individual spiritual discipline done daily with sincerity and regularity.” 14.3 p.16
- d) “... if you are cheerfully discharging the duty entrusted to you, I shall be with you, by your side; do not doubt this.” 7.5 p.26
- e) “Let the will of the Lord prevail; one’s duty is but to connect oneself to the current of His Grace.” 1.3 p.18-19

J. Concluding Comments-- Sadhana (“... become Love....”)

1) (“See yourself as Divine; see others as Divine”)

- a) “To see through the fog that projects many where there is only the One is the purpose of all spiritual discipline.” 13.30 p.176
- b) “Spiritual discipline is the name for the mental control and intellectual effort to realize this unity.” 13.27 p.157
- c) “The Call of the Divine echoes in every heart; it provokes the reaction of awe, reverence, affection love and sacrifice-- all ingredients of Bhakthi. It translates itself into acts of worship, of praise, of adoration and of rituals symbolizing the majesty of God. Thus, the mind gets saturated with Divine thoughts, it is recast in the Divine Mould, until the flow of Ananda is unabated.” 10.25 p.153
- d) “See yourself as Divine; see others as Divine. Turn away from all else in you and in others. That is the essence of Sadhana.” 8.27 p.146

2) (“Have faith in the wisdom of the ancients....”)

- a) “In spiritual matters, faith is the very essence.... Have faith in the wisdom of the ancients; do not pitch your tiny little brain against the intuitions of the saints and their discoveries.” 5.33 p.183
- b) “A broken bridge on a highway cannot be set right by amateur skill and the momentary enthusiasm of the villagers around.” 3.32 p.185
- c) “Lasting happiness, happiness that will not be shaken or diminished or modified by good fortune or bad, can come only by the discipline of the mind and faith in a Higher Power that guides all the deeds and words and thoughts of man.” 6.13 p.69-70

3) (“... first step will itself take you nearer the second....”)

- a) “The individual has to start observing the limits and laws laid down, and derive joy and strength thereby. And, then, his cleansed mind will lead the way, to higher and higher states. He and the society of which he is a unit will benefit thereby.” 11.54 p.304
- b) “Start with a sincere desire to succeed. Light will be shed by the Grace of the Lord. The Lord has come to help you.” 2.39 p.230
- c) “Discover for yourself your stage of spiritual development, to which class in the school you would fit in. Then determine to proceed from that class to the next higher one.” 6.4 p.17
- d) “You will have to select that activity which is conducive to your spiritual progress, judging the stage in which you are at present.” 11.9 p.52

- e) “It is enough if you put into practice one sloka, the one that suits your spiritual stage, that appeals to you most. That first step will itself take you nearer the second step, the second will make the third easier and so on until the end.”
5.26 p.143
- 4) (“Welcome inspiration from any quarter....”)
- a) “Welcome inspiration from any quarter for your own improvement.” 5.38 p.216
- b) “Learn from all the methods by which you can discover Him and reach Him.”
4.24 p.138
- c) “If only you evince some genuine interest in your own real uplift, I am ready to stand by you and crown your efforts with success.”
(3.17 p81 in 1st U.S. Edition) (not in current edition)
- d) “God is so merciful that He will come ten steps towards you, if you but take one step towards Him.” 10.24 p.151
- 5) (“... make the mind settle on God only....”)
- a) “Your task... is to grow in love, expand that love, practice love, strengthen love and finally become Love... love expressed through service to those that draw that love from you, and by drawing, help to increase it and deepen it. Spiritual Discipline is designed to canalize that love....” 9.30 p.158
- b) “The more systematic and successful your Sadhana, the more useful you will be for yourself and society.” 9.35 p.182
- c) “The regulation must come from within, not from without; people must control themselves through their own innate strength, not get controlled through fear of some one or desire for temporary gain.” 6.20 p.105
- d) “Frequently doing right makes it easier and easier, habit grows into conscience. If you are once established in right conduct, you will automatically follow the right.” 2.44 p.251
- e) “Learn therefore the discipline that can make the mind settle on God only and never waver therefrom.” 7.36 p.186
- 6) (“The goal is the same for you all....”)
- a) “You may say that Sadhakas alone have to bear such rules in mind, but tell Me... who is not a Sadhaka? All are pilgrims on the road; some going fast, some going slow, that is all. The goal is the same for you all, though the roads may be many.” 2.35 p.206
- b) “All men in all countries are pilgrims proceeding along the path to God. The progress of each is decided by the discipline adopted, the character formed, the ideal kept in view, the leadership chosen, and the faith implanted.” 8.25 p.135-136

- c) “Practice-- that is the real thing in spiritual matters.” 4.8 p.41
 - d) “Do not preach; practice... demonstrate in your own lives, how Love can confer peace and joy, how all faiths lead to the same goal...” 12.7 p.27
 - e) “Speak the Truth; walk in the Path of Virtue.” 5.11 p.67
- 7) (“... connect oneself to the current of His Grace”)
- a) “In the beginning, the Adored and the Adorer are distant and different; but, as the Sadhana becomes more confirmed and consolidated, they co-mingle and become more and more composite.” 7.48 p.240
 - b) “See yourself as Divine; see others as Divine. Turn away from all else in you and in others. That is the essence of Sadhana.” 8.27 p.146
 - c) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p.164
 - d) “Let the will of the Lord prevail; one’s duty is but to connect oneself to the current of His Grace.” 1.3 p.18-19

II. Sathsang

(“... communion with the godly and good”)

A. Introduction (“... proper atmosphere is very essential for the aspirant”)

- 1) “... I would advise you to form a sathsang, where you will meet and exchange truths and virtuous talk; where you will study holy books and discourse on the glory of God.” 6.13 p.72
- 2) “Sath-sang is like quaffing pure crystal water.” 9.6 p.27
- 3) “Cleanse the heart, by listening to spiritual discourses, seeking the company and comradeship of the righteous, the simple, the sincere, the seekers, and by cultivating goodness of character and sweetness of disposition.” 10.10 p.68
- 4) “... have good activities and good companionship. That will help very much in spiritual Sadhana; proper atmosphere is very essential for the aspirant. That is why the Sadhaka used to go and dwell in the ashramas maintained by the sages in the past. (There) they had the unique chance of being immersed in good thoughts, good activities and good company.” 1.15 p.88
- 5) “It is through the subtle influence of the Sanga into which they were inducted that Narada, the son of a maid, was transformed into the foremost practitioner and exponent of Bhakthi-marga; that Valmiki, a highway robber, was transmuted into a great sage, the first and foremost among poets...” 5.37 p.208
- 6) “Ascetic practices, years of constant recitation of the Name, pilgrimages to holy places and shrines, study of sacred books-- these will not help the aspirant to spiritual victory as much as communion with the godly and good.” 8.18 p.80

B. The Effect of Environment (“... the subtle influence of the company one keeps”)

- 1) “... from every being and thing, constantly, without intermission, millions of minute particles and millions of vibrations are issuing forth.... The bodies of others affect us by these emanations and we too affect them in the same way. For good or bad, we are interacting in this manner, inescapably. Naturally, the growth of the body is affect, as well as its health and strength, by the contact or company we develop.” 12.48 p.262
- 2) “A man is made or marred by the company he keeps. A bad fellow who falls into good company is able to shed his evil quickly and shine forth in virtue. A good man falling into evil company is overcome by the subtle influence and he slides down into evil. The lesser is overpowered by the greater.” 5.39 p.221
- 3) “... when a smoker joins a group of non-smokers, there is every likelihood of his giving up that bad habit; but, when a non-smoker falls into a den of smokers, he is certain to become a victim soon! Such is the subtle influence of the company one keeps.” 13.15 p.76

- 4) “There were two parrots on a tree, twins to be more precise. A hunger trapped them and sold them, one to a low, cruel butcher and the other to a sage who was running an ashrama to teach the Vedas. After a few years, he was surprised to find that one bird swore very foully, while the other recited the lilas of the Lord in a sweet musical tone which captivated the listeners. Such is the effect of the environment; so seek and secure Satsang.” 1.15 p.89
- 5) “The company one keeps determines one’s character; a person tries to join that group where he can freely express his innate nature.” 13.36 p.208

C. Meet Regularly (“Form small Sathsangs and meet regularly....”)

- 1) “Sath-sanga, or the Company of the Good also acts like a tonic. Try the prescription for some time; it will be rather unpleasant at first.” 2.34 p.189
- 2) “Form small Sathsangs and meet regularly for Bhajana and mutual consultations about spiritual matters. Read some fine spiritual classic, like the Bhagavad-githa. Fill your eyes with the Beauty of His Form, your ears with the story of His Leelas, hearts with the sweetness of His Glory; inspire yourselves by seeing Him everywhere.” 3.38 p.220
- 3) “Meet once a week or oftener; do Bhajan, read some spiritual book that will inspire you to further sadhana, meditate for some time and depart, refreshed and strengthened.” 8.24 p.132
- 4) “You can meet every Sunday, at about 4-30, in the evening and engage yourselves in Bhajan, or listen to some musical discourse, or some lecture on spiritual subjects or saintly personages.” 11.38 p.229
- 5) “Faith can grow only on conviction and one can be convinced only when doubts are dissolved by discussions.” 5.50 p.276
- 6) “A single fibre of grass has little strength: but, twist a large number into a rope, and you can use it to bind a rogue elephant to a tree! In the same way, the wild mind can be bound by faith that is confirmed in godly company.” 8.20 p.103
- 7) “Be united in that adventure, and encourage one another while proceeding along that path. Then success is assured.” 13.26 p.152

D) An Auspicious Meeting Time
 (“... prescribed for more intense Sadhana....”)

“... let Me tell you why this day is considered holy. Today is the fourteenth day of the dark half of the month, when the moon is all but invisible; just a minute fraction remains visible to man. The moon is the presiding deity of the mind. The mind is the source of all the entangling desires and emotions. The mind is, therefore, almost powerless this day; if only this night is spent in vigil and in the presence of the Divine, it can be fully conquered and man can realize his freedom.

“So, every month, the fourteenth day of the dark half of the month is prescribed for more intense Sadhana; and once a year, this Maha-Sivarathri, the Great Sivarathri, is laid down for the Great Consummation. Vigilance this night is to be secured by Sadhana; that is, by means of Bhajana, or the reading of Sacred Texts, or listening to the reading of such texts.... Be engaged in seeing good, listening to good, speaking good, thinking good, doing good; that is the programme for the vigil, tonight. Make it also the programme for your entire life.” 7.6 p.36

E. Sathsang-- Sathya Sai Baba Centers (“... promote the awareness of Divinity in human beings”)

- 1) Sathya Sai Baba Centers (“... congenial places to deepen their Sadhana....”)
 - a) “The Sathya Sai Organization has been established to provide sacred tasks for every moment of wakeful life....” 12.54 p.300
 - b) “These organizations are meant to broaden your love, to canalize your activities along lines of constructive service performed as worship....” 7.46 p.233
 - c) “The main objective of the Sathya Sai Organization-- which you must always keep before you-- is, to help man to recognize the Divinity that is inherent in him.” 13.2 p.9
 - d) “You must have the firm belief that the aim of this Organization is to remove the obstacles that keep man away from God....” 10.33 p.205
 - c) “The organization must be such that members find them congenial places to deepen their Sadhana, to cultivate their virtues, and to overcome their ego....” 7.18 p.98

- 2) Sathya Sai Baba Centers (“Let the Sathsang start with your homes”)
 - a) “The goal is not the proliferation of activities and centers... but encouraging Sadhaks to become examples and inspiration to others.” 10.1 p.4
 - b) “Units must be started only when there is a felt need, a yearning among the people.” 8.6 p.25
 - c) “Let the Sathsang start with your homes. Let the home be harmonious, happy, smooth-running, with no friction or faction. Let the individuals comprising the home, the different generations and levels of intelligence, growth and attainments living together, let all learn to live together, with understanding and sympathy, fortitude and forbearance, in mutual co-operation and loving kindness. Let peace reign in your homes, between the mother and her children, the brothers and sisters, the kith and kin. On that secure foundational Sathsang, you can build the superstructure of Sathsang in the Community, the State, the Nation and the World. When that foundation is absent, you will only draw down ridicule when you initiate publicity for the sathsang idea.” 10.3 p.13

- d) “Extend your activities to places and peoples who have no one now to guide them.” 9.18 p.98
- e) “... wholeheartedly share in all festivals and functions that promote faith, devotion and dedication.” 11.3 p.20
- f) “Feed the little lamp of yours, with the oil of enthusiasm provided by godly company.” 8.24 p.132

3) Sathya Sai Baba Centers (“... they have to regulate their social behaviour....”)

a) “... who can be members of these organizations, and what are their qualifications?

1) Of course, they must be eager aspirants for spiritual progress. 2) They must have full faith in the Name that the organization bears, and in spreading that Name, in the manner suited to Its Message and Majesty. 3) Besides, the member must have won recognition as a good person. That is all the qualification needed....”

7.18 p.97-98

b) “Do not have anyone in, who would much rather be outside the group of Sai Bhakthas, either on account of his habits or indifference towards religious matters, especially towards the directions given by Me.”

9.33 p.173

c) “Another point I want to emphasize is this: there are many other organizations with spiritual objectives in this land, run under different names, attached to other Names and Forms of God, like Rama, Krishna. You know the reverence that Indian culture insists that you should offer to all the names and forms of the One Godhead. In your organizations, there may be some who insist that only Sai Bhajans should be sung, only the Name and Form of Sathya Sai be used. This is a great mistake..... In this matter do not develop fanaticism or sectarianism.... Try your best to avoid such infection.”

7.18 p.99

d) “Whoever neglects his parents, allows them to languish and suffer while he himself is enjoying a higher standard of life, does not deserve to be a member; for I always stress the Vedic injunction: Mathr devo bhava, Pithr devo bhava-- (‘Let your mother be your God, Let your father be your God’). Those of you who are guilty of this malfesance, take note, and be cured by this injunction. The Sathya Sai Family must have only men and women who honour their family obligation of nourishing and nursing their parents.”

9.33 p.173

e) “Some members from Western countries do not seem to favour the rule of the Sathya Sai Organization, which lays down that, at Bhajans and at other meetings, men devotees should sit apart from women devotees. The rule should be applicable to all members-- whether they are Indians or non-Indians, in India or elsewhere. It is a part of the spiritual discipline that is necessary for devotees.”

14.56 p.318-319

f) “For example, you must have noticed that I never call a woman, alone for the ‘interview’. I call women only in groups of ten or fifteen. I want that you should note this and infer that one has to be extremely cautious in dealing with the other sex, for, though I am above and beyond the Gunas, since this body is obviously masculine, I want to teach both men and women how they have to regulate their social behaviour and be above the slightest tinge of suspicion, or of small talk.”

10.30 p.185

- 4) Sathya Sai Baba Centers (“... mould your destiny along the lines of Love....”)
- a) “... the Organization strives to establish World Peace and Prosperity, promote Mutual Service in Society and cultivate Selfless Love in the Individual.”
12.24 p.125-126
 - b) “... it is the duty of all those who are connected with the Sathya Sai Organizations to promote spiritual discipline... dedicate their lives to social service... promote the awareness of Divinity in humans beings, and thereby build a genuine sense of brotherhood among people...”
14.56 p.317
 - c) “So too, whether it is meditation that you are encouraging, or discourse that you are arranging, or bhajan that you are organizing, or clothes that you are offering to the poor, or worship that you are conducting, the object is... cleansing the mind of the tarnish of egoism, greed, hatred, malice, list and envy. The one quality that you must acquire as a result of all this is ‘mutual love’. That is the sign of the Sai devotee, of devotees of all the Forms of God.”
8.44 p.233-234
 - d) “You have formed a study circle, so study the best means of bringing peace, and apply those means in a few villages to prove their validity. They can then be taught to people in other lands also.”
14.47 p.270
 - e) “You must carry on activities of your Unit in the faith that a Divine Will is the basic motive power of all you plan and do. Who are you? You are that Divine Will...”
10.32 p.198
 - f) “You must be thankful that here at least you can calmly consider your own inner nature and resolve upon ways and means by which you can mould your destiny along the lines of Love and Contentment.”
8.8 p.31

F. Friendship (“... between one inner God... and another....”)

- 1) “It is all a matter of the company you fall into. Be careful when you choose your friends.”
3.38 p.220
- 2) “Genuine friendships can only be possible between one inner God (Atman) and another...”
14.10 p.62
- 3) “Most ‘friendships’ are based on selfish considerations and last only as long as selfish interests are prompted thereby.... Do not cultivate close friendship with anybody unless you know that the motives on the other side are pure, unselfish, and spiritual.”
14.10 p.61-62
- 4) “Only those deserve the name ‘friends’ who help in uplifting life, cleansing ideals, elevating emotions, and strengthening resolves.... See into the very soul, the inner motives and motivator, the deeper aspirations and achievements, and then, yield your loyalty to such.”
12.18 p.84

- 5) "Friendship that is cultivated from childhood onwards is more lasting..." 1.7 p42
- 6) "... choose friends who by their company would help you in raising your character." 14.8 p.53
- 7) "Krishna also blessed his wife with enormous wealth, comfort, peace, and prosperity in quantity much more than ever she hoped for or prayed for. No one asked Him for it; but, His love took that shape, His Grace awarded them the happiness. But, Kuchela was ever content with the friendship of Krishna; he never desired anything other than that.... The feeling of friendship must activate every nerve, permeate every blood-cell, and purify every emotional wave.... Perhaps, the only friend who can pass this rigorous test is God." 12.18 p.85
- 8) "God is the nearest, the dearest, the most loving, the most eager companion, comrade and kinsman for man." 12.36 p.196
- 9) "Friendship is the expression of unshakable Love, Love that is noble, pure, free from desire or egoism. I bless you that you may have such friendship from others and that you too make others happy by granting this holy type of friendship." 12.18 p.87

G. Concluding Comments-- Satsang ("... keep your self surrounded... by persons devoted to the higher life...")

- 1) ("... strengthen your faith and devotion")
 - a) "... until Reality is realized, the balm of faith, of holy company, and holy thoughts must be applied to the ego-affected mind." 4.34 p.203
 - b) "The real You is the Atma. This can be learnt only by constant meditation, by moving in good company, by listening to the talks of realized men, by following some prescribed course of discipline. That is why I lay so much emphasis on discipline." 4.39 p.230
 - c) "... proceed to the Presence of the Great, to listen to the discourses of genuine teachers, to visit sacred places where the atmosphere is fragrant with Sadhana and study." 6.32 p.161
 - d) "... keep your self surrounded always by persons devoted to the higher life; persons who will encourage you to move forward along the road towards the goal." 6.11 p.60
 - e) "The evil traits that have grown through many lives and generations cannot be wiped away in an instant. So, mix in godly groups, cultivate good habits and attitudes, and involve yourselves in good activities." 14.55 p.311
 - f) "The value of holy places, sacred theerthas, etc. consists in just this: kindred spirits congregate there and contribute to the deepening of spiritual yearning. You can take sweet and sustaining counsel together, in such places, and strengthen your faith and devotion. If in any place, you do not find such an atmosphere, avoid it and move on, until you secure it." 5.2 p.12
 - g) "You must take all the trouble and welcome all the patience needed, to seek Satsang and remain therein." 13.15 p.76

- 2) (“... attach your mind to the Lord....”)
- a) “... attach your mind to the Lord. Then you will be led on to the company of good men and your talents will be transmuted.” 1.11 p64
 - b) “If Satsang is not available, you can keep company with your own higher impulses and noble thoughts.” 5.30 p.167
 - c) “Have the Name of God on your tongue, in your breath, ever. That will evoke His Form, as the Inner Core of every thing, thought or turn of events. That will provide you with His Company, contact with His unfailing Energy and Bliss. That is the Sathsanga (good association) that gives you maximum benefit.” 8.11 p.48

III. Examples

“... restore confidence among the people in the higher values of life....”

A. Introduction (“... the showering of love”)

- 1) (“Why are personages like... Jesus... revered in human hearts until this day?”)
 - a) “The individual by his thoughts, words, and deeds develops or undermines the welfare of Society, and thus affects the world.” 11.34 p.199
 - b) “One gets inspired by the devotion of others; the company of men with kindred sentiments helps to foster the tiny seedling....” 1.31 p.195
 - c) “Listen and ruminate over the stories of the great moral heroes of the past, so that their ideals may be imprinted on your hearts.” 8.5 p.19
 - d) “For saplings, to grow, soil is essential; for ideals to get implanted, knowledge of the struggles and successes of saints and sages is essential.” 3.6 p.41
 - e) “Why are personages like Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya, Madhwacharya, the Buddhas, Jesus, Zoroaster, and other religious pioneers revered in human hearts until this day? Is their scholarship the reason? No. Their virtues and lives reflecting those virtues-- these are the reasons.” 15.30 p.161
 - f) “Students must learn more about persons who have achieved success despite obstacles of every kind.” 15.18 p.100

- 2) (“... they... communicate that joy and wisdom to others”)
 - a) “For such individuals who have liberated themselves from the narrowness of individuality, the only task is the uplift of humanity, the welfare of the world, and the showering of love. Even if they are quiet, the state of Bliss in which they are will shower bliss on the world.” 7.48 p.240
 - b) “Such transformed persons will spontaneously engage themselves in the task of promoting human welfare.” 13.25 p.146
 - c) “The lives of such Personalities are lived out, in order to establish the welfare of humanity, the prosperity and peace of the world, and individual liberation from bondage, to sensual desires and passions.” 11.54 p.309
 - d) “Immersed in Sath-chith-ananda themselves, they must communicate that joy and that wisdom to others.” 11.53 p.302
 - e) “Themselves having crossed... they help others to do likewise....” 11.48 p.283

B. Examples (“Dwell on... the example they place before you... correct your habits...”)

1) Bharadwaja (“Eight days passed... before Sakthi noticed (him) standing in the cold”)

a) “This Bharadwaja was a great sage, who studied the Vedas for full one hundred years; but, finding that the Vedas were Anantha (endless) he did Thapas for prolonging life, and from Indra he got two extensions of a century each. Even then, the Vedas could not be completed, so, he asked Indra again for another hundred years. Indra showed him 3 huge mountain ranges and said, ‘What you have learned in 3 centuries form only 3 handfuls from out of the 3 ranges, which the Vedas are. So, give up the attempt to exhaust the Vedas. Do a Yaga instead, which I shall teach you; that will give you the fruit of Vedic study, full and complete.

“Bharadwaja decided on performing the Yaga; Indra taught him how to do it; all preparations were completed. The sage wanted that Sakthi must preside and bless the Yaga. So he went to Kailasa but, the time was not opportune for presenting his petition. Siva and Sakthi were engaged in a competitive dance, trying to find out who could dance longer. Eight days passed thus, before Sakthi noticed Bharadwaja standing in the cold. She just cast a smile at him and danced along as before! The sage mistook the smile as a cynical refusal to notice him; so, he turned his back on Kailasa and started to descend. To his dismay, he found his left leg, hand, and eye put out of action by a stroke. Siva saw him fall; He came up to him and consoled him; Bharadwaja was told that Sakthi had indeed blessed him and his Yaga. Then, Siva revived him and cured him, sprinkling water from the Kamandalu. Both Siva and Sakthi granted the Rishi boons: They would both attend the Yaga, they said.

“After the Yaga was over, they were so pleased that They conferred even more boons on the sage. Siva said that They would take Human Form and be born in the Bharadwaja lineage or Gothra thrice: Siva alone as Shirdi Sai Baba, Siva and Sakthi together at Puttaparthi as Sathya Sai Baba and Sakthi alone as Prema Sai, later. Then Siva remembered the illness that had suddenly come upon Bharadwaja at Kailasa on the eight day of the waiting in the cold on the ice. He gave another assurance. ‘As expiation for the neglect which Sakthi showed you at Kailasa for 8 days, this Sakthi will suffer the stroke for 8 days, when We both take birth as Sathya Sai and, on the 8th day, I shall relieve her from all signs of the disease by sprinkling water, just as I did at Kailasa to cure your illness.’

“It was the working out of this Assurance that you witnessed today, just now. This had to happen, this stroke and the cure. The assurance given in the Threthayuga had to be honoured.”

3.15 p.90-91

2) Bharata (“Ceaseless contemplation....”)

a) “Bharata gave up... his throne and all his wealth and power; he reveled in travail and poverty, he dwelt only in the thought of Rama in the forest and denied himself every thing that his brother could not get. By constant contemplation on Rama, even his complexion changed into Rama’s.” 6.18 p.93

b) The thought of Rama was so intense in him that people saw Rama in the form of Bharatha. Ceaseless contemplation had made him an exact replica. That is the depth of Bhakthi which is fruitful.” 3.3 p.22

3) Buddha (“... renunciation of attachment was the first step... he took”)

a) “Buddha sought to solve the mystery of suffering; renunciation of attachment was the first step in the Sadhana he undertook.” 10.16 p.101

b) “Buddha was so agonized by the suffering that haunts the life of man that he investigated the behavior of the mind and intellect of man and discovered remedial disciplines! He analyzed the ways of reason, too, and spotted the areas where prejudice takes root. Above all, he preached surrender to righteousness, to compassion, and to Buddha (the Enlightened One).” 13.23 p.128-129

4) Chaithanya (“... milk can only be got from her....”)

a) “Chaithanya once had very high fever, the temperature rising to 105 to 106! He refused to administer upon himself any drug other than what the Sastras have prescribed; he asked for the dust of the feet of a Brahmin, water consecrated by washing his feet! They could only get hold of a Brahmin who was not following correctly the disciplines laid down for that high caste, which is entrusted with heavy responsibilities like leading the community along the spiritual path to self-realization. But, Chaithanya asked that they need not be very strict in scrutinizing his credentials, for, a Brahmin is holy, however fallen he may be. He belongs to a line which has soaked itself through many lives in Vedic Lore and Sadhana. However rickety a cow has become, milk can be got only from her; she has to be fed, fostered, fondled and revered. Thus, Chaithanya reminded the Brahmin of his great role in society and encouraged them to live up to the high expectations that history has fastened about them. Man to has come for a great destiny, on a sacred mission....” 11.14 p.84

5) The Gopis (“... that yearning and that vision....”)

a) “Every gopi had the highest type of Bhakthi in her heart. They saw only Krishna wherever they turned....” 3.18 p.110

b) “The Gopis were so filled with the highest type of love that they saw and experienced the Krishna Principle in every speck of dust and blade of green that they saw. Love of Krishna makes the whole world Krishna.” 11.15 p.89

c) “When Narada went to Gokul and called the Gopis to gather around him so that they can listen to his teachings about the attainment of Jnana, the Gopis gave no heed; they said, they did not like to waste precious minutes. ‘The hours of day and night are not enough for us to dwell on the Name of the Lord. We do not require your verbal acrobatics to convince us that God is Sath-chit-anand-swarupa; we know, we feel, we experience the Bliss every moment.’” 8.27 p.147

d) “... Narada concluded that they had no need for the lessons he had planned to give. He prayed to them to teach him the means of getting that yearning and that vision of the all-pervading Krishna.” 4.16 p.90

6) Hanuman (“This was how deep and sincere Hanuman’s loyalty and devotion was...”)

a) “Hanuman succeeded in coordinating his thoughts, words, and acts. Therefore, he had the unique distinction of being great in physical strength, mental stability, and virtuous character. He shines as an invaluable gem among the personalities of the Ramayana (the epic of Rama). He was also a great scholar, who had mastered, of all things, the six schools of grammar! He knew the four Vedas and the six Sastras (ancient scriptures). The Gita says that a scholar is one who sees the same divine force motivating every one. Hanuman was a good example of this outlook. He did not pride himself that he knew so much. He was the very picture of humility, born out of genuine sincerity and wisdom. He realized that the Rama principle (Atmarama) was illumining every being, and he adored It above all else.” 13.28 p.159

b) “... Agasthya, one of the renowned sages in the hall, rose up and challenged Hanuman with the question, ‘Hanuman! You say that you will not wear or bear, eat or carry anything that does not sound of Rama. Well, you carry about this body, don’t you? Does it sound of Rama to you?’ Hanuman accepted the challenge. He pulled a single hair from his wrist and held it to the ear of the sage. Lo! it was reciting ‘Rama, Rama’, without interruption. This was how deep and sincere Hanuman’s loyalty and devotion was to all that belonged to his Master. That is the reason why he achieved success, whatever the assignment.” 13.28 p.164

c) “Do not cast away the nectar of Grace when it is offered. Hanuman was ordered to discover the whereabouts of Sita and he obeyed implicitly, without question and succeeded. He did not calculate the dangers of the journey and hesitate; he did not feel proud that he was chosen for the high adventure and enthuse. He listened, he understood, he obeyed, he won. The name Ramadutha, Messenger, servant of Rama that he earned thereby has made him immortal. You must earn the name, Sai Rama Dutha....” 8.33 p.184-185

7) Jesus (“... the embodiment of compassion and love”)

a) “Jesus was a person whose only joy was in spreading Divine Love, offering Divine Love, receiving Divine Love, and living on Divine Love.” 14.45 p.256

b) “Jesus taught simple practical lessons in spiritual advancement for the good of mankind; He manifested Divine Powers to instill faith in the validity of his teachings; He marked out the path that can confer on men the sweet nectar of Ananda. He exhorted people by precept and example to cultivate the virtues of charity, compassion, forbearance, love and faith. These are not separate and distinct qualities, they are only the many facets of the Divine in Man, which he has to recognize and develop.

“People talk of the sacrifice of Christ as evidenced by His crucifixion. But, he was surrounded and bound, and crowned by the crowd who captured Him with a crown of thorns, and later, nailed to the cross by his captors. A person bound and beaten by the police cannot say that he has sacrificed anything, for, he is not a free man. Let us pay attention to the sacrifice that Jesus made while free, out of his own volition. He sacrificed his happiness, prosperity, comfort, safety and position; he braved the enmity of the powerful; he refused to yield or compromise. He renounced the ‘ego’, which is the toughest thing to get rid of. Honour Him for these. He willingly sacrificed the desires with which the body torments man; this is sacrifice greater than the sacrifice of the body under duress. The celebration of His birthday has to be marked by your sacrificing at least a desire or two, and conquering at least the more disastrous urges of the ego.”

11.54 p.308-309

c) “Jesus was the embodiment of compassion and love.... His entire life was dedicated to service. In the interest of truth, he laid down his own life. Such persons are revered in the world, however much times may change.”

(10.28 p.178 in 1st U.S. Edition, not in current edition)

8) Sri P. R. Kamani (“... ceaselessly engaged in the thought of Swami only....”)

a) “...Sri P. R. Kamani, one of the greatest of Swami’s Devotees, has personally supervised the erection of this shed. Supplying scarce articles like iron and cement and also the technical guidance and skill, with a smiling face and an exuberant heart, he sought to fulfill Swami’s Sankalpa and succeeded. Sri P. R. Kamani is responsible for giving you all so much delight. His devotion and the loving care and steady attention that he bestows on any work connected with Swami is really remarkable. It is decided that this great auditorium shall be consecrated to the memory of Sri P. R. Kamani. From this day, it shall be known as Poornachandra Auditorium.....

“So man too must carry on in a spirit of dedication, as P.R. Kamani did. We can assert that there is no fulfillment greater than that, there is no merit higher than that to be acquired by man. Because this great devotee has always cherished Swami in his heart and was ceaselessly engaged in the thought of Swami only, he is even with Swami and in Swami. This Auditorium shall be known as Poornachandra-- His memory, enshrined in that name, will live for ever.”

11.48 p.285-286

9) Krishna (“... pulling its heartstrings to arouse the melody of... love...”)

a) “Krishna has three separate meanings-- the word, that is: 1) Karsh is one root from which the name is derived. It means, that which attracts; Krishna attracts hearts to Himself, by His sportive pastimes, miraculous victories over the forces of evil, His charming conversation, His wisdom, His personal beauty. 2) The word is also related to the root, Krish, to cultivate, as a field, for growing crops. The word means, he who removes the weeds from the heart of man, and sows seeds of faith, courage and joy. 3) It is related to the root, Krish, meaning something above and beyond the three attributes and the three eras, and na, means Sath-chith-ananda. The leelas and mahimas of Krishna-- through which He attracts the Love of Mankind, cultivates the harvest of joy in the hearts of His devotees, and makes them aware of His being Existence-knowledge-Bliss-- are described in the Bhagavatha.” 11.31 p.182

b) “Krishna dealt with the world as with a sitar, pulling its heart-strings to arouse the melody of comradeship, heroism, love, affection, compassion and conviction. But, of these, the two emotions of Love and Compassion were characteristically His and His own. His breath was Love! His behaviour, Compassion! Adore Him, placing a garland of tears around His neck; washing His Feet with tears, springing from joy at the contemplation of His Love! That very worship will endow you with the wisdom that sages seek, the Bliss that the Books extol!” 11.31 p.185

c) “‘Krishna’ is derived from the root Krish which means 1) to attract, 2) to plough and cultivate, and 3) the Divine Principle beyond Time, Space and Causation. Krishna, like all Avatars, attracts not only seekers, saints and sages, but the simple, the innocent and the good. He draws also the curious, the critics, the skeptics and those who suffer from atheism. He draws them towards Himself by the irresistible charm of His Person, by His invincible Look, His Voice, His Flute, His counsel and His undaunted heroism. He is ever in a state of Bliss, spreading Harmony, Melody and Beauty around Him....

“Why does He attract all to His Presence? To plough the heart, prepare it for receiving the shower of Grace, to grow the seeds of Love, weed it of all evil thoughts which smother the crops of Joy and to enable it to gather the harvest of Wisdom. That wisdom finds its fulfillment in Krishna Himself....” 11.45 p.264-265

d) “The Name is redolent with Divine Glory; so when it is turned over in the mind it transmutes it into an instrument for liberation from delusion. Take the name, Navanithachora (Butter-thief) that is used for Krishna. It does not mean a person who runs away with the butter that people have stored. It is not the stuff called butter that is got by churning curdled milk, that He stole. It is the butter of Faith, won by the churning process called ‘yearning’, from the curdled milk call ‘worldly experiences’. He covets only this ‘butter’. When Yosoda chided the child Krishna for this ‘theft’, He replied, ‘But Mother, they like me for stealing it; they are sorry if I do not; they churn it in the hope that I will steal it; when I steal, their hearts are illumined and they awake.’” 7.25 p.139-140

e) “This is only another way of describing the search for the God that we know to be within us, who eludes our efforts to sink into that sweetness. Krishna is hiding in the recesses of your hearts; you have to trace Him there and hold fast. He runs away, but leaves footprints marked by the spilt milk on which He has trodden.... Yes, the lesson is: recognize His Footprints in every thing of beauty, every act of goodness, every tear of gratitude, every sigh of compassion, and discover Him in the bower of your own heart, filled with the fragrance of Love and Light of Virtue.” 9.17 p.89

f) “Kankana is the word for dedicatory armlet, worn when a person resolves on a vow. You may wonder what the vows are, which Krishna took upon Himself! I shall tell you what they are. They are mentioned in the Bhagavadgitha, for all humanity to read, know, and believe...

“There are three vows in all:

- i) ‘For the protection of the good and the punishment of the bad, for the establishment of the Moral Order, I shall concretize Myself, age after age.’
- ii) “Whoever is wholly immersed in My contemplation, with no other thought, I shall be ever with Him; and I shall bear the burden of his welfare.’
- iii) ‘Surrender unto Me, giving up all other duties and obligations; I shall liberate you from all sin; do not grieve.’” 5.4 p.25-26

g) “One day Krishna pretended to be fast asleep, with the Flute carelessly thrown aside by His side. Radha approached the fortunate Flute and asked it in plaintive terms, ‘O Lucky Murali! tell me, how you earned this great good fortune. What was the vow you observed, the vigil you kept, the pilgrimage you accomplished? What was the manthra you recited, the idol you worshipped?’ The Flute got tongue through His Grace; ‘I rid myself of all sensual desire, of envy, greed, of ego, that is all. I had no feeling of ego left to obstruct the flow of His Prema through Me to all creation.’” 4.30 p.174-175

10) Lakshmana (“... he could vouchsafe for the genuineness of only one jewel....”)

a) “His greatness is immeasurable. He served Sita every day for fourteen years, but never once raised his eyes to her face. His conduct was the height of righteousness. When the bundle of jewels that Sita had thrown along the way while being abducted by Ravana was retrieved by the monkey hordes at Rishyamuka Hill, they handed it over to Sugriva. Sugriva brought it before Rama and Lakshmana for identification. When Rama asked Lakshmana whether he could identify any of the jewels as belonging to Sita, Lakshmana said that he could vouchsafe for the genuineness of only one jewel-- that which Sita wore on her ankles. He saw it every day when he fell at the feet of Sita and so could recognize it as unmistakably hers. Such was the noble character of Rama’s brother.” 13.32 p.190-191

11) Mahavira (“... all things and beings are holy in their own right....”)

a) “... Mahavira, extols jina, or the heroic conqueror of the senses, the emotions, and the stratagems of the intellect. He called upon all to carry out the duties commensurate to their status and professions with steady faith and enthusiasm. He declared that all things and beings are holy in their own right and are but pilgrims on the road to realization. Any injury inflicted on any of them is an intervention in that sacred journey and so has to be scrupulously avoided.” 13.23 p.129

12) Messing (“... undertook a variety of spiritual exercises....”)

a) “Messing came to India in order to identify and realize the Atma principle. He undertook a variety of spiritual exercises with this end in view. As a result, he acquired Divine Vision. He met Gandhi and many holy persons engaged in ascetic practices on the Himalayas and returned to his country gratified that he had won what he was yearning for.” 14.57 p.326

13) Prahlada (“... whatever happened to his physical cloak, he never felt it”)

a) “Prahlada knew the truth, ‘Sarvam vishnu mayam jagath’; ‘This world is all filled with the immanent God’. He knew it by study and by experience; he knew it as an everpresent fact. So, when he was asked to frame a boon to be granted by the Lord who concretized before him, he asked neither for the revival of his father, or the restoration of his kingdom, or long life or wealth or fame; he asked for the chance of assuaging the pain and sorrow of all beings! God, he knew, was manifest as those beings and the best form of serving God was to serve those manifestations and give them relief and joy.” 6.5 p.25

b) “Prahlada is a fine example of this, for he had no egoism; he was in perfect unaffected calm. So, whatever happened to his physical cloak, he never felt it.” 2.37 p.219

14) Radha (“... pure, unremitting devotion”)

a) “Radha lived the life of an ideal woman in accordance with the standards set by the Sanathan Dharma (eternal path of righteousness), and kept her thoughts fixed all the time on the Lord in pure, unremitting devotion. And so she secured the bliss of merging with Him. This is the type of devotion referred to in the scriptures as ‘madhura bhakthi’ (sweet devotion).... When this sweet experience is achieved, there is nowhere else to go, nothing more to do. The totality of God is experienced in sweet devotion....” 14.5 p.28-29

15) Rama (“... the embodiment of steady adherence to Satya and Dharma”)

a) “Just consider the series of ideal examples that the Ramayana provides: the family of Rama is itself an invaluable gallery of supreme Dharma. When a son is as loyal as Rama, accepting even exile as his father’s will and gladly walking into the forest as gladly as he moved towards the throne for his coronation, he will be the ideal son indeed.” 11.19 p.104

b) “Rama enlightens every seeker in the spiritual field, since he put into daily practice all that he deemed right. So, He sets the standard for every member of the household, of society, of the nation and of the human race.” 15.6 p.32

c) “Rama was the embodiment of steady adherence to Satya and Dharma. Only those who are saturated in Rama-bhakti can dive into that glory. He is the grand ideal, upon whom you can contemplate. By doing so, you can imbibe and develop his virtues, slowly and silently. A tree grows silently for years before it yields fruits.” 15.6 p.33

d) “Rama’s glory shines brilliantly even after all these centuries. It will shine as resplendently for ages to come.” 15.6 p.33

16) Ramadas (“... he received on his back, the blows meant for his pupils”)

a) “Man is on a long pilgrimage towards God. He moves from one life to another to the goal of Splendour. On the way he has to take shelter in many caravanserais, or rest-houses, but, however attractive these may be, he cannot strike root, but has to remind himself of the journey’s end! Once when Samartha Ramadas was moving about the countryside with his disciples, those behind him saw a fine field of juicy sugar cane and entered it and started pulling out the cane and crunching with great relish. The owner of the field was naturally enraged at their behaviour and at the loss to which they were subjecting him; he fell upon them with a stout cane. The Master was sorry that they broke discipline so badly, drawn by the desire of the tongue for the sweet juice. Next day they reached Emperor Sivaji’s Palace, where a great welcome awaited the Guru and his followers. Sivaji offered to attend personally to the Guru during his ceremonial bath; when Ramadas undressed, Sivaji was shocked to find broad red marks, indicating that he had been beaten! Such was the sensitive sympathy of the great saint, that he received on his back, the blows meant for his pupils. Sivaji sent for the owner of the field of cane; and, when he stood shivering in fear before the Emperor and his Guru, Ramadas was requested by Sivaji to inflict on him any punishment he liked. But, Ramadas accepted that wrong was committed by his disciples, that they should not have allowed the cane to attract them into theft. He blessed the farmer and granted him a boon that his lands will be tax-free for ever!

“The Sandalwood tree will lend its fragrance even to the axe which cuts it down. That is the nature of the good and the great.” 7.43 p.221-222

17) Ramakrishna Paramahansa (“Why pray? If it is Her will, it will happen...”)

a) “Ramakrishna Paramahansa was fascinated by the friendship exemplified by the Krishna-Arjuna relationship. He learned from the Bhagavatha and the Bhagavad Gita how the spiritual aspirant can go through all the nine stages of complete surrender to God. He was also determined to emulate the gopis, loving devotees of Krishna and earn for himself the unattached type of complete devotion, the sweet love that the gopis had. When he read the Ramayana, he decided to emulate Hanuman and practice his ten stages of surrender. Of all the verses in the Bhagavad Gita, Ramakrishna was especially impressed by the one that emphasized the attitude of absolute and total surrender to the will of God:

‘Become one with Me; be devoted to Me;
sacrifice to Me; bow down to Me.
Unifying thus yourself, you will surely
come to Me.’”

14.10 p.63

b) “Ramakrishna was a Paramahansa; he knew how to separate milk (Truth) from the water (untruth) added to it! When he was suffering from cancer of the throat, unable to swallow food, his disciples entreated him, to pray to mother Kali, that the cancer may be cured; they felt that Kali will certainly answer the prayer if he but made it. But, Paramahansa refused, to ask any such boon from God. His attention could not be diverted to any such low desire. ‘Why pray? If it is Her will, it will happen; if not, that too is Her will’, that was the reply.”

7.35 p.180

c) “The mind too can be weaned away from vicious desires if you feed it on good thoughts, good resolutions, tenderness and love.... Ramakrishna Paramahansa told an addict that he must not consume more than a given quantity of opium; he gave him a piece of chalk, to weigh every day the quantity of opium he can eat-- no more, no less! But, he imposed a condition, whose usefulness in helping him to conquer the bad habit, the addict did not realize then. It was, that every time he used the weight he had to write on a slate, the Pranava (Om), before putting it on the scale of the balance. The fellow obeyed; the chalk was reduced in weight with every Om, until it was eliminated in full; the opium habit too was reduced out of existence! The Om also helped to transfer his attachment from the opium-induced tranquillity to the everlasting Bliss of God-intoxication.”

7.43 p.220-221

18) Sabari (“... just as she cleaned the paths, she cleaned her heart...”)

a) “Sabari had a very tender compassionate heart. How she came to Matanga Rishi and stayed at his hermitage is a very interesting story. Her marriage was arranged by her parents, and as was the custom among the Adivasis a goat was to be offered to the tribal Goddess, on the night previous to the ceremony, in order to win the Grace for the couple. When Sabari came to know about this slaughter, she wept, and fell at the feet of her parents, praying them to save the goat. She asked, “How can our married life be happy, when the dying bleat of this goat is the prologue?” But, the

father pushed her aside and proceeded with the cruel rite. That night, Sabari stole out of that den of torture, and hid herself in the depths of the jungle that was not far off.

“When day dawned, her parents as well as the groom’s party were plunged in grief and anxiety; they combed the area, even where she was lying low amidst the thick bushes, and they went back, saying among themselves, “She could not have gone to the hermitage, for no woman would be given asylum there”. She heard these words and so, she concluded that the hermitage was the safest place for her. She felt that some monk will take pity on her, and not send her back. Matanga espied her and gave her permission to be in his habitation. He told her that God in the Form of Sri Rama was coming to the hermitage some day, since he has been exiled into the forests for 14 years and He is eager to save the monks and seekers doing Tapas in the forests from the ravages of the demonic enemies of peace! Rama, he said, was proceeding from one region to another, with His consort, Sita and His brother, Lakshmana.

“From that day Sabari had no other thought than of Rama, no other desire than the desire to have the Darshan of Rama, the chance to touch His Feet and the opportunity to speak with Him. Her heart was saturated with the Ramarasa, the sweetness of the Rama principle. She had no other Japam or Dhyana or spiritual exercise. She spent her time preparing for the visit of Rama to the hermitage; just as she cleaned the paths, she cleaned her heart, too. Pebbles and thorns disappeared from both, through her efforts. She walked through the undergrowth and removed overhanging creepers and briars, for she imagined Rama would not have combed His hair and it might get caught. She broke the lumps of earth, for she feared the tender soles of Sita will be hurt when she walks over them. She gathered fruits and tubers from the jungle trees and plants and kept them by every day, for no one knew when Rama will arrive! And, she took no risks. She tasted every fruit, whether it was bitter, sour or sweet, so that Rama could eat the best. She smoothed the surface of all stones that lay by the side of the tracks in the jungle for, she expected Rama, Lakshmana or Sita to sit upon any one of them when they got tired of walking. She hoped that one of them would rest awhile on one of the rocks she had polished with great care. Thus her heart became Ramahrdaya!

“The children of the Sathya Sai Bala Vihar must know the Sathya Sai that is residing in their hearts. Teachers also must take it as a Puja of Sai Rama. How to reveal the Sai Ram residing in their hearts to the children?-- that is the problem that must be directing your work. Sai Ram has to move about in the jungles of your heart; so, render the tracks wide, smooth, free from thorn and pebble.

“Sabari was so immersed in Rama that the ascetics lost all awareness of her sex; they allowed her to remain in the hermitage, after Matanga related to them her high level of Sadhana. Matanga also left this body and gave up his hermitage to Sabari, saying, ‘you alone deserve to be here when Rama arrives!’”

“The Sadhana that Sabari did to earn the bliss of serving Rama, you do, when you serve Sai Rama in these children. By this service, you realize the Self.”

11.2 p.9-11

19) Sankara (“... the crocodile would let him off, only if he took Sanyasa...”)

a) “When Sankara thought of renouncing the world (in order to get the authority to educate it), he felt that his mother’s consent had to be taken for the step. So, while bathing in the Porna River near his house, he cried out one day that a crocodile had caught his leg. It was true, for the crocodile was, as in the Gajendramoksha story, only Samsara called by that name, Sensual Desire, to put it in other words. When the mother came rushing to the bank of the river, he told her that the crocodile would let him off, only if he took Sanyasa, became a Monk! This was also true, for, renunciation, detachment, giving up worldly ties, is the means of saving oneself from bondage. The bewildered mother agreed, and the boy left home to seek his Guru, and though him the secret of liberation.” 3.12 p.75

b) “Sankara lived only for thirty two years, but, during that time, he purified and consolidated the various schools of worship and brought them under the over-all care of one philosophical principle, Adwaitha.” 3.12 p.75

c) “Sankara knew that Adwaitha requires intense Sadhana which will remove all trace of ego, all idea of duality, from the mind of man. So, as a preparatory discipline to the dawn of the awareness of one’s real unity with the substance of the Universe, he taught the rules of Yoga and Bhakthi and Karma; these, according to him, will brighten the intellect, cleanse the emotions and purify the heart.” 3.12 p.76

d) “Sankara suggested Sath-sanga as the very first step in Sadhana; the company of the wise and the good will develop into detachment and love of silence and solitude.” 3.12 p.76

e) “Sankara declared ‘Make your drishti charged with jhana; then, the seen will appear in its true light as Brahman.’” 9.14 p.71

20) Sita (“If all wives were as steadfast and loyal and loving....”)

a) “Consider how that great lady, Sita, revered her husband as her Lord and God, and herself persuaded him to take her with him into exile in the forest, braving all the deprivations in her desire to be by his side! If all wives were so steadfast and loyal and loving as Sita, India would certainly be full of happy homes resounding with hearty laughs of contentment.” 11.19 p.104

21) Tukaram (“Whatever happens, accept it gladly as His Handiwork....”)

a) “Whatever happens, accept it gladly as His Handiwork, a sign of His Compassion. Tukaram was always in that mood. When he did not get something to eat, he thanked God for the chance to fast granted by Him. When he got some good, he thanked God for coming to him in that Form, and sustaining him so that he may sing His Glory.” 8.28 p.159

22) Valmiki (“... the spiritual leap... needs extraordinary courage...”)

a) “Valmiki was a highway robber who waylaid and killed hundreds without hesitation; he was the slave of passion and emotion but, when the Seven Sages whom he waylaid one night, counseled patience, forbearance and self-inquiry, he turned heroically into the path of Ram (giving up the path of Kam or Lust), and achieved Immortality, immortal fame as the narrator of Rama’s Story. From the Rajasic stage, he transformed himself into Sathwic. The spiritual adventure, the spiritual leap from darkness into light needs extraordinary courage, and Divine Grace is the reward for courage.”

10.35 p.230-231

23) Vyasa (“... Divine Effulgence”)

a) “Vyasa was born with a great urge for spiritual uplift and he entered into deep study and Sadhana, even as a child. He acquired such Divine Wisdom and Glory that he is identified with Narayana Himself. He stands out as the Loka-guru for he codified the Vedic Hymns, and prepared the great Vedantic Text of Brahmasuthra, besides the Epic commentaries of the Veda-vedanta teachings for the people whom he loved the educate, commentaries named the Mahabharatha and Srimadbhagavatha.

“He is called the Veda-Vyasa, because of his services to the students of the Vedas (which defied understanding, since they were countless and fathomless: ‘Anantho vai Vedaah’). He composed also the 18 Puranas, on the various Nama-Rupas of the same Godhead, Puranas which are textbooks and illustrative descriptions of moral codes, historical episodes, philosophical principles, and social ideals.

“Vyasa sought to bring home, through the Puranas, the need for mastering the egoistic impulses, as the sloka says:

Ashtaa dasa puraaneshu
Vyasasya vachana dwayam;
Paropakarah punyaya
Paapaaya para peedanam.

“Two statements can summarize all the eighteen puranas composed by Vyasa: Do good to others; avoid doing harm.’ Doing good is the drug; avoiding harm is the regimen that must accompany the treatment. That is the cure for the disease of suffering from joy and grief, honour and dishonour, prosperity and adversity, and the dual throng, that bothers man and deprives him of equanimity.

“Vyasa is Lokaguru: he is Divine Effulgence.”

4.20 p.108-109

b) “This day is a day when mankind pays homage to the greatest of spiritual doctors, Vyasa. Vyasa is the greatest of such doctors; for he put together the Vedas and composed the Puranas and the Mahabharatha and gave humanity the Bhagavatha. He is the primal Guru for all who walk in the Path of God. He planted the seed of theism and nurtured it, through Sruthi smrithi Sastra and the Mahabharatha. He gave the world the Githa and the Brahma Sutras, the idea of the Immanent Atma, the Story of the Divine Leela, the secret of this changeful Creation.

“He belonged to about 3800 B.C.; he was the grand-son of the sage Vasishta, the son of Parasara and the father of that celebrated gem among Rishis, Suka. His life-story is a series of miracles, a Divine Saga. He came from Vasudeva, announced the Leela of Vasudeva to all and finally, got merged in Vasudeva. He established the era of Namaparayana and made all aware of the sweetness of the Name of the Lord, which evokes His Form and His Grace.”

2.14 p.62-63

24) Zoroaster (“... always have the fire of wisdom blazing....”)

a) “... Zoroaster, who wanted that man should always have the fire of wisdom blazing in his consciousness so that evil thoughts and tendencies might be reduced to ashes. It has to infuse all thoughts, words, and deeds with the illumination of virtue and vigor. It must destroy all worldly desire and render man pure for entry into the heaven of freedom. Adoration, meditation, and acts of selfless service are essential for the dawn of enlightenment.”

13.23 p.129

25) Summary (“... they are Aware....”)

a) “The Grace of the Lord is a subject dear to every one. It is a subject that is within the grasp of all.... You can sing of Him as Muruga, Ganapathi, Sarada, Jesus, Maithreyi, Sakthi, or you can call on Allah or the Formless, or the Master of all Forms. It makes no difference at all.... He is the beginning, the middle, and the end; the basis, the substance, and the source. So, any story that brings into your consciousness, His Glory, His Grace and His Beauty must perforce appeal to you.”

3.18 p.104-105

b) “All who come embodied are Avatars-- that is to say, advents of the Divine, Manifestations of God. What, then, is the special feature of Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Christ? Why do you celebrate their Birthdays with such reverential enthusiasm? The specialty is this: they are Aware; you are unaware of the Atma which is the Truth. Awareness confers Grace, Glory, Majesty, Might, Splendour. Awareness confers Liberation from bounds, from time, space and causation.... Avatars are ever alert, aware....”

11.50 p.292

c) “... discover for yourselves the greatness of Rama, Krishna, Meera, and Radha. Dwell on their lives, the example they place before you; correct your habits, your outlook, your attitude to the world, to society, to yourself.... hear good things, do good things; share good things. That gives joy and contentment.”

5.23 p.127

- d) “Select stories from the scriptures of all faiths to interest the children in the values of good life. Speak to them of the moral heroes of all lands, the Saints of all faiths.... All saints are embodiments of service, compassion and renunciation.”
12.22 p.114-115
- e) “Vyasa and Valmiki underwent a long process of asceticism and study, as well as experience of spiritual bliss and thus lifted themselves up to the heights of rshihood, before they composed the epics and texts bearing their name. The question may be asked, ‘Why should they compose poetry, however exalted, after attaining rshihood? What was the urge that prompted them? The answer is: ‘they were overcome with compassion, for the fellow-pilgrims struggling along the path they had traversed; they were full of agony at the plight of fellow-beings who were sweltering in the heat of worldly entanglements.’ They desired to establish peace on earth and good-will among mankind. Their attention was ever on the Vedic message, ‘Swayam theernah, paraan tharayathi.’ ‘Themselves having crossed (the Sea of Samsara or Change), they help others to do likewise’-- themselves risen to the Divine, they helped (others) to rise.”
11.48 283
- f) “The wise are those who know the Atma.”
11.53 p.300
- g) “The Great Teachers belong to mankind.... Christ, Rama, Krishna-- they are for all men everywhere.”
11.54 p.305

C. Examples and Society (“Search for the good... and you will see only those things....”)

- 1) “The mariner uses his compass to guide him aright amidst the dark storm clouds and raging waves. When Man is overwhelmed by the dark clouds of despair and the raging confusion of irrepressible desires, he too, has a compass which will point to him the direction he has to take.... That compass is a society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline.”
8.21 p.108
- 2) “People here are aware of God in everything-- the truck driver folds his palms before the steering wheel and utters a prayer, the potter bows his head before the wheel, the poet worships the pen, the musician invokes the deity in the harmonium before he starts playing on it. No one enters upon a task without prayer and making a sign of submission. This means that the spiritual attitude precedes the secular attitude of self-praise.”
14.50 p.284-285
- 3) “Pay respect to spiritual excellence and intellectual discrimination wherever it is evident.”
7.7 p.42
- 4) “Search for the good, the noble, the elevating-- and you will see only those things around you.”
2.20 p103

D. Role Models (“... the responsibility of demonstrating... under all circumstances....”)

1) (“They must teach the people the principle of the Atma....”)

- a) “India has been announcing this Truth to the World since ages; this is the land where holy personages, divine personalities, saints and sages, Avathars, carrying the authentic stamp of God have demonstrated that nothing else can give man the Peace and Joy that the contemplation of the universal Atma can give.” 4.42 p.248
- b) “Activity that is divorced from spiritual goals, divorced from reverence and humility, leads to conceit and authoritarianism. It makes man arrogant and cruel; but, the sages of India laid down that all activity has to be done as a Yajna (Yaga), as offerings for the glory of God, in an atmosphere of thankfulness and awe, of humility and holiness.... Individual aggrandizement was thus ruled out....” 10.22 p.129-130
- c) “The Pundits and Scholars who have gathered today under the auspices of the Prasanthi Wisdom Mahasabha must promote and set themselves up as pioneers and examples for the task of making people aware of the greatness of Sanathana Dharma, and of the Vedas and Sastras in which it is enshrined. They must teach the people the Principle of the Atma, and themselves shine as inspirerers through their own practice of what they teach. Immersed in Sath-chith-ananda themselves, they must communicate that joy and that wisdom to others.” 11.53 p.302

2) (“... the homes... have to be the first schools”)

- a) “Of course, to instill in the minds of the young the value of prayer and of humility and loving service to others, the homes where they grow have to be the first schools. The parents have to be imbued with faith in the basic truths of this Universal Religion. They must be seen worshipping at the family altar, meditating in silence, forgiving the lapses of others, sympathizing with pain and grief; they should not be seen by the children as worried, helpless, discontented and distressed, as if they have no God to learn upon, no inner reserves of strength and courage to fall back upon.” 7.15 p.78
- b) “In Kerala, there is a practice still happily existing in rural parts, of the elders gathering the children around them every evening and spending an hour or so reciting aloud the stotras in praise of God. It is essential that it must be revived. Time thus spent is well spent. It will give great peace and joy. Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom.” 7.47 p.236
- c) “... tell the children the epic stories of sacrifice and heroism, of saints who sought God and saw Him in Truth, Beauty and Goodness everywhere....” 9.35 p.185

- 3) (“The elders must... show how Divine Life can confer... real happiness”)
- a) “For it is the duty of the elders to show the rising generation by their lives that spiritual Sadhana and study have made them more joyful and courageous in the adventure of life.” 1.8 p.50
 - b) “Duty done without love is deplorable; duty done with love is desirable. But acts of love that emanate from a person because it is his nature, and not because it is enjoined on him as a duty he has to fulfill, are really divine.” 13.18 p.92
 - c) “Youth always imitates the elders...” 1.8 p.50
 - d) “The elders must practice what they preach, show how Divine Life can confer joy, mental poise, contentment and real happiness.” 1.17 p.102
 - e) “Hence on you lies a great responsibility: the responsibility of demonstrating by your calmness, composure, humility, purity, virtue, courage and conviction under all circumstances, that the Sadhana you practice has made you a better, happier and more useful person.” 7.17 p.89
 - f) “By the examples of your lives, you have to restore confidence among the people in the higher values of life.... Have the picture of the happy, united, love filled human community in your heart. That will give you enough encouragement in your mission.” 15.12 p.70
- 4) (“... be shining examples of spiritual awareness and its beneficial consequences....”)
- a) “What is needed today is a band of sincere sadhaks who long to experience the bliss promised at the end of the spiritual journey, as well as along the pilgrim road!-- a band of aspirants who are eager to test the validity of what they are taught to believe, on the touchstone of experience.” 10.12 p.74
 - b) “Show your companions here and in your villages how disciplined you are, how sincerely you obey your parents, how deeply you revere your teachers. Be a light, a lamp, radiating virtue and self-control in the village.” 8.5 p.20
 - c) “Develop Love, demonstrate Love, draw Love from your surroundings-- that is the way to deserve leadership.” 10.33 p.203
 - d) “You can prove that there are still people who believe in truth, righteousness, peace, and love; that acts of loving service rendered in a spirit of humility and reverence are still making people happy; and that the day when the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God will shine bright and beautiful is dawning and drawing near.” 13.18 p.93-94
 - e) “Our hope is that by your lives you will be shining examples of spiritual awareness and its beneficial consequences to the individual and society.” 12.44 p.243

E. Stories and Experiences (“... what they themselves have experienced and practiced....”)

- 1) “Books must reveal, inspire, educate, inform, lead, and guide.” 7.33 p.171
- 2) “ A study of the lives of the great men of past ages in Bharath will reveal that they were candid enough and brave enough to confess their sins before everyone. They were also willing and ready to accept the punishment the sin involved. They sought to know what the Prayaschitta was, the means of purifying and cleansing the erring mind. They went through the process....” 11.23 p.123
- 3) Of course, it is interesting to hear from them speeches on subjects contained in the books which these pundits have studied; but it is much more interesting and useful to hear what they have themselves experienced and practiced on the basis of what they have studied.” 2.43 p.244
- 4) “These experiences are not uniform; each Sadhaka has a different story to tell, depending upon his equipment and enthusiasm.” 3.6 p.41
- 5) “Consider... the aspirations, the ideals, the dreams of unity and universality, the struggle for truth, for mercy, for grace, for sympathy, for liberation-- and depict these in the plays you write. That will change the atmosphere of the theatre and make it more holy, sanctifying. You will then be helping men to become stronger and the nation to become more enduring.” 4.43 p.253
- 6) “Books that prompt persons to love God and fear vice are most beneficial.... Such books can only come out of hearts that pine and pray. Lead that life and the lines will emerge.” 7.33 p.175

F. Practicing What One Preaches (“Let its validity be examined through actual living....”)

- 1) “Whatever... man has gained... he should share... with others in an unselfish manner”)
 - a) “The markets are stock full of the books we need; mountains of spiritual texts are offered to readers; gurus throng the streets. But, mankind is still afflicted with fear and hatred, discontent and restlessness. The reason lies in the tragic fact that the writers and purveyors of spiritual knowledge, the gurus and teachers, are not demonstrating in their own lives the validity and value of the advice they offer.” 15.42 p.239
 - b) “You must transform your lives into examples of the ideal you preach.” 13.8 p.36
 - c) “Let its validity be examined through actual living... and communicated to others by those who have experienced the peace and joy derivable from it. I do not want the extolling of the drug by persons who have not been themselves cured by it.” 7.18 p.94
 - d) “No one has the right to advise others unless he is already practicing what he preaches.” 13.23 p.130

- e) “Whatever information, instruction, or inspiration man has gained, or whatever wealth, riches or material possessions he has earned, he should share them with others in an unselfish manner.” 14.39 p.216-217
- f) “It is often declared that knowledge is power. No. No. Character is power. Nothing can be more powerful on earth than character. Riches, scholarship, status, authority are all frail and flimsy before it. A strong virtuous character cannot be earned from guide books; it is earned only through intimate involvement with society.” 15.39 p.219

2) (“Become Sai, be Sai”)

- a) “... without reforming conduct, daily behavior, the little acts of daily life, Ananda will be beyond reach.” 4.37 p.222
- b) “The mind, senses, the intelligence, the imagination, the desires, the plans, the prejudices, the discontent, the distress, all are items of luggage. Jettison them, soon, to make your travel lighter, safer and more comfortable. Learn this lesson watching the great, who are humble and simple. They are the elders whom you should admire and follow.” 9.23 p.124
- c) “... a man is worthy of honour in proportion to the knowledge of the Self he has acquired. That knowledge alone can confer steadiness and strength.” 4.9 p.48-49
- d) “If you are devoted to God, how should you manifest that devotion? Let Me tell you how. By manifesting divine qualities, divine virtues, divine love, divine strength. Become Sai, be Sai.” 11.46 p.273

G. Concluding Comments-- Examples (“Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom”)

1) (“... recognize His Footprints in... every act of goodness....”)

- a) “God has a million names, Sages and Saints have seen Him in a million Forms; they have seen Him with eyes closed and eyes open. They have extolled Him in all the languages and dialects of man; but yet, His glory is not exhausted.” 8.22 p.119
- b) “God is not to be spoken of as coming down or going up, since He is everywhere, available for your becoming aware of Him, through beauty, truth, goodness, strength, love or any one of the divine attributes.” 8.3 p.13
- c) “Yes, the lesson is: recognize His Footprints in every thing of beauty, every act of goodness, every tear of gratitude, every sigh of compassion....” 9.17 p.89
- d) “We too can discover His Footprints, which can be discovered everywhere, provided sincere search is made with trained eyes. You can find the footprints wherever there is beauty, virtue, humility, justice, truth, love and peace.” 6.37 p.185

- 2) (“Endeavor to be as beneficial, as sweet, as soft as possible”)
- a) “Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom.” 7.47 p.236
 - b) “Pay respect to spiritual excellence and intellectual discrimination, wherever it is evident.” 7.7 p.42
 - c) “Being in the midst of such spiritual heroes, you can fight against evil with greater chance of success.” 5.2 p.11
 - d) “Do not damage the faith of anyone, in virtue and divinity. Encourage others to have that faith by demonstrating in your own life that virtue is its own reward, that divinity is all-pervasive and all-powerful.” 5.50 p.277
 - e) “Love all; revere all; help all to the best of your ability. Endeavor to be as beneficial, as sweet, as soft as possible. Then, the spot on which you stand becomes as sacred as Kasi; the words you utter will be as holy as scripture. This Sadhana will lead you to Realization.” 4.44 p.256
 - f) “I bless you that you succeed in raising the standard of conduct and behaviour, the standard of morals and manners, the standard of social and individual discipline-- and instill deep desire for discovering the inner Divinity.” 4.43 p.253
- 3) (“Themselves having crossed... they help others to do likewise....”)
- a) “The Atma, it is, that sees through the eyes, hears through the ear, handles through the fingers, moves through the feet. That is the basic ‘you!’” 4.9 p.50
 - b) “They must teach the people the Principle of the Atma, and themselves shine as inspirers through their own practice of what they teach. Immersed in Sath-chith-snanda themselves, they must communicate that joy and that wisdom to others.” 11.53 p.302
 - c) “The wise are those who know the Atma.” 11.53 p.300
 - d) “Themselves having crossed... they help others to do likewise....” 11.48 p.283

IV. Education

(“Virtue can grow only in an atmosphere of theism....”)

A. Introduction (“In order to promote truth, righteousness, and universal love....”)

- 1) “In order to promote truth, righteousness, and universal love, the Sathya Sai Trust is establishing primary schools, high schools, junior colleges and colleges where emphasis is laid on spiritual education so that good character becomes the core of personality. The Sankalpa of Sathya Sai is to offer, for serving humanity, heroes of action and heroes of self-sacrifice.” 15.18 p.102
- 2) “The most fundamental teaching of the culture of ancient India is love. For generations, the youth of this land have been exhorted, encouraged and taught, by precept and example, to love the poor, the helpless, the handicapped, the illiterate, and the disabled, for the same spark of Divinity that is in each of us is also equally evident and active in them. Education must endow man with this compassion and this spirit of service.... If education confers this gift, then surely life will become peaceful, happy, and full of mutual help and cooperation.” 14.11 p.68-69

3) “A Beneficent Code of Morals”

(“... preserved and handed down as heritage....”)

“Long before the birth of this generation a beneficent code of morals and a precious collection of guidelines for the realm of the spirit had been preserved and handed down as heritage through the efforts of selfless seers and sages.

“Each generation draws inspiration and knowledge from the previous ones, especially from the pathfinders, the pioneers, and bridge-builders in the regions of ethics, law, mysticism, sociology, and religion. These persons promote concord and progress and remove social conflict; their footprints mark out the lines of individual and social development.... They have handed down a precious quantity of knowledge about nature, about consciousness, and also about the means and methods of testing and enlarging that knowledge. But today man is neglecting this heritage and even discarding it as invalid and superfluous.... Man has to preserve this knowledge and foster it, revere it, and use it.” 13.31 p.181

- 4) “Man must saturate his daily life with truthful speech, virtuous acts, and holy thoughts. Education must equip you with a discrimination sharp enough to discover these virtues. You must know what the truth is and develop love and loyalty to it.” 14.42 p.236

B. Current Education Systems Deficient

(“... schools are denied the spiritual atmosphere....”)

1) (“... happiness and peace depend on the inner equipment of man....”)

- a) “Many leaders of this country are promising to provide a quantity of food, some kind of dwelling, and a few yards of clothing to everyone so that people might be happy. They also promise sufficient schooling to everyone so that they may write and read. But these cannot ensure peace; for man is not merely a bundle of bones and muscle; he is equipped with a heart and a spirit, and these also have to be fed and fostered.” 13.12 p.58
- b) “Happiness and peace do not follow when man is fed well, clothed well, housed well, and even educated up to a high standard and employed under comfortable conditions, with no injury to health and security. There are many who have all these in plenty, but who are yet worried or in pain or discontented. They (happiness and peace) depend on the inner equipment of man, not on his outer skills or riches.” 6.20 p.103
- c) “Every effort to give the villager a few more coins through employment will only make things worse if his moral fiber is not made strong enough to overcome the temptations of drink and gambling.” 14.13 p.87
- d) “What is the worth of education if Seelam, virtuous conduct, is not found in those who claim to have been educated?” 3.24 p.143
- e) “The unrest, anxiety, fear and hatred that torment the world now is largely due to the neglect which kept off from the growing child the disciplines that can regulate the passions and emotions.” 12.22 p.112-113
- f) “Though all the sacred books, all the saints of all the lands and all the creeds, and all the teachers and preachers have been saying that God alone is the source and spring of lasting happiness, man turns a deaf ear to the counsel and goes his own blind way.” 12.32 p.172

2) (“... children grow up into... problems to themselves and as well as to the nation....”)

- a) “Now, since the teachers are themselves woefully ignorant of what culture means, what spirituality consists of, and what the significance of Religion is, the pupils are deprived of the wisdom that alone can confer peace and joy to their hearts.” 12.25 p.133
- b) “... Of what profit is all this feeding and growing, this striving and struggling, this earning and saving and spending, this losing and gaining, this speeding in cars and planes, if by these means you do not get peace in the mind, joy in the heart?” 3.41 p.234

- c) “At school, the first lesson is: ‘Baa Baa black sheep, have you any wool?’ and the second, ‘Ding dong dell, puss is in the well’. Gone are the days when the first lesson was on Rama, Krishna or some great sage or saint.” 9.9 p.49
- d) “... now, when schools are denied the spiritual atmosphere, they (children) grow up into handicaps on the road to progress, problems to themselves as well as to the nation. This is the reason why I have entered the field of education, and established colleges for the new era, for both boys and girls, in different states.” 10.11 p.71

C. Schools as Holy Places (“Does this lead the child to a... more God-oriented life?”)

- 1) “In the past, teachers saw to it that the pupils were equipped with devotion to God in addition to the curricular training. So, the students were well versed in spiritual discipline and knowledge; every act of theirs was motivated by the yearning for salvation and spiritual joy.” 12.25 p.132-133
- 2) “Every village school is to be transformed into a holy teacher place and every teacher into a sage who will lead the children along the material, moral, ethical, and spiritual paths until they become ideal citizens of India.” 14.6 p.33
- 3) “At school too, the day’s work should start with prayer for five minutes which should be taken seriously by one and all... treat the prayer as the very foundation of the entire edifice of schooling. When the last bell of the day is rung, make the pupils stand up in class quietly and let them observe silence for a minute or two and then disperse. There is nothing like silence to still the waves of your heart.” 1.16 p.98-99
- 4) “The teachers must tell the children inspiring tales of our saints and heroes and plant the love for spiritual literature.” 1.16 p.99
- 5) “Tell your pupils stories from the scriptures of all religions, so that they can realize that the saints and seers of all lands are equally good and great.” 14.3 p.15
- 6) “You must examine every story or account that you place before the children from the point of view of individual faith and social harmony. Does this lead the child to a better, more harmonious life, a more God-oriented life?” 12.22 p.109
- 7) “Consider every subject you teach as a way of instilling faith in God.” 14.47 p.271
- 8) “...the school is always a house of God... Treat it as a holy place.... prompting the pupils to accord their conduct with the sacred atmosphere....” 14.8 p.53-54

D. All Faiths Curriculum (“All men are lamps lit from the same flame which is God”)

- 1) “Education must also remove hatred between the pilgrims on the various roads to God.” 10.17 p.107

- 2) “Select stories from the scriptures of all faiths to interest the children in the values of a good life. Speak to them of the moral heroes of all lands, the Saints of all faiths. For, they are all of the same stamp. No scripture enjoins violence or lays down untruth as a way of life. All religions extol Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Brotherhood, and Love. All saints are embodiments of service, compassion, and renunciation.” 12.22 p.114-115
- 3) “... You have to teach the equal validity of all faiths. Teach them through quotations from the Bible, the ideals of Christianity. So too, use the sacred texts of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Islam, etc. to acquaint them with the ideals held aloft by those faiths. Also tell them the stories contained in the scriptures of all religions.” 14.40 p.228-229
- 4) “All men are lamps lit from the same flame which is God.” 7.3 p.16
- 5) “The teacher should bring to his pupils the common factor of good advice about human conduct contained in the scriptures of all religions.” 14.3 p.15
- 6) “... the poor in the villages and in the huts will welcome you and listen to stories and lives of saints and Divine Incarnations. Transmit to these people the sacred texts of all religions and the lives of the Saints of all faiths. Do not imagine that your task is to propagate Sai and speak of Sathya Sai and his Message. That is not right. But, through the name of Sathya Sai and the emphasis on the message, aim at the promotion of Godliness and of Faith in God. Create the spiritual attitude, promote spiritual discipline. It does not matter what Name you use, or what Form they concentrate upon. Through some Name and some Form, lead them into the path of Faith and Sadhana.” 13.2 p.13-14
- 7) “The bhava (the idea intended to be communicated) is the real thing; the bhasha (language in which it is clothed) is of superficial interest only.” 12.33 p.178
- 8) “Let the children realize that prayer is universal and that prayer in any language, addressed to any Name, reaches the same God.” 14.3 p.15

E. Service-Learning and Mentoring

(“Experience is essential for the confirmation... of what is learned....”)

- 1) (“... the ideal of Seva must be inculcated in the hearts of the students....”)
 - a) “... pupils in schools must have, for their satisfactory progress in life, a strong foundation. And what is a strong foundation? Moral, ethical, and spiritual knowledge and experience are the best foundation.” 14.6 p.37
 - b) “... the ideal of Seva must be inculcated in the hearts of the students and they must acquire not only the enthusiasm to serve but they must earn proficiency in the ways of helpfulness.... The Ananda that can be derived by unselfish scattering of Love is a rare elevating experience. It is a very valuable Sadhana.” 11.28 p.157

- c) “One day in each week or fortnight, teachers should gather students and instruct them in certain lofty ideals of life; (then) they should go to the villages of the students and devote themselves to some program of welfare activity in the village. This is very advisable.” 12.25 p.135
- d) “Experience is essential for the confirmation and consolidation of what is learned from books.” 14.47 p.267

2) (“Whatever... man has gained... he should share... with others in an unselfish manner”)

- a) “Teachers and students must involve themselves in useful work without intermission. When left idle, the mind roams into insane regions of thought.” 15.20 p.113
- b) “You have formed a study circle, so study the best means of bringing peace, and apply those means in a few villages to prove their validity.” 14.47 p.270
- c) “Therefore, through each one of the students of our College belonging to a village, we must establish a Spiritual Centre in that village...” 12.25 p.134
- d) “Consult the students group by group, and find out who among them are interested in establishing such Spiritual Centres in their own villages; if they make proper arrangements in their villages, then I shall Myself come and inaugurate the Centre and confer on the people of the village necessary enthusiasm and adequate facilities.” 12.25 p.135
- e) “Whatever information, instruction, or inspiration man has gained, or whatever wealth, riches or material possessions he has earned, he should share them with others in an unselfish manner. This is his primary duty. Teachers must be on the watch for chances to instill this ideal in the hearts of their pupils.” 14.39 p.216-217

F. Ancient Ideals (“... certain common ways of life and thought handed down as valid... by generations... of leaders of spiritual life”)

1) (“Serving the teacher was itself a part of education in those days....”)

- a) “The educational system, that brings both teacher and student together, has two aspects: the first, the provision of skills and information so that man can live in health and happiness; and the second, the understanding of one’s inner urges and their sublimation in order to attain lasting peace, equanimity, and bliss. The two aspects are not opposed; they are bound irrevocably together. Both teachers and students have to recognize this truth.” 14.50 p.281
- b) “The actual syllabus is not so important as the creation of an atmosphere where noble habits and ideals can grow and bear fruit.” 14.3 p.12

- c) (In the past) “Most of the learning was done by listening to the preceptor. Not only in the seats of higher learning, but even the smith, the artisan, the artist, the carpenter, the farmer, the potter, the writer, the musician, the sculptor-- all learnt from the elders by the silent process of lovingly listening and reverentially watching, not through the process of poring over books. Those days can be revived, if only you love and revere the heritage which is yours.”
14.50 p.284
- d) “The Ramayana holds up the ideals to be pursued by the father, the son, the mother, the brother, the friend, the servant, the master, the teacher, the pupil etc.”
13.11 p.49
- e) “Serving the teacher was itself a part of education in those days; it was easy to please the teacher and get the best out of him by the process of loving service.”
13.35 p.202
- f) “You must love and revere your teachers. That is the first step in the discipline which leads to a virtuous character. They have your progress as the spur in their work; they have a lot of patience to put up with your errors; they take your hand in theirs and lead you gently on into the wonderland of knowledge about the world and its Creator. If you disregard them, how can you imbibe the lessons they are eager to teach you?”
6.12 p.66

2) (“Heart-culture has been the goal...”)

- a) “The country is not just a piece of the map, or a slice of earth. It is a collection of men, women and children, bound together by tradition and certain common ways of life and thought handed down as valid and valuable by generations of patriots and leaders of spiritual life.”
12.46 p.255
- b) “In this College, the ancient ideals of Truth, Righteousness, Equanimity and Love are held before you, all the time.”
13.5 p.25
- c) “Heart-culture has been the goal and aim of Sanathana Dharma, the ancient religion of India. It is essential for a happy, contented, peaceful life. This Dharma exhorts us to plant the seeds of Love and reap the harvest of Wisdom, for the sake of social harmony and national prosperity and the uplift of all humanity.”
13.1 p.3
- d) “Let Discipline, Devotion, and Duty be subjects in your compulsory curriculum.”
14.50 p.286
- e) “We also encourage service, especially among the illiterate and the needy, in the villages around. We try to highlight the responsibilities of youth, rather than rights. The right is earned only by the proper discharge of the responsibility. When duty is shirked, you have no right to ask for your rights.”
13.14 p.70
- f) “Humility is the hall-mark of true education. Arrogance, envy and ostentation should have no place in a properly educated person.”
15.2 p.11
- g) “Without character, man becomes the plaything of every passing whim...”
15.18 p.100

G. Children (“... the primary basis of the great movement to restore righteousness....”)

1) (“As the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined”)

- a) “Children! Learn the best teaching of all faiths, put them into practice.” 13.3 p.17
- b) “Between the ages of two and five the child’s mind is profoundly affected by the behavior of those nearest to him, so the parents must take care to set a good example.” 14.3 p.13
- c) “... the first few steps in spiritual Sadhana must be taught even in childhood. Man has the springs of joy and peace in his heart, even as a child. Cultivate them, give them the fullest freedom to gush forth and fertilize all fields of activity-- that is the real purpose of education.” 2.49 p.276
- d) “The virtues you implant in them, the counsel you are providing them and the examples you place before them will remain carved in their memories and transform their outlook and behaviour in the days to come. Ask anyone assembled here whether they can bring back to memory the book that he read this morning; ninety five per cent of this vast gathering will fail in this test. But ask them to repeat from memory some one hymn or stotra or moral verse that their grandfather or grandmother taught them when they are little children sitting on their knees, and I am sure most of you will be able to recite the sloka or stotra. The things learnt during those early years stick in the memory and act subtly and silently on the growing mind to modify and purify the conduct of later years.” 12.22 p.112
- e) “If only they are allowed to grow in the proper spiritual atmosphere, if they are allowed to approach God, then, they become good, just, humble and pure.” 10.11 p.71
- f) “...real education consists in helping the child to manifest the Divinity latent in him.” 12.22 p.106
- g) “As the twig is bent, so the tree is inclined.” 6.12 p.65

2) (“... not merely for... the children but also for the teachers”)

- a) “... every child must learn to live in peace and love with other children and other families. The idea that one can live for oneself and that one need not worry about the wants and weaknesses of others has to be removed quite early in life, by the Bala Vikas Gurus. Encourage the child to cultivate the pleasure of ‘togetherness’. they will enjoy it; and, you will be sowing the seeds of social peace. The seeds will grow into universal peace and universal bliss.” 13.3 p.15-16
- b) “Samithis can hold classes for children and tell them stories from the Upanishads and Epics, teach them Bhajan, and get dramas enacted by them on Puranic themes.” 7.47 p.236
- c) “Teach the children the habit of daily prayer...”
(7.8 p.33 in 1st U.S. Edition, not in current edition)

- d) “Do not instruct or instill in children magnificent ideas and colossal thoughts. Teach them small, practical ideas and simple modes of behavior through your own example and loving exposition.” 14.40 p.227
- e) “Gradually you will realize that the Bala Vikas is devised not merely for the education of the children but also of the teachers.” 14.3 p.14
- 3) (“... the resurgent culture of Bharath will be built on strong foundations....”)
- a) “I like children; I take great care of them; I pay them great attention. I give, and advise parents to give them, proper advice at the proper time. I insist on discipline, on reverent obedience to parents, on regulated food and play, on rigorous allocation of time for study, bhajan, meditation, etc. I also recommend some items of service....” 12.13 p.56-57
- b) “The Bala Vikas is the primary basis of the great movement to restore righteousness in the world.” 14.3 p.12
- c) “When the Bala Vikas movement spreads, and children are ready to join High Schools, High Schools to receive them and continue their education on lines in tune with the ideals of the Organization can be opened, and with the establishment of Sathya Sai Colleges, the process of education will be completed entirely under Sathya Sai auspices. Thus, the resurgent culture of Bharath will be built on strong foundations. Men teachers can run Bala Vikas Classes; but, they can have only boys as pupils.” 11.35 p.213-214

H. Parents (“Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom”)

- 1) (“... they should not be seen... as if they have no God to lean upon....”)
- a) “The family is essential for the blossoming of human personality; how can the helpless baby grow and learn, talk and move forward without the home?” 12.3 p.7
- b) “In every home, a certain length of time must be fixed every day in the morning as well as evening for readings from spiritual books and namasmarana.” 8.22 p.117
- c) “Of course, to instill in the minds of the young the value of prayer and of humility and loving service to others, the homes where they grow have to be the first schools. The parents have to be imbued with faith in the basic truths of this Universal Religion. They must be seen worshipping at the family altar, meditating in silence, forgiving the lapses of others, sympathizing with pain and grief; they should not be seen by the children as worried, helpless, discontented and distressed, as if they have no God to lean upon, no inner reserves of strength and courage to fall back upon.” 7.15 p.78

- d) “In Kerala, there is a practice, still happily existing in rural parts, of the elders gathering the children around them every evening and spending an hour or so reciting aloud the stotras in praise of God. It is essential that it must be revived.... Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom.” 7.47 p.236
- e) “Above all, realize that children are precious treasures; yours is the great task of rearing them up to become devoted servants of God and sincere Sadhakas of the spiritual path.” 2.37 p.221
- f) “The parents of these children have to be congratulated, for they have realized the value of school education for their children, and have put them here, in spite of various difficulties-- economic, social, etc. I know how many of them are depriving themselves of a full meal every day so that their children may get the benefit of education.... They daily pray for (the childrens’) health; they pray that no harm may befall (their children); they pray that (their children) earn a good name in school. I know all this, for they pray to Me.... Children must be grateful to them for all this and for the love they bear for them.” 6.12 p.64

2) (“... show the rising generation by their lives....”)

- a) “Discipline is the mark of intelligent living.” 12.13 p.56
- b) “Parents and elders must see that their sons and wards are corrected on the spot, whenever they forget or deviate from the path.” 5.50 p.276
- c) “Without a certain amount of restraint and some use of authority (to press good things on unwilling minds), no progress can be made. The child has to be persuaded much against its will to eat rice and curry.... The sick man has to be reprimanded, if he refuses the drug that can cure him. Why, you, too, have to impose on your own selves a rather rigorous routine of discipline, so far as Sadhana is concerned.” 11.16 p.92
- d) “For it is the duty of the elders to show the rising generation by their lives that spiritual Sadhana and study have made them more joyful and courageous in the adventure of life.” 1.8 p.50
- e) “Youth always imitates the elders....” 1.8 p.50
- f) “A guidepost which changes direction with every gust of wind only adds confusion for the confounded traveler.” 14.39 p.219
- g) “An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of preaching. That is why I declare ‘My Life is My Message’. You must transform your lives into examples of the ideal you preach.” 13.8 p.36

3) (“You reap what you sow....”)

- a) “Do not ask others to reach a standard which you are loathe to climb up to!” 1.8 p.48

- b) "I must give the elders, and the parents who are here in large numbers, some advice. Do not set bad examples for these children to follow. If you are truthful, just, calm under provocation, and full of love in all your dealings with others, these children too will grow up in Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, and Prema." 13.3 p.16
- c) "You reap what you sow; you cannot grow a fruit-tree when the seed you have planted is that of a weed." 13.12 p.59
- d) "No one has the right to advise others unless he is already practicing what he preaches." 13.23 p.130

I. Teachers ("As the teacher, so the pupil")

1) ("... radiating joy and love....")

- a) "... the Wisdom of the Sages in the Heritage of Humanity." 4.16 p.86
- b) "Fundamentally, the years of life are but a short span, a rest in a wayside caravanserai, a drama played on a rickety stage, a bubble upon the waters. During this fleeting hour, it has been given to few to share this golden chance of imparting instruction, inspiring devotion, instilling courage, into the growing children, so that the generation to follow will be ever grateful." 8.31 p.172
- c) "The teachers should be simple, sincere, straightforward Sadhakas, radiating joy and love..... must be like the rishis of old: balanced, contented, quiet, calm scholars who have practiced self-control and who carry about with them an atmosphere of cool equanimity." 7.15 p.78-79
- d) "Teachers too must be examples of sincerity, simplicity, mutual cooperation, and love; they too must evince interest in prayers, and other items of spiritual importance." 13.17 p.90

2) ("... the first task of teachers is the cultivation of virtue....")

- a) "... the first task of teachers is the cultivation of virtue in the hearts of the pupils." 14.39 p.216
- b) "He should watch his behaviour rigorously and find out whether there is some habit or trait which if imitated by the pupil will be harmful.. He should himself follow the advice that he gives. Otherwise, he will be teaching hypocrisy to the little children and encouraging them to acquire the cleverness not to be found out." 1.24 p.147
- c) "They should not lose their tempers; they should keep their emotions under control and not exhibit depression, dejection, or a wavering will. The quality of work is more important than the quantity, so they should not undertake to do more than what they can render satisfactorily." 14.3 p.13-14

- d) “When the teacher falls a victim to bad habits, undesirable manners, bad company and evil behavior, the children too, will naturally be drawn into evil ways. Thus the teacher has to bear the responsibility of promoting the welfare of the world or bringing the world down to disaster.” 14.6 p.33
- e) “As the teacher, so the pupil.” 14.39 p.217
- 3) (“An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of preaching”)
- a) “The teacher dedicates himself to a great Sadhana, when he enters upon this profession. He has himself to be what he advises his pupils to be. The tender minds in the classroom are easily moulded by his example.... Any misdemeanour of his, becomes the talk of the town; it is discussed during dinner in a hundred homes the same day.” 10.5 p.21-22
- b) “No one has the right to advise others unless he is already practicing what he preaches.” 13.23 p.130
- c) “An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of preaching.” 13.8 p.36
- d) “Teachers must be examples which can inspire the pupils. They must practice what they preach.” 14.39 p.217
- e) “Elders must revere the teacher, so that the child may revere him; when the teacher comes to your house, honor him, so that your child may honor and obey him. This will induce the teacher, too, to become worthy of honor; it will make him aware of his role.” 9.2 p.10
- f) “The Vidwans are fast declining in numbers and influence. They must be revered and fostered. Do not say that this is a difficult assignment. I am not asking you to improve their material standard of living more and more; what I want you to do is to remove their fear that their scholarship is a burden. Use them, to learn the essentials of Sanathan Dharma...” 5.50 p.293
- 4) (“A life of spiritual discipline is a must....”)
- a) “Hills and mountains are overlaid with rock and boulder. The sculptor gathers them, and shapes each of them into something useful and beautiful, depending upon the nature of characteristics of the stone.... Though they were the progeny of one peak, each has a different destiny, depending on the care and consecration bestowed on it by the sculptor. Teachers are the sculptors whoshape the rocks into things of beauty and significance, of utility and inspiration. They study the pupils, their nature and equipment, and decide on their roles in society, their paths and the stages in their progress.” 12.22 p.109-110
- b) “You must equip yourself for this task of service by some individual spiritual discipline done daily with sincerity and regularity.” 14.3 p.16
- c) “A person rich in bliss can share bliss with those around him. Therefore, your duty as teachers is first to earn and second to offer bliss. A life of spiritual discipline is a must to every teacher.” 14.40 p.224-225
- d) “Serve, and give your knowledge, your delight, and your love gladly to the children.” 14.39 p.220

J. Youth (“... must be the torch bearers of the educational ideals....”)

1) (“It is a sacred responsibility that cannot be passed by”)

- a) “The destiny of nations hangs on the direction the youth will take in these turbulent times.” 13.18 p.95
- b) “... whether we reach out to God depends on the fashioning our mind has received already.” 15.36 p.202
- c) “Almost all the great sages of the past spent the early years of their lives in spiritual discipline that would ensure a pure consciousness.” 13.29 p.167
- d) “The heart of youth is pure, clean, full of enthusiasm and optimism. They are eager to achieve happiness, to enter upon an adventure, and earnest to serve others. It does not involve much effort to direct them along beneficent channels. Of course, with equal ease, they can be directed along maleficent channels too.” 12.11 p.42
- e) “Do not allow any evil to rob you of the sacred chance you have secured to consecrate your lives.” 15.36 p.202
- f) “Beautiful fruitful ideals must be planted in the tender hearts of the youth. They are lovely creepers which can yield clusters of fragrant flowers, spreading the fragrance of truth and virtue. They have to be fostered with love and care, by parents, teachers, and all those interested in the progress of the nation. It is a sacred responsibility which cannot be by-passed.” 12.11 p.43

2) (“... must learn... the standards by which he can test his desires”)

- a) “What needs to be done today is ‘fostering men who are determined to stand and suffer, even risking their lives, for realizing the holy goals of peace and prosperity for the entire world.’” 15.39 p.218
- b) “... Sai Colleges have as their aim the production of a generation of youth who live ideal lives.” 15.16 p.92
- c) “... students of the Sathya Sai Colleges must go out into the world fully equipped with courage, compassion, and inner peace and render selfless service to the people.” 14.42 p.238
- d) “Students of our college must cultivate commendable virtues, mould themselves into ideal men and women, promote the happiness of their parents and be examples to others through their holy thoughts and deeds.” 15.36 p.203
- e) “Man has to be continually examining every desire that emerges in his mind, so that he may suppress or destroy or by-pass or obey. He must learn, from parents, elders, teachers, friends and the leaders of the land-- (and from) the books written by wise men of his own as well as other countries-- the standards by which he can test his desires.” 12.44 p.242

- f) “Educated people must be identified in society, by their strict adherence to virtue, not by more skilled methods of escaping the consequences of vice.”
5.52 p.283
- g) “Any system of education... (must)... help you discriminate between right and wrong.... instill the fear of sin and the love of God, train you in the codes of humility and reverence, widen the horizon of your wonder, encourage you to worshipfully serve your parents, and inspire you to dedicate your skill and attainments to the progress of your family, village, community, country, (and) language....”
12.37 p.205
- 3) (“... ideals... confirmed as the best suited for individual and social progress....”)
- a) “I am ever ready to do everything that will promote the joy and happiness of these students.”
15.20 p.114
- b) “I want the Committee in charge of this Institution to propagate the ideals of Service, Love and Sadhana, which Sanathana Dharma embodies. Even a small number of such Institutions will be enough... to serve as examples and guides to others.”
13.1 p.6
- c) “I have allowed this college to rise, because it will install in the minds of students the ancient ideals of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, the ideals that are delineated in the Vedas, described in Sastras, illustrated in the Epics, practiced by countless generations of the men and women of this land, and confirmed as the best suited for individual and social progress by its saints and sages, law givers and leaders, for centuries.”
8.26 p.139-140
- d) “My Sankalpa (plan of action) is to provide the youth with an education which, while cultivating their intelligence, will also purify their impulses and motions, and equip them with the physical and mental disciplines needed for drawing upon the springs of calmness and joy that lie in their own hearts. Their higher natures will have to be fostered and encouraged to blossom— by means of study, prayer and Sadhana, contacts with the sages, saints and spiritual heroes and heroines of their land-- and place them on the path of self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice, and self-knowledge.”
9.31 p.162
- e) “Students should grow to be the guardians of the people. As the prospective protectors of the people, their future leaders and administrators, they should prepare themselves for national service.”
15.33 p.178
- 4) (“Be a light, a lamp, radiating virtue....”)
- a) “The culture of India has ever extolled such embodiments of devotion and held them up as examples before the common man. You must read about these saints, revere them, and follow in their footsteps. To do this, you must always keep yourselves in good company.”
14.8 p.53

- b) "... congregational devotional singing by all must be fostered, developed, and transplanted in the towns again. I am glad to note that the young men of this village and of the adjacent villages, especially those who are attending the Sri Sathya Sai College, are evincing keen interest in this type of singing. That is indeed a promising sign fraught with great potential for the future of this country and its culture." 13.26 p.151
- c) "Show your companions here and in your villages how disciplined you are, how sincerely you obey your parents, how deeply you revere your teachers. Be a light, a lamp, radiating virtue and self-control in the village." 8.5 p.20
- d) "Your acquaintances, family, friends, the elders of the village, and all who have the welfare of the country at heart must be happy and proud to see you acquiring new skills, fine character, and eagerness to serve others." 14.2 p.11
- e) "You must give the College a prize, and do you know what that is? When your parents shed tears of joy when they see you healthy, happy, and good, that is the prize the College gets. When your parents hear that you are honest, serviceable, leading useful honorable lives, they are full of joy. That joy is the prize you give your college!" 10.17 p.109
- f) "I bless you that you may progress in life with the help of the ideal and inspiration you have garnered during these days at Brindavan-- the discipline, the social conscience, the wisdom of the ages, the lessons of the past and of the future. Draw upon them whenever you are afflicted by doubt or despair. Put them into daily practice; meditate on them; reflect on their importance and significance." 11.42 p.251-252
- g) "May you all lead exemplary lives, bring happiness to your parents, render help to society, and bring credit to the College where you have studied for many years." 15.2 p.11
- 5) ("... have to rise as lion cubs....")
- a) "Students are the very foundation of the nation. When the foundation is strong, the building can be stable. To make the foundation strong, people, rulers, parents, teachers, and students, all have to co-ordinate their plans and efforts." 15.33 p.177
- b) "I am depending upon you, students, for a great transformation in out-look, a great revolution. Students of the Sathya Sai College must lead this movement.... Be disciplined, be sweet in manners, in speech, and in your relations with the less fortunate. Be grateful to your parents, your villagers, and those who strive for your welfare." 12.26 p.140
- c) "You must be the torch bearers of the educational ideals...." 14.11 p.73
- d) "In this Kali era, students have to rise as lion cubs, re-establish peace and restore Dharma in individual, social and national life." 15.33 p.176

e) "I shall tell you one incident that happened at the Sathya Sai College, so that you can picture the kind of change I welcome. At the Public Examinations held at the College, which is one of the Centres, the moment the candidates got the question papers, all the examinees stood up together. The Invigilators were surprised and some of them were struck with fear, that perhaps, they were trying to create a scene and protest against the paper and the setter! But, they stood up, only for a minute of silent prayer!... a very ennobling and purifying habit." 10.5 p.26

f) "These students and those of the same stamp are the pioneers in My task of mending the present world and ushering in a new world. I am determined to transform the students of all colleges into such instruments for the rebuilding of the world on the foundation of righteousness." 14.37 p.208

K. Society ("Virtue can only grow in an atmosphere of theism....")

- 1) "The mariner uses his compass to guide him aright amidst the dark storm clouds and raging waves. When Man is overwhelmed by the dark clouds of despair and the raging confusion of irrepressible desires, he too, has a compass which will point to him the direction he has to take.... That compass is a Society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline." 8.21 p.108
- 2) "Wisdom can grow only where humility prevails. It thrives when man is afraid of vice and sin, and is attached to the Divine, in himself and in all else. The crises of character which is at the root of all the troubles everywhere has come about, as a result of the neglect of this aspect in education." 13.5 p.24
- 3) "... many do believe that his search concerns only the individual and that society need not get involved in their yearning or their endeavours. This is as foolish as saying that one need (not) worry about the darkness prevailing outside the walls of his residence. The individual and society are intertwined inextricably. 12.23 p.118
- 4) "It is said that you should not sleep in a village where there is no temple; for, the people there are sure to be so ungodly that your life is in danger amidst such unbelievers." 10.11 p.72
- 5) "... many prefer city institutions for their studies though cities do not provide proper atmosphere for study. They are enticed into the undesirable company of bad people where their minds and bodies are ruined by bad habits. Keeping oneself strong and straight is a difficult process in cities." 15.44 p.250
- 6) "Virtue can grow only in an atmosphere of theism; you must have faith in the omnipresence of God.... confidence that you are the pure unlimited self, is the great reinforcement that religion can endow you with. When you establish this in your hearts, you can be entrusted with any type of responsibility, and any type of work." 12.41 p.223

L. Concluding Comments-- Education

(“... know what the truth is, and develop love and loyalty to it”)

- 1) (“... education must be judged by the concern for others... it promotes”)
 - a) “... education has to encourage the exploration of the true needs of the country and the methods by which they can be met.” 15.44 p.247
 - b) “Man has to be continually examining every desire that emerges in his mind, so that he may suppress or destroy or by-pass or obey. He must learn, from parents, elders, teachers, friends and the leaders of the land besides the books written by wise men of his own as well as of other countries, the standards by which he can test his desires.” 12.44 p.242
 - c) “Man must saturate his daily life with truthful speech, virtuous acts, and holy thoughts. Education must equip you with a discrimination sharp enough to discover these virtues. You must know what the truth is and develop love and loyalty to it.” 14.42 p.236
 - d) “Real education must be judged by the concern for others which it promotes.” 15.33 p.178
 - e) “‘What kind of Government is the best?’ the answer is, ‘That Government is best, which helps us to govern ourselves.’” 10.9 p.53
 - f) “The end of education is character, and the end of knowledge is love.” 13.10 p.45

- 2) (“Let its validity be examined through actual living....”)
 - a) “Heart-culture has been the goal and aim of Sanathana Dharma, the ancient religion of India. It is essential for a happy contented peaceful life. This Dharma exhorts us to plant the seeds of Love and reap the harvest of Wisdom, for the sake of social harmony and national prosperity and the uplift of all humanity.” 13.1 p.3
 - b) “Man is in essence a fountain of eternal joy, peace, love and devotion. Cultivate these, by precept, example and exercise, during the formative years. Then, the educated will have security and sweetness as long as they live.” 11.27 p.147
 - c) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p.164
 - d) “Let its validity be examined through actual living... and communicated to others by those who have experienced the peace and joy derivable from it.” 7.18 p.94
 - e) “The sustenance of Love, endowed by Divine Grace, has to circulate in every State and community to make the World live in Peace and Joy. If this truth is realized, there will arise no idea of difference.” 11.54 p.305
 - f) “The lesson that the Atma or Divine Principle, resident in everyone, is the real core of the Universe-- and that It is the supreme sovereign of the Cosmos-- will certainly bring together all mankind and ensure Peace and Harmony among the nations.” 13.7 p.32

V. Guru

(“... the Inner Core of every thing, thought or turn of events”)

A. Introduction (“Immersed in Sath-chith-ananda themselves....”)

- 1) (“... must himself have transgressed Name and Form....”)
 - a) “To reach the goal, one must know where it is, how glorious it is, what the obstacles are, and what the preparatory discipline is.” 4.52 p.298
 - b) “... only those who have discovered the ultimate goal of life and become masters of themselves can lead others as Gurus.” 14.59 p.342
 - c) “Who is the genuine Guru? He who teaches by precept and example, good conduct, right thinking, loyalty to Truth, mental discipline, sense of Duty. Who is the genuine student? He who learns these.” 14.50 p.281
 - d) “They must teach the people the Principle of the Atma, and themselves shine as inspirers through their own practice of what they teach. Immersed in Sath-chith-ananda themselves, they must communicate that joy and that wisdom to others.” 11.53 p.302
 - e) “The Guru who can give this Upadesam must himself have transgressed Name and Form....” 3.2 p.16
 - f) “A real teacher will be able to attract seekers from afar merely by his personality. He need not be talked about in glowing terms; his presence will be felt and aspirants will hurry towards him, like bees towards a lotus in full bloom.” 1.12 p.70-71

- 2) (“... you will immediately recognize that their experience is authentic”)
 - a) “You may have a costly transistor or watch or phonograph with you, but if you do not know how to use it efficiently they are mere lumber. Now, imagine what a wonderful machine you yourself are! Should you not know how to operate it and get the best results out of it?” 6.17 p.90
 - b) “Imagine the enormous efforts of these seers, as a result of which the path of spiritual progress has been cleared by them for the good of all! Why do you not proceed along it? If you take the very first step, you will immediately recognize that their experience is authentic.” 5.26 p.145
 - c) “In spiritual matters, faith is the very essence.... Have faith in the wisdom of the ancients; do not pitch your tiny little brain against the intuitions of the saints and their discoveries.” 5.33 p.183
 - d) “... it is the teacher who opens the inner eye and makes you aware of the wonder and beauty of the world around you. He tells you of the truth of stars and sky, he teaches you how to be healthy and happy, useful and peaceful. The father and the mother brought you here and helped you to grow and gave you into the hands of the teacher. The teacher makes you bright and cheerful, skilled and serviceable to all. So, honour him, obey him....” 9.9 p.48

- e) “Simple faith in the words of the wise is more profitable than years of study and discussion.” 3.32 p.189
- f) “... attach your mind to the Lord. Then you will be led on to the company of good men and your talents will be transmuted.” 1.11 p.64
- g) “When you are earnest about it, the Lord Himself will guide you, either from within or from without, through some one He will send, or through illumination from within.” 5.31 p.172

B. Early Stages (“... best you approach a Guru who knows the truth by experience....”)

1) (“Inner prompting to see the light....”)

- a) “The Guru is needed when you have the Guri (Goal). If you do not have that urge, what can the Teacher do?... Inner prompting to see the Light must send the aspirant to the Teacher or must draw the Teacher to wherever he is.” 2.39 p.227
- b) “Instead of relying upon mere enthusiasm to show the way, it is better that the spiritual aspirant receives guidance from a preceptor during the early stages. For, one has to observe the disciplines, with the awareness of their meaning.... The significance of each step has to be appreciated, in order to insure the co-operation of all the faculties of man in the effort and ensure success.” 7.35 p.181
- c) “... proceed to the Presence of the Great, to listen to the discourses of genuine teachers, to visit sacred places where the atmosphere is fragrant with Sadhana and study.” 6.32 p.161
- d) “Do not run after all and sundry who blabber text-book stuff and wear the cloak of fakirhood. Examine, judge and admire. Examine the daily conduct, the motive, the outlook, the trend of the advice, the coordination between what is said and what is done.” 2.2 p.8
- e) “In order to bring conviction to you in all this, it is best you approach a Guru who knows the Truth by experience and whose daily activities, words and thoughts reflect this realisation.” 1.3 p.21
- f) “Go to the proper Guru and learn from him about at least three Principles to guide your lives.... Dharma.... Bhakthi.... Sadhana....” 4.23 p.129-130

2) (“... love and revere your teachers....”)

- a) “Take the case of the Bhagavadgitha.... When and where was it taught? On the battlefield, in the midst of the opposing forces, to solve a mental crisis. It is when such crises affect man, that the Lord starts His Mission of Instruction. For those who have realized the Goal, there is no need; for those who have known neither goal nor path, nor thirst nor yearning, it is of no use. It is only those who are afflicted by doubt, swinging from yes to no, that instruction will be useful.” 4.41 p.242

- b) “The Guru must persuade you to take the first step, by describing the shame of standing still or going back, and by pointing out the pleasures of the journey and the magnificence of the goal.” 5.35 p.199-200
- c) “One step at a time, correct and consolidated-- that is the way this pilgrimage should progress.” 10.2 p.10
- d) “The Guru is a gardener, who will tend the plant; but, the (seedling) must have sprouted before he can take charge. He does not add anything new to the plant; he only helps it to grow according to its own destiny, quicker perhaps, more fully perhaps, but, not against its inner nature.” 5.35 p.195
- e) “Concentrated meditation on the meaning of the thing heard gives you the fruit of the teaching as intended by the Teacher.” 4.9 p.50
- f) “You must love and revere your teachers. That is the first step in the discipline which leads to a virtuous character. They have your progress as the spur in their work; they have a lot of patience to put up with your errors; they take your hand in theirs and lead you gently on into the wonderland of knowledge about the world and its Creator. If you disregard them, how can you imbibe the lessons they are eager to teach you?” 6.12 p.66

C. What the Guru Does

(“The guru sows the seeds of virtue, of wisdom, and of faith....”)

1) “He is like the farmer....” (“... praised as equal to God himself”)

“We have heard the Guru being praised as equal to God himself. Gokak quoted the sloka where the Guru is referred to reverentially as Brahma, the first of the Trinity entrusted with Creation; as Vishnu, the second of the Trinity entrusted with the preservation and protection of Creation; and as Maheswara, the last of the Trinity, charged with destruction and dissolution.

“This description is symbolically correct, as we can see when we analyze the work which the Teacher or Guru is expected to carry out. The Guru sows the seeds of virtue, of wisdom, and of faith in the heart of the pupil. He is, therefore, Brahma, of the nature of the Creator. He is like the farmer who plants (seedlings) in the well-prepared soil of his field.

“But, the farmer does not sit with folded hands there-after. He takes incessant care to see that the saplings grow vigorously and well, and he is vigilant to water the growing crops and feed them with fertilizers at the appropriate stages of growth. This is the role of Vishnu so far as education and the educator are concerned. The Guru cannot sit back and silently watch the fate of the pupil, after the first few

lessons. He has to guide the pupil at every step, foster and encourage good habits, sound reasoning and valid emotions, and act as Vishnu, the second of the Trinity.

“The Guru has also the duty cast on him, to watch every step of the pupil, and warn him off, when he takes false steps, or develops a bad habit, or entertains a deleterious doubt. Like the farmer, who has to be vigilant against the growth of weeds or the upsurge of pests, the Guru too must be ever alert to destroy the pests of vice and the weeds of sloth and unsteadiness. (Thus he also acts in the role of Maheswara.)”

12.22 p.110-111

2) “And, how do we know....?”
 (“Again, it is the Guru, whom you trust....”)

“Of course, at first sight, the Divinity inherent in all beings and things will not be clear to the vision. How can any one read the sign G as jee, without being told by some one who knows and accepts that statement in good faith? Then, he reaches the stage when he can read G O D as jeeodee. But, what persuades him to read it as God, and not as jeeodee? Again, it is the Guru, whom you trust and who knows these things well. And, how do we know that the sound God represents for all the inscrutable all-pervasive Intelligence that pervades the atom and the star? Again, it is the Guru who has taught us so to accept it.”

10.38 p.252

D. Warnings (“Never yield to anyone unless you feel... you are on the right path”)

1) (“If the Guru... is afraid to lose their loyalty, or anxious to win it....”)

- a) “The Gurus want money for various purposes and so they always have an eye on the purses of the disciples. They try to draw out the money by the grant of titles or by public praise or by promise of public recognition-- all worldly baits which are derogatory to the principle of non-attachment that they teach and stand for.... such Gurus ignore and tolerate evil in the would-be donors, because they are afraid any condemnation will dry up their source of income. Thus, they ruin the disciples by desisting from giving them the drastic drug they need, urgently, for their spiritual health.”

1.31 p.197

- b) “They welcome you with great gusto and proclaim the excellence of their wares, condemning those of the others and set about the profitable task of hooking you as a disciple, so that they may extract funds from you or fame through you. Like shop-keepers clamouring for customers, manufacturers of patent medicines competing for customers, they try to sell their prescriptions to you, before you discriminate and escape.” 4.30 p.173
- c) “There is the guru who gives you a chant, tells you its potentialities, and directs you to repeat it sincerely and steadily. He is the deeksha guru; that is, the initiation into the chant is called ‘deeksha’ in a ritualistic manner of speech. He assumes that his duty ends with the gift of the chant and the command to use it with conviction and care. He does not direct the pupil to master his senses or guide him to march forward and attain that victory.” 14.27 p.146
- d) “Another group of gurus teaches lessons destined to change consciousness. These are the teacher-gurus. But... they do not lay down methods by which purity and clarity can be won. They are afraid to antagonize the animal urges in their pupils.” 14.27 p.146
- e) “... (don’t) be misled by amateurs who prescribe patent remedies, irrespective of your personal history and needs.” 2.33 p.183
- f) “If the Guru bends and yields to the whims and fancies of the disciples and is afraid to lose their loyalty or is anxious to win it, then, he is the servant of the disciple, not his master!” 5.35 p.200
- g) “Praise feeds the fire of egoism and fogs genuine faith. The disciple or pupil should not flatter the Guru nor should the Guru flatter the pupil or disciple.” 6.11 p.61
- 2) (“No one has the right to advise others unless he is already practicing what he preaches.”)
- a) “... seek only such Gurus as do not indulge in declamations about themselves or in derisive attacks on their rivals.” 2.23 p.123
- b) “One of the dangerous tricks of modern times, which is misleading a large number of people, is the claim made by many, that they have been sent to re-establish Dharma.” 4.11 p.60
- c) “The markets are stock full of the books we need; mountains of spiritual texts are offered to readers; gurus throng the streets. But, mankind is still afflicted with fear and hatred; discontent and restlessness. The reason lies in the tragic fact that the writers and purveyors of spiritual knowledge, the gurus and teachers, are not demonstrating in their own lives the validity and the value of the advice they offer.” 15.42 p.239
- d) “No one has the right to advise others unless he is already practicing what he preaches.” 13.23 p.130
- e) “You should tell the Guru ‘If you can help me, do so. If you cannot, do not give false hopes and mislead me.’” 2.19 p.96

- f) “When there is the clear call from the higher regions of the good aspects, why should the guru remain deaf to that call and grovel in the regions of dark aspects and self motivation? Why is he content to keep his pupils in those lower levels?” 14.27 p.148
- g) “Never yield to any one unless you feel the inner satisfaction that you are on the right path.” 1.9 p.57

E. Characteristics of Real Guru

(“He is the Atma....”)

- 1) (“... he renders you fit for a vision of the eternal absolute truth”)
 - a) “Be conscious on the sacred significance of the name ‘guru’ (teacher) by which you are known: ‘Gu’ means ‘darkness’, ‘ru’ means ‘removal’. So the guru has to illumine the intelligence of the child and remove the ignorance that is obstructing its full development.” 14.39 p.218
 - b) “The Guru is the person who.... knows the right road, and (who) is full of love for all who strive to escape the travails of the night, without lamps to light their steps.” 5.34 p.189
 - c) “They must teach the people the Principle of the Atma, and themselves shine as inspirerers through their own practice of what they teach. Immersed in Sath-chith-ananda themselves, they must communicate that joy and that wisdom to others.” 11.53 p.302
 - d) “Only one who has earned wisdom can enlighten others who are in ignorance. One who is himself unilluminated cannot illumine others.... One must light his own lamp from the Universal Light of Love and thenceforward he can transmit illumination to all who seek and strive.” 15.29 p.155-156
 - e) “Teachers must be examples which can inspire the pupils. They must practice what they preach. As the teacher, so the pupil.” 14.39 p.217
 - f) “An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of preaching.” 13.8 p.36
 - g) “... the sage who has transcended Name and Form and is beyond the effect of the three gunas or attributes; he is neither good nor bad; neither passionate nor dull; neither enthusiastic nor uninterested. He is unaffected, calm, content. He is the Atma, having realized that the Atma is the One and Only. He makes you cast off the fear of death and birth, he renders you fit for the vision of the eternal absolute truth.” 9.14 p.76
 - h) “Almost all the great sages of the past spent the early years of their lives in spiritual discipline that would ensure a pure consciousness.” 13.29 p.167

2) (“The Guru reveals to the disciple the invisible current....”)

- a) “... every experience is the consequence of a desire; every desire is the progeny of the impact of an object on the senses; the objective world is the superimposition of diversity on the One....” 10.16 p.101
- b) “So too, the mind stays, receiving the impacts of objects which come into its sphere, and developing desires and attachments for them.” 14.59 p.341
- c) “... this superimposition is Maya; Maya is owned and acknowledged as ‘mine’... by the Lord. It is a manifestation of Divine Sport, Artfulness, Leela, the expression of the upsurge of ego in the Absolute! The Guru teaches you this and tells you how to rend the veil of Maya.” 10.16 p.101-102
- d) “To clear the mind of these bonds, Dhyana is the most fruitful Sadhana. There are many who propagate and demonstrate processes of meditation, but only those who have discovered the ultimate goal of life and become masters of themselves can lead others as Gurus.” 14.59 p.342
- e) “The Sastras lay down what has to be acquired and what has to be given up. This wisdom when applied to life through activity marks the real Guru.” 14.59 p.342
- f) “The sages of India gave up the paths of superficial pomp and temporary security; they sought to gain inner peace and lasting joy. They discovered that these can be gained only by drawing the sap of life through the roots of one’s own inner Reality called Atma.” 8.6 p.22-23
- g) “The Guru reveals to the disciple the invisible current that activates the many seemingly distinct instruments, like the bulb, the mike, the fan, the refrigerator, the tape-recorder, the stove, etc. He deserves your gratitude.” 5.7 p.46
- h) “If you do not get such a Guru, pray to the Lord Himself to show you the way... and He will surely come to your rescue.” 1.3 p.22

3) “... compassion, for the fellow-pilgrims....”

(“Themselves having crossed... they help others to do likewise....”)

“Vyasa and Valmiki underwent a long process of asceticism and study, as well as experience of spiritual bliss and thus lifted themselves up to the heights of rshihood, before they composed the epics and texts bearing their name. The question may be asked, ‘Why should they compose poetry, however exalted, after attaining rshihood? What was the urge that prompted them?’ The answer is: ‘they were overcome with compassion, for the fellow-pilgrims struggling along the path they had traversed; they were full of agony at the plight of fellow-beings who were sweltering in the heat of worldly entanglements.’ They desired to establish peace on earth and good-will among mankind. Their attention was ever on the Vedic message, ‘Swayam theernah, paraan tharayathi.’ ‘Themselves having crossed (the Seas of Samsara or Change), they help others to do likewise’....” 11.48 p.283

F. Guru and Society (“... love and revere the heritage which is yours”)

1) (“... the Guru alone can open the inner eye....”)

- a) “The mariner uses his compass to guide him aright amidst the dark storm clouds and raging waves. When Man is overwhelmed by the dark clouds of despair and the raging confusion of irrepressible desires, he too, has a compass which will point to him the direction he has to take.... That compass is a Society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline.” 8.21 p.108
- b) “The first Guru is the mother; her example, her advice, her admonition affects man deepest and longest. The second is the Father, who is admired by the child for his strength and knowledge and feared for the punishments he inflicts. Next is the teacher, who leads him and guides him into the maze of material knowledge. But, the Guru alone can open the inner eye and cleanse the inner instruments of intuition.” 11.44 p.258-259
- c) “Education fosters good traits, good thoughts, strong faith in Truth, in God, and devotion to discipline and to duty. The real Guru is one who teaches these and real pupils those who learn them.” 15.18 p.97
- d) “Man has to be continually examining every desire that emerges in his mind, so that he may suppress or destroy or by-pass or obey. He must learn, from parents, elders, teachers, friends and the leaders of the land besides the books written by wise men of his own as well as of other countries, the standards by which he can test his desires.” 12.44 p.242

2) (“... the Wisdom of the Sages is the Heritage of Humanity”)

- a) “Pundits who are versed in the sacred scriptures of this land are the real leaders of the people, for, they can show the path to self-realization, which is the highest duty of man. They must, as the sages and scholars of old used to do, counsel the rulers and guide them in the path of Dharma.” 5.20 p.110
- b) “The child should grow with the mother for the first five years of life. Many children do not know what the Prema of the Mother is like.... When (the child) is five years old, the father has to take up the task.... Then, (the child) must be entrusted to a Guru; the Guru must teach him a standard of values with which to deal with the family, the village, the community, the country and mankind.” 2.37 p.217
- c) “One day in each week or fortnight, teachers should gather the students and instruct them in certain lofty ideals of life; they should go to the villages of those students, and devote themselves to some programme of welfare activity in the village. This is very advisable.” 12.25 p.135

- d) “Whatever information, instruction, or inspiration man has gained, or whatever wealth, riches or material possessions he has earned, he should share them with others in an unselfish manner. This is his primary duty. Teachers must be on the watch for chances to instill this ideal in the hearts of their pupils.”
14.39 p.216-217
- e) “(In the past) most of the learning was by listening to the preceptor. Not only in the seats of higher learning, but even the smith, the artisan, the artist, the carpenter, the farmer, the potter, the writer, the musician, the sculptor-- all learnt from the elders by the silent process of lovingly listening and reverentially watching, not through the process of poring over books. Those days can be revived, if only you love and revere the heritage which is yours.”
14.50 p.284
- f) “The Guru Poornima, the Full Moon day dedicated to the Teacher is to be spent in Contemplation of the Path that leads to liberation and in offering gratitude to the Pathfinders.”
11.44 p.260
- g) “... the Wisdom of the Sages is the Heritage of Humanity.”
4.15 p.86

G. The Guru is Everywhere

(“Approach these teachers with awe, reverence, and humility....”)

- 1) (“The sustenance given by Divine Grace circulates in every part....”)
- a) “Welcome inspiration from any quarter for your own improvement.” 5.38 p.216
- b) “Listen to all who speak of the glory of the Lord, who is in you, as in everyone else. Learn from all the methods by which you can discover Him and reach Him.”
4.24 p.138
- c) “He who seeks a Guru can find him in every word spoken within his hearing, in every incident that happens around him.”
9.14 p.76-77
- d) “In fact, the world itself is a great teacher, a constant guide and inspiration.”
11.44 p.258
- e) “Do not confine your Studies to this Circle and these Books. The whole Universe is a University for you. You can imbibe wisdom from the sky, the clouds, the mountains, the rivers, the daily phenomena of sunrise and sunset, the seasons, birds, trees, flowers, the insects-- in fact, all Beings and Things in Nature. Approach these teachers with awe, reverence and humility; they will respond with their lessons.”
12.30 p.168
- f) “The sustenance given by Divine Grace circulates in every part of the Body....”
11.54 p.305
- 2) (“... He is everywhere, available for your becoming aware of Him....”)
- a) “... the true Guru is not a human preceptor. It is the Cosmos Itself, Prakrithi, Creation, the World around us.”
15.15 p.84

- b) “Search for the good, the noble, the elevating-- and you will see only those things around you.” 2.20 p.103
- c) “God is not be spoken of as coming down or going up, since He is everywhere, available for your becoming aware of Him through beauty, truth, goodness, strength, love or any one of the divine attributes.” 8.3 p.13
- d) “God is not somewhere away from you, some One distinct from you. He is in you, before you, behind you, beckoning, guiding, guarding, warning, prompting, the Inner Voice speaking ever with you.... Call on Me and I am always by your side.” 12.14 p.64
- e) “God has a million names, Sages and Saints have seen Him in a million forms; they have seen Him with eyes closed and eyes open. They have extolled Him in all the languages and dialects of man; but yet, His Glory is not exhausted.” 8.22 p.119
- f) “God, out of His Infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for.” 14.59 p.343

H. Obey the Guru (“... the Guru is God...”)

- 1) (“... it is best to trust to the experience of the sages....”)
 - a) “... each must get himself diagnosed by an experienced doctor of the spirit and then follow his advice....” 5.26 p.142
 - b) “... you must be aware, of course, of your illness and long for a cure.” 5.26 p.145
 - c) “Imagine the enormous efforts of these seers, as a result of which the path of spiritual progress has been cleared by them for the good of all! Why do you not proceed along it? If you take the very first step, you will immediately recognize that their experience is authentic.” 5.26 p.145
 - d) “In spiritual matters, faith is the very essence.... Have faith in the wisdom of the ancients; do not pitch your tiny little brain against the intuitions of the saints and their discoveries.” 5.33 p.183
 - e) “So, it is best to trust to the experience of the sages, who were filled with compassion and who were moved out of that compassion to illumine the path of liberation.” 3.1 p.8
- 2) (“Simple faith in the words of the wise is more profitable than years of... discussion”)
 - a) “The disciple must learn to follow the commands of the Guru; that is the best way to benefit by his wisdom.” 5.35 p.200
 - b) “The Sadhaka rises step by step towards the highest Bliss by adhering to the instructions of the Guru.” 2.19 p.96
 - c) “The Brahmachari or Disciple must obey the commands of the Guru without flinching and to the full.” 3.2 p.17

- d) "Simple faith in the words of the wise is more profitable than years of study and discussion." 3.32 p.189
- e) "Have faith in yourself, your own capacity to adhere to a strict time-table of Sadhana, your own ability to reach the Goal of Realization." 6.23 p.121
- f) "Grace is showered on all who obey instructions and follow orders." 2.36 p.211
- 3) ("... obey him... for, you can be cured only by him")
- a) "The parents endow you with the material body, the Deha; the Guru points out to you the Dweller within the Body, the Dehi. So, he is entitled to be honoured as a God, says the Vedas." 5.7 p.45
- b) "When I was in the previous body at Shirdi, there was a woman named Radhabai who yearned to get a Manthrapadesam (initiation into a mantra) from Me.... (I) asked her, 'Why not take the Guru's name, then? Why demand another name from the Guru?' If the Guru is God, obeying His orders, walking in the Path he has shown... these are as effective as the japam of the Name. Once you have secured a Guru, leave everything to Him, even the desire to achieve liberation. He knows you more than you yourself ever can. He will direct you as best as is good for you. Your duty is only to obey and to smother the tendency to drift away from Him." 4.20 p.112-113
- c) "It requires all the strength one can collect to carry a load up-hill.... The Guru who taught you cannot do anything to haul it; he can only guide. The control of the senses, changing the mode of life, the habits of thought, have to be done by you." 3.5 p.36
- d) "To discover one's reality and to dwell in that Divine peace, one need not give up the world and take to asceticism. There was a Guru who advised one seeker to go to the forests and live there. 'Go,' he said, 'How can you have peace in the market-square?' To another seeker, he said, 'Stay where you are.' The two seekers later met and compared notes. 'How is it that he gave such contradictory advice? Perhaps, we did not hear him correctly', they said and returned to him; but, he said, that his advice was based on the attainments of each of them and what was best for each." 5.41 p.230-231
- e) "The Guru shows you the road; you have to trudge it alone, without fear or hesitation." 3.11 p.71
- 4) ("... please the teacher, and get the best out of him, by... loving service....")
- a) "The true doctor is interested in curing you of illness and so, he advises hitha to restore your health; the Guru is such a doctor." 6.7 p.38
- b) "Prefer the beneficial to the pleasant, for the pleasant might lead you down the sliding path into the bottom less pit." 6.7 p.38
- c) "Obey him, even when his prescription is unpalatable, for, you can be cured only by him." 6.7 p.38

- d) “You must so act that the heart of the Guru melts at your devotion.” 4.32 p.192
- e) “Serving the teacher was itself part of education in those days; it was easy to please the teacher and get the best out of him by the process of loving service.” 13.35 p.202
- f) “To earn the good-will of the Master there is one recipe: obey His orders without murmur.” 2.36 p.211
- g) “Every one should be prompted by reverence to the Guru, which means not worshipping his picture, but, acting according to his orders, his commands, his Ajna. If you are right on the path laid down by him, then you can march boldly on, regardless of praise or blame. Do not doubt this.” 4.49 p.284

I. Baba as Guru (“If only you evince some genuine interest...”)

- 1) “Even in My case, do not be attracted simply by stories of what I ‘create’ by a wave of the hand etc. Do not jump to conclusions with closed eyes; watch, study and weigh.” 1.9 p.57
- 2) “Examine everything and believe only what appeals to you as correct. Do not simply say, Sai Baba spoke well, or Sai Baba writes well; respect Sai Baba only if He does as well as He speaks and writes.” 1.6 p.37
- 3) “I do not claim that I am a Guru; or, consider you as Disciples or pupils. When I am All that is, who can be separately specified as Guru and who as Disciple or pupil? Ignorance of the One leads one to this dichotomy. Realization of the Truth will end this distinction.” 12.42 p.231-232
- 4) “Come to Me, eager to learn, to progress, to see Yourself in Me-- and I shall certainly welcome you and show you the way.” 1.35 p.227
- 5) “If only you evince some genuine interest in your own real uplift, I am ready to stand by you and crown your efforts with success.” (3.17 p.81 in 1st U.S. Edition, not in current edition)

J. The God Within as Guru (“Your heart is your witness....”)

- 1) (“... from your own heart you will receive the Gita that you need...”)
- a) “If you do not come across such preceptors, do not get down-hearted; pray for guidance and from your own heart you will receive the Gita that you need from the Charioteer who is there.” 9.14 p.76
- b) “You need not rely on another for success in Dhyana and Japa and await contact with some sage in order to get from him a mantra for recitation. Pray to the God within you and you will receive the needed guidance.” 10.30 p.183
- c) “Pray to God to illumine your mind, awaken your intelligence, and be your Guru. He will surely guide you aright, from the altar of your own heart.” 4.52 p.300

- d) "Meditate on such a Mahavakya as 'Thath-thwan asi' (Thou art That; There is no other, There is only One), and as you go on revolving it in your mind, meanings will dawn upon you, without the help of any commentary." 3.32 p.189
- e) "The best Guru is the Divine in you..." 10.23 p.140
- f) "People resort to Gurus to receive mantras (mystically powerful formulae to be recited by them for their spiritual uplift); others seek medicine men and holy monks to get yantras (esoteric talismans to ward off evil forces); some others learn from pundits tantras (secret rites for attaining superhuman powers)... One should accept the body as the tantra, one's own breath as the mantra, and one's heart as the yantra. There is no need to seek them outside oneself." 15.22 p.122
- 2) ("... the Inner Core of every thing, thought or turn of events")
- a) "Converse with God who is in you; derive courage and consolation from Him. He is the Guru most interested in your progress. Do not seek the guru outside you, in hermitages or holy places. The God in you is Father, Mother, Preceptor, Friend." 8.11 p.48
- b) "These are not distant regions that have to be reached by tortuous travel; they are springs of tranquillity that are in your own heart." 3.3 p.25
- c) "... meditate on Him and you are filled with Prema for all beings; dwell on His Story and you find all the agitations of your mind quietening in perfect calm." 3.10 p.64
- d) "I am in your heart all the time, whether you know it or not." 11.14 p.86
- e) "Your heart is your witness; question it, whether you have obeyed the directions of the Lord. A thousand persons may swear that you have not, but, if your conscience affirms that you have, you need not fear." 7.5 p.28
- f) "The best thing is to have your own Self as the source of Light, as the Guru." 2.14 p.64

K. Concluding Comments-- Guru ("As the teacher, so the pupil")

- 1) ("Your task... is to merge in the Illimitable Love, which is God")
- a) "India has been announcing this Truth to the World since ages; this is the land where holy personages, divine personalities, saints and sages, (and) Avathars, carrying the authentic stamp of God, have demonstrated that nothing else can give man the Peace and Joy that the contemplation of the universal Atma can give." 4.42 p.248
- b) "For such individuals who have liberated themselves from the narrowness of individuality, the only task is the uplift of humanity, the welfare of the world and the showering of love. Even if they are quiet, the state of Bliss in which they are, will shower bliss on the world." 7.48 p.240

- c) “The lives of such Personalities are lived out, in order to establish the welfare of humanity, the prosperity and peace of the world, and individual liberation from bondage, to sensual desires and passions.” 11.54 p.309
- d) “The guru out of His infinite compassion and wisdom counsels the most beneficent path. The Sishya (pupil) out of his infinite devotion follows it and attains the goal.” 14.60 p.345
- e) “Your task... is to grow in love, expand that love, practice love, strengthen love and finally become Love and merge in the Illimitable Love, which is God. All your life, you must be Love, with Love, for Love. That is to say, love expressed through service to those that draw that love from you, and by drawing, help to increase it and deepen it. Spiritual Discipline is designed to canalize that love, so that it may irrigate the heart, which will otherwise go dry.” 9.30 p.158
- f) “If one has the yearning to reach the goal, one has to follow the path that leads to it.” 11.54 p.308
- g) “A disciplined life is the best offering you can make to the country or to the Divine in you.” 13.36 p.210

2) (“Your heart is your witness....”)

- a) “The best Guru is the Divine in you....” 10.23 p.140
- b) “... you can gain bliss the very day you decide on dedicated service. Whether you get or do not get the comforts you desire, you should pay attention to the task for which you have come and cultivate the means for realizing the inner God.” 14.6 p.40
- c) “Your heart is your witness; question it, whether you have obeyed the directions of the Lord. A thousand persons may swear that you have not, but, if your conscience affirms that you have, you need not fear.” 7.5 p.28
- d) “I am in your heart all the time, whether you know it or not.” 11.14 p.86
- e) “Grace is showered on all who obey instructions and follow orders.” 2.36 p.211

3) (“Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma....”)

- a) “... attach your mind to the Lord. Then you will be led on to the company of good men and your talents will be transmuted.” 1.11 p.64
- b) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p.164
- c) “As the teacher, so the pupil.” 14.39 p.217

VI. Namasmarana

(“... co-mingle, and become more and more composite”)

A. Introduction (“... the best exercise to acquire Prema....”)

- 1) “... the Smarana of the Name of the Lord is the root of all virtues.” 1.33 p210
- 2) “The essence of the Scriptures lies in this one rule: Repeat the name of the Lord, keeping His Glory always before the mind.” 1.9 p55
- 3) “... it is only when coal is in contact with the live embers that it can also become live ember.” 4.31 p183
- 4) “There is a secret spring in the heart that will well up when the Name is uttered and that will slake your thirst.” 2.34 p199
- 5) “Each one has a special attachment to one Name out of many, suited to the temperament and the samskara, the inherited instincts and tendencies shaped in previous births. Meera loved the Name, ‘Giridhari;’ to her, that Leela appealed as the most significant, as the most symbolic of the Lord’s Glory. The name that pleases you, that arouses the sweetest and the purest love, is best for you.” 3.13 p81
- 6) “So, attach yourself to Me and the current will flow through you and get things done for your good.” 2.6 p25
- 7) “Namasmara, I have told you often, is the best exercise to acquire Prema towards God and all that is great. But have you tried that recipe?” 2.21 p110
- 8) “The Lord will respond even if you call Him just once from the depths of feeling....” 4.48 p278

B. Early Stages (“... link yourselves with God, by a chain of Love....”)

- 1) (“The effectiveness... lies in the heart, in the yearning, in the thirst”)
 - a) “The very first thing you have to do, to impress upon your mind the reality, is to recite the Name of God and dwell on His Glory in the mind, so that the tongue will not stray into lesser topics or the mind drag you away into inferior fields.” 5.13 p80
 - b) “... begin the recital of the Name of the Lord. That will give you all the rest in due time.” 1.13 p77
 - c) “Install on the tongue any one of the thousand names of the Lord, current in any part of the world, among any community of devotees.” 3.38 p217
 - d) “The Name is sugar; you can make sugar dolls of any shape; call it by any name appropriate to the shape, cat or rabbit, eagle or elephant; the sweetness and the calorific value are the same. So too, when engaged in the sadhana of Namasmara, you can select Om Sakthi, Om Narayana, Om Srinivasa,

- Om Paramatma, Om Sai Rama-- the curative value, the cleansing value, is the same; the sweetness on the tongue is the same.” 6.30 p154
- e) “I do not appreciate in the least, the distinction between the various appearances of Godhead, Sai, Rama, Krishna etc. I do not proclaim that this is more important or that the other are less important.” 4.28 p161
- f) “... let Me tell you that no particular Name can be raised to a status higher than the rest, for all Names are His and He answers to all.” 8.18 p85
- g) “The effectiveness lies not in the Mantra or in the Name and Form it is centered upon. It lies in the heart, in the yearning, in the thirst. God will assume the form and answer to the Name for which you thirst! That is the measure of His Grace.” 10.34 p218
- h) “Along the lines already familiar to you, continue the worship of the God of your choice; then you will find, that you are coming nearer and nearer to Me; for, all Names are Mine and all Forms are Mine. There is no need to change, after you have seen Me and heard Me.” 5.22 p122

2) (“Dig in one place steadily and with faith”)

- a) “In the beginning, the name has to be recited, willy nilly, as a routine; later, the taste will draw you into the habit; the recitation will yield unending joy.” 9.24 p128
- b) “I will never force you to take up a particular Name or Form of the Lord as your Ishtan. The Lord has a million names and a million forms, and He wants that faith and attachment should be evoked in you by any one of them, as you recite the Names or contemplate the Forms. That is why they have a string of 1008 Names for use in worship; the Bhaktha might be drawn closer to the Lord while any one Name is being repeated, however distracted or inattentive he might be during the rest of the list.” 1.34 p218-219
- c) “... encouraging, as Sanathana Dharma has always done, all to move forward from wherever they are, in the direction of the Lord, whom they are free to picture in whatever Form they like.” 3.34 p197
- d) “... in the spiritual path, each one has to move forward from where he already is, according to his own pace, in the light of the lamp which each one holds in his own hand.” 6.7 p37
- e) “You do not realize that I am everywhere at all times, that God is not confined to the upper regions of the sky or to one little room where you keep his picture! He can be concretized anywhere by sincere prayer. Pray to Him, one-pointedly, with any Form or Name. He will answer; only, do not change the name and form, as fancy flits; then, concentration will be impossible. All names are His; all Forms are His; but, when you are striving to concretize Him, it is best to select the Name and Form that appeal to you most.” 10.19 p115-116

- f) “Follow the same rigorous routine every day: time, place, duration, method, pose-- all being unchanged. Then the disturbing factors can be easily humbled and tamed. As Ramakrishna said, do not dig a few feet in a number of different places and moan that you could not strike water. Dig in one place steadily and with faith. The boring drill goes down into the very underground spring of water; drill ‘Ram’ ‘Ram’ ‘Ram’-- continuously, steadily, and you too can get the rewarding result of Realization.” 7.4 p23
- g) “Have one Name-Form for Japam, Dhyanam, and Smaranam. Then only can concentration take root.” 6.39 p195

3) Namasmarana for Beginners

(“... the Emotional Picture, dear to the heart and fixed in the memory....”)

“First, when you sit for meditation, recite a few slokas on the glory of God, so that the thoughts that are scattered could be collected. Then gradually, while doing Japam, draw before the mind’s eye the Form which that Name represents. When your mind wanders away from the recital of the Name, take it on to the picture of the Form. When it wanders away from the Picture, lead it on to the Name. Let it dwell either on that sweetness or on this. Treated thus it can be easily tamed. The imaginary picture you have drawn will get transmuted into the Bhavachitram or the Emotional Picture, dear to the heart and fixed in the memory; gradually, it will become the Sakshathkarachitra when the Lord assumes that Form in order to fulfill your desire.

“This Sadhana is called Japasahithadhyana and I advise you all to take it up, for it is the best for beginners. Within a few days, you will fall in line and you will taste the joy of concentration.” 1.5 p30-31

- 4) (“... offer grateful homage to God in that Form....”)
- a) “Of course, you will be hankering after the taste of the Name only when you are gnawed by the pangs of hunger.” 2.3 p13
- b) “When you keep a heap of sweets on a plate in front of you and recite 108 times ‘Heap of sweets’, ‘Heap of sweets’, ‘Heap of sweets’, can your tongue relish or stomach receive the stuff you describe?.... God has to flow with the blood in the veins.” 15.26 p140-141
- c) “When you have the Name in your heart and on your tongue, you will never go astray, your hand will be clean, your eyes will be bright, your face will beam with courage and self-confidence.” 12.14 p66

- d) “Select any Name of His, any Name that appeals to you, select any form of His; every day when you awaken to the call of the brightening East, recite the Name, meditate on the Form; have the Name and the Form as your companion, guide and guardian throughout the toils of the waking hours; when you return for the night offer grateful homage to God in that Form with that Name, for being with you, by you, beside you, before you, behind you, all day long. If you stick to this discipline you cannot falter or fail.” 8.22 p119
- e) “Thank the Lord for giving you this life, this much intelligence, this much detachment; do Namasmara with this gratefulness in the background of your mind.” 7.21 p123
- f) “You can link yourselves with God, by a chain of Love, through the recitation of the name, in silence and with full awareness of the meaning and its nuances. Each Sairam, Hare Krishna, Hare Ram, or Vittal is a link; the more the links, the longer the chain, the firmer the bond. But, each link has to be well forged...” 11.3 p19-20
- g) “I appreciate two things most in you: 1) Silence.... 2) Namasmara.” 8.33 p185

C. Difficulties (“... have to be removed by rigorous Sadhana....”)

1) (“... few have steady faith....”)

- a) “Millions all over the land recite the Name of God, but, few have steady faith; few seek the Ananda that contemplation on the Glory of God with within (the Atma) can confer. They do so out of habit or for social conformity or to gain a reputation for religiousness. Therefore the Japam or recitation does not cure pain, grief, or greed.” 8.6 p23
- b) “When the Name is repeated without concentration and without reverence, it cannot cleanse the mind.” 8.8 p32
- c) “Do not indulge in Nama-samarana as a pastime or a fashion or a passing phase, or as the unpleasant part of an imposed time-table, or as a bitter quota to be fulfilled each day. Think of it as a Sadhana, to be seriously taken up for the purpose of reducing your attachments of fleeing objects, purifying and strengthening you, and liberating you from the cycle of birth and death.”
- d) “The Name has to be sung for your own delight, to quench your own thirst, to appease your own hunger. No one eats to appease another’s hunger, nor takes medicines to alleviate another’s illness. So do not care for what others feel about your meditation or devotional singing. Do not seek the approval, appreciation, or admiration of others, or refrain from your form of worship because others dislike it or ridicule it. Be self reliant, self confident.” 13.24 p141

- e) “You are also playing marbles with the Name of God, unaware of its value. Once you realize its worth, you will keep it in your heart of hearts as the most precious treasure. Know that the Name is the key to success in your search for consolation, confidence, courage, illumination and liberation.” 8.19 p89
- f) “Another point about this Namasmarana. There are some who ejaculate Rama or Sai-ram or Mahadeva when they are disgusted with some happening, or when they are displeased or depressed, in a tone indicative of distance or unwelcome surprise. They say it with a sigh or a groan. This is wrong. The name of the Lord must always be pronounced with joy, thankfulness, exultation, awareness of the uniqueness and the splendour. Say it with love, say it with sincere yearning.” 6.29 p147

2) (“The mind... weaves a net and gets entangled in it”)

- a) “You must welcome all Names and Forms, though you might have a personal attachment to one Name and one Form. You have to admit that the God whom you adore is universal enough to have many Names and many Forms.” 7.37 p190-191
- b) “Do not compare the various manifestations of the Divine and pronounce judgement, declaring that Rama is greater than Krishna or Siva superior to Vishnu. This line of thought is poisonous and harmful to the devout aspirant. You do not know your own self; but, yet, how dare you pronounce judgement on Personalities and Powers you have never experienced or understood. Rama is as unknown to you as Christ, and so, it is best to keep silent, and revere both with equal ardour. For, all are Manifestations of the same Divine Effulgence.” 12.22 p115
- c) “When this tiny little ego assumes enormous importance, it causes all this bother! That is the root of all the travail. In your heart, there is the Atmarama, the Rama that confers eternal joy. So repeat the name Rama; the Sun which can make the lotus in the heart bloom.” 1.14 p81
- d) “The mind is the mischief-maker; it jumps from doubt to doubt; it puts obstacles in the way. It weaves a net and gets entangled in it. It is ever discontented; it runs after a hundred things and away from another hundred..... So take up the task of training it into an obedient servant; it is educable, if only you know how to do it. Place before it things more tasty and it will hanker only for those. Once it realises the value of Namasmarana, it will adhere to that method of getting peace and joy. So start it now.” 2.3 p13
- e) “... illumine the inner consciousness and the outer behaviour, with the light of God. Put the lamp of the Name of the Lord, the illumining flame, on the tongue! That is the door-step; that light will drive out the darkness from both inside and outside. Have it ever burning, clear and bright. You will soon reach remarkable heights and enjoy happiness, the like of which you cannot get by sticking to the senses.” 4.26 p149

3) (“... false victories and absurd adventures....”)

- a) “Man’s mind is too full of the world; his stomach is demanding too much of his time and energy. His desires and wants are multiplying too fast for his capacity to satisfy them... they lead him into false victories and absurd adventures..... under this new dispensation, truth has become just a word in the dictionary.... The only hold that man has in this dreadful darkness is the name of God.” 8.8 p30
- b) “The taints of ‘I’ and ‘Mine’ have to be removed by rigorous Sadhana; chief among the disciplines being Namasmarana, because when you dwell on the names of the Lord, His Majesty, His Grace, His Potence, His Pervasiveness, these get fixed in the consciousness and one’s own capacities and capabilities get eclipsed in the Divine. So, humility increases and surrender is possible....” 7.12 p63-64
- c) “The Atma can be grasped only by a sharpened intellect and a pure mind. How to purify the mind? By starving it of the bad food it runs after, namely objective pleasures and feeding it on the wholesome food, namely, thought of God.... That is the reason why I attach so much importance to Namasmarana as a Sadhana.” 4.51 p297
- d) “Attach yourself to Him; then your attachment for these temporary objects will fall off....” 1.14 p81
- e) “Let your mind imbibe the nectar of the Name, let it taste the elixir of the Lotus Feet of the Lord, it will be incapacitated, rendered ineffective, incapable of harm.” 11.44 p261-262
- f) “Have the curtain of ‘Thought of God’ all around you; then, the deadly mosquitoes of desire and distrust cannot harm you.” 12.12 p50

4) (“The Ice-Peak of Karma-consequence....”)

- a) “Namasmarana is the process by which this dedicatory attitude can be cultivated and confirmed. When confronted by calamity, you must attach yourself to this Sadhana even more firmly, instead of losing faith in it and getting slack. The drug should not be given up when it is most needed. The pity is, when the first disappointment faces you, you lose courage and confidence and give up Rama or Krishna or Sai Baba.” 6.29 p147
- b) “Stick to your faith; do not change your loyalty as soon as something happens or some one whispers. Do not pull down Sai Baba’s picture from the wall and hang some other picture there at the first disappointment. Leave all to Him; let His will be carried out... that should be your attitude. Unless you go through the rough and the smooth, how can you be hardened?” 2.2 p7
- c) “Do not vacillate or change or try a series of Nama and Rupa. That will only fritter away time and energy.” 1.35 p227

- d) “When you are depressed by what appears to be loss or calamity, engage yourselves in Namasmarana, the recitation and recollection of the Names of the Lord...” 7.9 p50
- e) “At least from now on, recite the name and dear children, you will have joy and peace. Never care for the obstacles that may come your way; the name will clear the path.” 12.14 p66
- f) “The Ice-peak of Karma-consequence accumulated by you, will be reduced by the avalanches and glaciers caused by the warming effect of Nama-smarana... the sun of God’s Glory, shining through the samrana will level the snow-peak to the ground.” 8.15 p68
- g) “Nothing against Dharma can stand the Presence of the Lord. That fire will consume all impurities...” 3.21 p125

D. OM

(“... symbolic of the Universal Absolute”)

- 1) (“... the sum of all the teachings in the Vedas about Godhead...”)
 - a) “The One indestructible sound OM is Brahma, the Universal Absolute.” 15.4 p18
 - b) “The OM is the ever-present Voice within, the Echo of the Divine Call, from the cavity of the Heart.” 10.34 p231
 - c) “OM is the sum of all the teachings in the Vedas about Godhead and of all the systems of adoring the Godhead...” 10.13 p84
 - d) “OM summarizes the Vedas and their teachings..... the merging of object with subject manifests as the OM!” 11.11 p65
 - e) “The Pranavajapa, or the recitation of OM and the contemplation of that mystic syllable will help to calm the roaring waves.” 10.13 p84
- 2) (“Repeat the OM slowly, contemplating its vast potentialities”)
 - a) “It is laid down at Prasanthi Nilayam that the early dawn recital of OM should be done twenty-one times.” 14.3 p16
 - b) “OM must be recited slowly and with deliberation.... It should start softly at first, but gradually become louder and louder, and then slowly relapse into silence, this silence after the experience being as significant as the Pranava.” 14.3 p17
 - c) “The ascending voice of the Pranava or OM must take a curve at M and descend as slowly as it rose, taking as much time as when it ascended, disappearing in the silence, which echoes in the inner consciousness.” 9.34 p178
 - d) “It has to be pronounced rising in a crescendo as slowly as possible, and as slowly coming down, until after the m there will be the echo of the silence reverberating in the cavity of the heart.” 10.13 p85

- e) “The last stage is Thuriya. It is the stage when the consciousness is fully aware of itself. It cannot be identified as such by any means! We can try to delineate it a little, by saying that it is the silence that prevails after one OM and before another OM follows it.” 15.4 p19
- f) “Persevere, until you are able to be stirred by the upward sweep, the downward curve, and the silent sequel.” 10.13 p85
- g) “Repeat the OM slowly, contemplating its vast potentialities.” 9.34 p178
- h) “... the final OM must be the flower blossoming on the creeper of life, that has twined itself on God all one’s life.” 10.13 p82

3) (“... the vibrations of creation...”)

- a) “OM is the primeval sound, the sound caused by the vibrations of creation through the emergent will of the Attributeless.” 14.3 p16
- b) “... when the Elements originated and Creation started, the sound OM was produced.” 6.42 p212
- c) “... it is the sound that manifested when the dawn of Creative Will stirred the Niraakaara (the Attributeless) into activity.” 6.42 p211-212
- d) “It is the primordial fundamental sound, symbolic of the Universal Absolute.” 9.34 p178
- e) “Little children just learning to toddle about are given a three wheeled contraption which they push forward, holding on the cross-bar. The OM is such a ‘vehicle’ for the spiritual child. The three wheels are a u and m, the three components of the manthra.” 5.46 p255

4) (“When the bell sounds OM, the Godhead within you will awaken...”)

- a) “OM is the primal sound inherent in the life-breath.” 5.46 p255
- b) “Since God is omnipresent, the song of God, too, must be omnipresent. So, in reality, OM (the eternal sound of the universe) is the Gita of God.” 14.9 p57
- c) “God’s song cannot be only for a few or only for certain people or in a language understood only by one nation. OM is universal, eternal, full of the essence of all spiritual significance.” 14.9 p57
- d) “The bell in the temple is intended to convey the OM as the symbol of the Omnipresent God. When the bell sounds OM, the Godhead within you will awaken and you will be aware of His Presence.” 1.9 p55-56
- e) “If you have the ear, you can hear ‘OM’ announcing the Lord’s Presence in every sound.” 1.9 p55-56
- f) “Constant repetition of OM and intense meditation on its meaning are recommended for aspirants who seek cognition of the Indwelling Divine.” 10.10 p58

E. Practice (“Charge every second of time with the Divine Current....”)

1) (“By constant thought an ideal gets imprinted on our heart”)

- a) “In the beginning, this Namasmaraṇa is best done in company. For, when you do it alone, distracting thoughts will overpower the earnestness. A single fibre of grass has little strength; but, twist a large number into a rope, you can bind with it a rogue elephant to a tree! The wild mind can be bound by faith that is confirmed in godly company.” 8.20 p103
- b) “Twice a day, morning and evening, if you spare some time to sing the names of God, with like-minded persons, all in unison, with full awareness of the deeper significance of each name as it sweetens the tongue, it will be of considerable help to establish the feeling of the constant presence of God, within you and without.” 9.27 p146
- c) “Bhajan must become an unbroken stream of Bliss on your tongues and in your hearts....” 12.28 p153
- d) “But God does not shower grace on people because they sing His praises. Nor does He come down upon them because they do not deify Him. Recitation of the Divine attributes only enables us to dwell on elevating ideals and approximate ourselves more and more to the Divinity that is our nature. We become what we contemplate.” 14.1 p2
- e) “Contemplate on that Form, picture it in your mind, spend time slowly and with full attention in that holy picturization, (your attention will wander far in the initial stages, but do not lose heart)... Oh, you can spend hours painting Him on the canvas of your heart. It is a very profitable exercise to sublimate your thoughts and feelings. Every minute spent in this Dhyana will take you one step nearer Liberation....” 7.4 p21-22
- f) “By constant thought an ideal gets imprinted on our heart.” 14.1 p2

2) (“The Love will grow of itself....”)

- a) “The qualities of detachment and love will grow in you, when you stick to one discipline: Namasmaraṇa!” 10.19 p118
- b) “Step by step, you reach the end of the road. One act followed by another leads to a good habit. Listening, listening, you get prodded into action. Resolve to act, to mix only in good company, to read only elevating books, to form the habit of Namasmaraṇa....” 4.4 p23
- c) “... dedicate your life anew to the discipline enjoined, and resolve to accept it and practice it to the utmost. This involves giving up all habits that interfere with the constant remembrance of God.” 11.18 p98
- d) “Sanctify every word and deed by filling it with Prema for Krishna or whatever Name and Form you give to the Lord you love.” 3.21 p126

- e) “Have the name on the tongue, and in the thought, all your waking hours. See every one as the Person whose Name you adore; hear all tales told by people around you as tales of His Glory, His Leela!” 10.19 p118
- f) “The Love will grow of itself and by its slow and inevitable alchemy turn you into Gold.” 1.34 p214
- g) “The heart has the precious treasure of Ananda, but man does not know the key to open the lock; that key is Namasmarana, the repetition of the Name of the Lord, with a pure heart.” 5.27 p147

3) (“... will come only through long practice.... So, strive for it steadily”)

- a) “Only constant dwelling with the Name of the Lord gives that unshakable Peace, unaffected by the ups and downs of life.” 1.14 p81-82
- b) “The state of constant remembrance can come only through long practice; it will not be acquired suddenly. So, strive for it steadily.” 6.39 p192
- c) “Smarana must be the unseen spring of every activity of man, every minute of his waking life; then it will become the spring even during dream and will help the I during deep sleep to merge in the He, for over.” 6.39 p192
- d) “The recital of the Ramanama must become as automatic as breathing, as frequent and as essential.” 1.14 p81
- e) “The drug, Ram Ram Ram is to be swallowed and assimilated ad infinitum. Its curative essence will travel into every limb, every sense, every nerve and every drop of blood. Every particle of you will be transmuted into Ram.” 7.1 p4
- f) You should pray only for Grace. That one-pointed devotion can be got only by long practice of Sadhana, especially the Sadhana of Namasmarana.” 7.21 p122-123
- g) “Charge every second of time with the Divine Current that emanates from the Name.” 8.11 p49
- h) “Namasmarana like this will immerse you ever in Amritha....” 1.35 p225

F. Faith (“... create the evidence on which Faith can be built....”)

- 1) “Whatever the method of worship, whichever the Name or Form, it is Faith that matters, it is that which gives life and energy for higher things.” 2.28 p150
- 2) “Repeat the Ramanama, whether you have faith or not: that will itself induce faith, that will itself create the evidence on which faith can be built.” 3.6 p43
- 3) “You swallow food, but you are not aware how that food is transformed into energy, intelligence, emotion and health. In the same way, just swallow this food for the spirit, this Namasmarana, and watch how it gets transmuted as virtue and the rest without your being aware of it.” 2.3 p11

- 4) “Nowadays, people laugh at the idea of Namasmarana... They ask, what is in a Name? It is just an assortment of sound. My words too are assortments of sound, but, when they enter your hearts, you feel content, you feel encouraged, is it not? Words have tremendous power; they can arouse emotions and they can calm them. They direct, they infuriate, they reveal, they confuse; they are potent forces that bring up great reserves of strength and wisdom. Therefore have faith in the Name and repeat it whenever you get the chance.” 4.44 p257-258
- 5) “If you have faith and if you keep the Name of Rama as constant companion, you are in Vaikuntha or Kailas or Heaven, all the time. These are not distant regions that have to be reached by tortuous travel; they are springs of tranquillity that are in your own heart.” 3.3 p25
- 6) “Really, if only you have this faith in the Name, you need not struggle to secure the chance to detail to Me your desires and wants. I will fulfill them, even without your telling Me.” 2.34 p191

G. Manifesting God (“Remember the God in whom you move....”)

- 1) (“That will provide you with His Company....”)
 - a) “Remember the God in whom you move, the God who makes you move, the God who is all this vast Universe, every little atom, every huge star. Select some Name and Form for this All-pervasive Immanent God and keep those, on your tongue and before your mental eye.” 4.22 p122
 - b) “The Grace of the Lord is a subject dear to every one. It is a subject that is within the grasp of all. The Lord also can be addressed by any Name that tastes sweet to your tongue or pictured in any form that appeals to your sense of Wonder and Awe. You can sing of Him as Muruga, Ganapathi, Sarada, Jesus, Maithreyi, Sakthi, or you can call on Allah or the Formless, or the Master of all Forms.... any story that brings into your consciousness His Glory, His Grace, and His Beauty....” 3.18 p104-105
 - c) “Have the Name of God on your tongue, in your breath, ever. That will evoke His Form, as the Inner Core of every thing, thought or turn of events. That will provide you with His Company, contact with His unfailling Energy and Bliss. That is the Sathsanga (good association) that gives you maximum benefit.” 8.11 p48
 - d) “It will keep you in constant touch with the Infinite and so, it will transmit to you something of the wisdom and Power of the Infinite.” 6.7 p39
 - e) “I shall tell something that you will like most; it is true; it is extremely advantageous information for you. Pronounce the nectarine words, the Names of God, Govinda, Damodara, Madhava-- and derive exquisite joy. By means of the Name, you can keep God ever near you.” 7.48 p240

- f) "... I would advise you to dwell always on one name of God, one personification of one of His innumerable attributes of glory. Then there is the expansion of your love, the removal of hate and envy from your mental composition, seeing the God whom you adore in every other person as intently as you see Him in yourself. Then you become the embodiment of love, peace, and joy."
14.41 p233-234

2) ("God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for")

- a) "Man's duty is to sanctify his days and nights with the unbroken smarana (recollection) of the Name. Recollect with joy, with yearning. If you do so, God is bound to appear before you in the Form and with the Name you have allotted Him..." 8.19 p94-95
- b) "... as soon as the Name is uttered, the owner of the Name comes into view." 3.13 p79
- c) "When you repeat the Name; all the sweetness of the Form and its associated Glory must come to memory and-- just as your mouth waters when you remember some sweet dish you relish-- your mind must 'water' when you contemplate it. Choose the Name which captivates your heart." 3.13 p79
- d) "The Lord will manifest where and when you yearn for Him; if you yearn that He should come before you in flesh and blood, He will respond. He is ever ready to respond; only, you are not ready to invite or welcome or receive Him into your heart." 2.34 p200
- e) "The effectiveness lies not in the Manthra or in the Name and Form it is centered upon. It lies in the heart, in the yearning, in the thirst. God will assume the form and answer to the Name for which you thirst! That is the measure of His Grace." 10.34 p218
- f) "God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for." 14.59 p343
- g) "Japam and Dhyanam are means by which you can compel even the concretization of the Divine Grace, in the Form and with the Name you yearn for. The Lord has to assume the Form you choose, the Name you fancy; in fact, you shape him so. Therefore, do not change these two, but stick to the ones that please you most, whatever the delay or the difficulty." 1.5 p29

H. Concluding Comments-- Namasmarana

("The most effective method of cultivating Prema....")

1) ("... the transformation of the heart into a reservoir of Love....")

- a) "The best and the simplest Karma is the repetition of the Name of the Lord... It will help you radiate love all round you." 4.54 p310

- b) “You might have heard Me speak about Namasmarana and its fruits; how it slowly changes character and modifies conduct and mellows you and takes you nearer the Goal....(repeat) the Name, irrespective of the target number, dwelling deep on the Form it represents and on the Divine Attributes connoted by It, tasting It, reveling in It, enjoying the contexts and associations of the Name, relishing Its Sweetness....” 2.3 p12-13
- c) “... every name is but a facet, a part, a ray, of the Supreme. The spiritual discipline consists in recognizing and becoming aware of the One that supports and sustains the many. That is the precious gem of wisdom that one must secure and treasure.” 13.24 p136
- d) “The Name is enough to give you all the results of every type of Sadhana.” 3.13 p78
- e) “By constant thought an ideal gets imprinted on your heart.” 14.1 p2
- f) “Take up the Name and dwell upon Its sweetness; imbibe It and roll It on your tongue, taste Its Essence, contemplate on Its Magnificence and make It a part of Yourself and grow strong in spiritual joy. That is what pleases Me.” 1.35 p225-226
- g) “It is not enough if you calculate the amount of your Sadhana, or the hours you spend in study and Sadhana. He cares more for the transformation of the heart into a reservoir of Love....” 14.59 p339
- 2) (“... that spring of Love that bubbles in your heart....”)
- a) “The most effective method of cultivating Prema is to practice Namasmarana.” 6.42 p213
- b) “This kind of constant dwelling on the indwelling God will promote in you love for all beings.” 5.12 p74
- c) “... the Name is greater than even the Named, for the Named may disappear, but the Name will continue and will evoke the Form of the Named.” 1.30 p186
- d) “Do namasmarana; taste the sweetness that is in the heart of every one; dwell on His Glory, His Compassion, which those names summarize. Then, it will be easier for you to visualize Him in all, and to love Him in all, to adore Him in all.” 7.27 p149
- e) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma-- which is reflected equally in every human being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p164
- f) “In the beginning, the Adored and the Adorer are distant and different; but, as the Sadhana becomes more confirmed and consolidated, they co-mingle and become more and more composite.” 7.48 p240

- g) "... you must recognize this love as but a reflection of the Premaswarupa, (the embodiment of Prema) that is your reality, of the God who is residing in your heart. Without that spring of Love that bubbles in your heart, you will not be prompted to love at all. Recognize that spring, rely on it more and more, develop its possibilities, try to irrigate the whole world with it, discard all touch of self from it, do not seek anything in return for it from those to whom you extend it."

5.17 p96-97

Entanglements, Difficulties, and Signs of Grace

I. What to Avoid

(“Detach yourself from all that keeps you away from God”)

A. Introduction (“Just as you obey the rules of health for fear of falling ill....”)

1) (“... a multitude of shackles... called Maya”)

- a) “Life is steady march towards a goal, it is not a meaningless term of imprisonment or a stupid kind of picnic.” 5.28 p153
- b) “Just as you obey the rules of health for fear of falling ill, you have to practice certain mental restrictions and regulation so that you may have peace, contentment, joy, enthusiasm and faith.” 3.38 p216
- c) “Just as a thermometer indicates the heat of the body, your talk, conduct, and behaviour indicate your mental equipment and attitudes, and show how high is the fever of worldliness that afflicts you.” 9.20 p108
- d) “It is the mind that weaves the pattern called the ‘I’. The way in which it establishes this ego and elaborates it into a multitude of shackles is called Maya.” 6.11 p58
- e) “This is called Kaliyuga, but it has become worse. It has become Kalahayuga, the Age of Factions!-- Factions in the family, the village, the community, the country, the nation, the world. The root cause of all this is the emphasis on the ego and the desire for cheap and temporary pleasure.” 5.23 p127-128
- f) “Lack of discipline is the root cause of the disorder and discord that are undermining almost all the various types of association of men, from the simplest to the most complex.” 11.34 p203-204
- g) “An undisciplined person is a danger to society; any moment he may run amuck. Man must recognize what limits, regulations, and do’s and don’ts are laid down by the sages of the past in order to ensure social security and individual advancement.” 14.11 p71

2) (“... the cobra is a poisonous snake....”)

- a) “... we cling to the belief that the outer world is the treasure-chest of peace and joy.... When man becomes aware that the cobra is a poisonous snake and that the leopard is a cruel beast, he avoids them with constant vigilance. Similarly, when we become aware of the transitoriness and triviality of worldly triumphs and possessions, we can easily detach ourselves from them and concentrate on inner wealth and inner vision.” 14.33 p181
- b) “When an Atomic Bomb is exploded thousands of miles away by America or Russia in some far-off country, the fall-out travelling all over the world contaminates the atmosphere, poisons vegetation, and distorts life, say the doctors who have to deal with them. The vibrations of hatred and greed, of pride and envy that result from the shouts and discontent of animosity also pollute the air equally seriously.” 10.35 p230

- c) “Another warning, for you. When you are aware of the Truth and when you know what action Dharma dictates at a particular time, you should not play false to yourselves. Apply the knowledge of Truth in every crisis during your lives; follow the path Dharma has laid down; do not be misled (by) falsehood or wickedness by fear or favour.” 15.12 p68
- d) “... do not treat My words too lightly; do not say, ‘We saw Sai Baba and heard his talk and it was all very fine.’ Decide at least to carry out some one piece of advice about your spiritual advance. It is very wrong to tarnish the body making it perform any single bad deed or making it move in bad company. Sanctify the body, sanctify each activity by devoting it to a high purpose.” 1.25 p156
- e) “Let the petty wishes for which you now approach God be realized or not; let the plans for promotion and progress which you place before God, be fulfilled or not; they are not so important after all. The primary aim should be.... to hold intimate and constant communion with the Divine that is in you as well as in the Universe of which you are a part.” 10.8 p43-44
- f) “The saddest part of the story is that man, though he sees and hears, suffers and falls, does not get quite convinced that sin is a dangerous experiment...” 2.34 p187

B. Relating to Sadhana (“Develop nearness, proximity, kinship with God”)

1) Worship (“... call upon the Supreme Source of power... with... genuineness”)

- a) “This day, Jesus is worshipped but His teachings are neglected. Sai is being worshipped but His teachings are neglected.” 15.37 p210
- b) “Ritual worship offered without a purified heart is sheer waste of time. But even a short sincere session of worship spent in Divine Awareness yields much fruit.” 14.19 p111
- c) “Of what avail is all the loud chanting, praying, singing and wailing, when the heart is soiled by egoism and selfish desire?” 12.50 p273
- d) “Your Sadhana must avoid becoming like drawing water from a well in a cane basket! You get no water however often you may dip and pull the basket up. Each vice is a hole in the bucket. Keep the heart pure, keep it whole.” 9.1 p5
- e) “Similarly, the Mother of the Universe will not weigh the quantity of yoga that you have practiced or calculate the number of times you have repeated God’s name as you rolled the rosary, or the time taken by you for various kinds of spiritual discipline. She can be moved, and Her grace can be won, by a genuine appeal emanating from the heart. Man is finding it increasingly difficult to call upon the Supreme Source of power and grace with such genuineness. His life has become pathetically artificial.” 13.24 p140

- f) “Without gaining purity of thoughts and intentions, compassion and the urge to serve, these outward expressions and exhibitions are but ways of cheating the society which applauds you as a great devotee.” 13.11 p53-54
- g) “Nowadays, man has got into the habit of acting and talking as per his whims. There is no control exercised by conscience or moral sense or manners. For one who is so perverse, who is determined to go down to his doom, there is no need for counsel. Medicine is for the ill, not for the wholly healthy or the wholly dead.” 9.28 p147

2) At the Wish Fulfilling Tree (“Win Him by obedience, loyalty, humility, and purity”)

- a) “At sacred places, the pilgrim must renounce his evil habits and bad tendencies and attitudes. Then only can the pilgrimage be beneficial.” 15.29 p157
- b) “You have brought your body to India; but still, if you have the same habits which you are used to in America, what is the use of bringing the body to India?” 13.6 p30
- c) “Darsan and Sparsan have their spiritual consequences but, they must be *granted* by Me, not seized when I do not welcome them. Now, you rush forward and secure the chance of falling at My feet, more for the satisfaction of the ego, that you got it, while others did not!” 8.8 p53 (1st U.S. Edition)
- d) “I find some people breaking coconuts before the Nilayam, disturbing the silence by the bang! I do not know what benefit they get, except getting the coconut for the chutney they make for lunch!” 10.14 p93
- e) “Do not run excitedly and fall on the car as I move out, causing injuries to women, old men, and children. Bhakthi must be disciplined and controlled. It is because you have that disciplined Bhakthi that I have come to your place.” 5.15 p88
- f) “Placing God at a great distance from you and praising Him as omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent will not please Him. Develop nearness, proximity, kinship with God. Win Him by obedience, loyalty, humility, and purity.” 10.8 p42
- g) “He is Love, He is Mercy, He is Goodness, He is Wisdom, He is Power. He gives what you ask; so, be careful what you ask. Learn to ask (for) the really beneficial boons. Do not go to the Wish-fulfilling Tree and come back in glee, with a towel that you asked and got!” 4.52 p301

3) Personal Sadhana (“Be sincere in your yearning and in your Sadhana”)

- a) “You bring a picture of Sai Baba and install it in your domestic altar, and start offering flowers. If, a few days later, your cow yields less milk than usual, you decide that is due to the evil worked by the new God who has come into the home or by the anger of the old God who has been superceded and you cast away the picture! Do not offer flowers or worship any form of God for the sake of these low gains.” 8.28 p154

- b) “You cannot bargain: ‘Give me the Ananda and then I shall have faith.’”
11.47 p277
- c) “Many of you sit in Dhyana and after some time start complaining, ‘O Why is it I am not able to concentrate? Bhagavan! Help me to fix my mind on you!’ Do not get impatient and bewail. Feel rather that you must make the mind pure and clean, so that God Himself will be tempted to possess it.”
12.43 p233
- d) “Be sincere in your yearning and in your Sadhana. Formal scholarship and outward conformity are poor substitutes for real genuine devotion.”
9.23 p125
- e) “Some persons boast that they are devotees of God, that God has blessed them in such and such ways, that God’s Grace has helped them thus and thus; do not give ear to these egocentred pretenders. You become a devotee when *God* has acknowledged your devotion.”
11.23 p121
- f) “If you do not care to spend your time for promoting love among men, do not wake up at 4-30 A.M.! You can wake up an hour later!, for that will save others an hour of bother! If you are eager to fill time with your works, rise at 4, there is no harm!”
19.27 p164

4) Personal Sadhana (“Do not... do them casually and without care”)

- a) “Sadhana has to be taken up under the direction of an expert, who knows your health and temperament well. Over enthusiasm and irregularity are both to be avoided.”
3.39 p225
- b) “Just as a doctor prescribes a certain fixed measure or weight of the drug and warns you that anything less is ineffective and anything more is harmful, so too, have some limit for your spiritual exercises. Do not overdo them or do them casually and without care.”
2.4 p16
- c) “Sadhana should not become mechanical repetition of set formulae or execution of dry formalities.”
7.2 p7
- d) “Simplicity is the sign of Divinity... Pomp, paraphernalia, jaw-breaking formulae, abracadabra, dark mysterious mumblings-- these are alien to the spirit of true religion.”
7.43 p243

5) Personal Sadhana (“... [do not] discourage people from approaching you...”)

- a) “Yes; I like simplicity, I like dress that will not discourage people from approaching you for a kind word, a bit of service, a helping hand. It must be clean and decent; not outlandish and queer.”
10.17 p107
- b) “You should wear simple dress, and not swagger about in new fangled outlandish bush-shirts and drain-pipe pants.”
11.10 p60

- c) “The tongue that does not utter the Name of God, the hand that knows no charity, the years of life that know no calm... a life that has not garnered wisdom, a temple where there is no atmosphere of reverence, talk that does not communicate knowledge-- all these are of no worth.” 4.36 p213
- d) “He who shouts and swears and advertises his worries to every one he meets and craves for sympathy, such a one can never be a Bhaktha.... They make earnest men lose faith in godly ways....” 1.35 p224
- 6) Within Organization (“I ask for... purification of hearts, that is all”)
- a) “So, the very first ideal you must keep in mind, when you start and run these organizations is: Do not crave for status or authority or position; do not allow any pomp, or show; do not compete for publicity or for recognition or praise. Duty is God. Do it and be content.” 7.18 p94
- b) “Whatever you desire others to do, you must first put into daily practice sincerely and with steadfastness. You must do Bhajan regularly and systematically, before you advise others about the efficacy of Bhajans.” 7.18 p96-97
- c) “This Organization believes that the Atma in each is the Atma in all and that the God that each worships is the God that all worship. You cannot insist that in the Bhajans only songs on Sathya Sai should be sung! Fanaticism of that kind I very much dislike and condemn. For, all names and all forms denote Me only! You betray your ignorance of My truth when you stick to any one of My names and avoid the rest.” 11.35 p215
- d) “... he who has an eye on the profit he can derive from service to God cannot be a true devotee.... I want to warn you against a set of people who have emerged nowadays using My Name for such personal purposes.” 4.28 p162
- e) “Many persons have also started using My name for the purpose of collecting money or material, for various purposes. If such come to you, send them back with the admonition that they are doing wrong. I ask for Bhakthi, Sraddha, Sadhana, purification of hearts-- that is all.” 5.18 p101
- f) “I do not like your going about collecting funds, or raising donations. I assure you that funds will come-- provided you sincerely pray-- for every worth cause. Have that faith; and watch the funds flow in. The sages of ancient times celebrated many yajnas, with no resources other than faith and sincerity.” 8.44 p236
- 7) Study of Scriptures (“Read for the sake of practicing....”)
- a) “Then about the Study Circles. I am not for indiscriminate reading of books, however valuable they may be. Much reading confuses the mind; it fosters argumentation and intellectual pride. What I insist upon is putting the things read into practice....” 8.21 p111
- b) “Study of scriptures and religious texts and such books, without effort to practice, results in ill-health.” 7.16 p88

- c) “Read for the sake of practicing; not for reading’s sake. Too many books in the room indicate a person suffering from intellectual illness, just as too many tins, capsules and bottles in the cupboard indicates a person with physical illness.” 8.21 p111
- d) “A letter can be cast aside, once its contents have been noted, and the instructions communicated through it have been grasped. So too, these Sastras and texts are to be laid aside, once they are read, understood and followed. There is no purpose in reading them over and over again.” 9.28 p147
- e) “Do not use the study of the Sastras and scriptures for increasing your egoism; let it make you humble, though at the same time, more resistant to temptation.” 2.12 p53-54
- f) “... he had learnt the Sastras only as a staff to help him walk, as a guide to action; not as a stick to beat others with.” 2.30 p159

g) “A Slave of Conceit”
 (“Desisting from practice, is itself irreverence”)

“When Sri Rama decided to end His Avathar career and walked into the flooded Sarayu river, a dog too followed the concourse. When asked why it had attached itself to the entourage, it said, ‘I desire to enter Heaven with you all. I was, in my previous life, a full-fledged Yogi; but I slipped and fell from the straight path of self-control, I became the slave of conceit; I expounded the Vedas as my fancy dictated, in strange but attractive ways; so, I have now become this animal that takes delight in barking, biting and baying. The persons who encouraged me then by praise, are now the fleas and flies that crowd on my skin and pester me. Help me Lord, to escape from this disgrace; I have worked out my Karma; I have lived out my sentence.’ That is the consequence of irreverence shown to the Vedas; study them reverentially and with a view to practice what they teach. Desisting from practice, is itself irreverence.”

8.36 p198-199

8) Talking (“If you can’t act up to your declarations, keep quiet....”)

- a) “Never discuss the spiritual standards reached by others; persevere in your own path.” 1.27 p170
- b) “It is no use indulging in arguments and disputations; he who clamours aloud has not grasped the truth, believe Me.” 1.10 p59
- c) “Avoid cleverness and pompous scholarship in the process of spiritual discipline. Verbal jugglery is an unprofitable pastime.” 6.42 p209

- d) “If you cannot act up to your declarations, keep quiet; do not go about advising and advertise that you are hypocrites.” 5.24 p130
- e) “Mere utterance without the intention or effort to practice what is uttered is hypocrisy, which ruins the character and degrades the personality.” 8.35 p191
- f) “Do not scatter advice, without the authority born of practical experience.” 9.35 p187
- g) “Until you try out My prescription fully and sincerely, it is best you keep quiet. You do not know even a pebble; how can you evaluate a peak?” 1.13 p79
- h) “Above all, do not talk ill of great men and sages. That is a sign of gross egoism and impertinence born of that conceit.” 1.9 p57
- 9) Talking (“... four big errors: uttering falsehood, scandalizing, finding fault with others, and excessive speech”)
- a) “Do not compare and cavil at others’ Ishtadevathas. It is wrong to undermine the faith of another, and to disturb your own. Faith is a plant of slow growth; its roots go deep into the heart. Silence is the best Sadhana, to guard faith; that is why I insist on silence here also, as a first step in Sadhana for you.” 5.42 p235-236
- b) “Do not talk ill of others. Do not talk about others but, if you must, talk only of the good in them..... If you do not like some one, do not mix with him; keep away. But, do not try to blacken his name....” 9.9 p46
- c) “Whenever we talk disparagingly or defamingly or sarcastically or hatefully of others, they get recorded on the tape, which is our own mind. When we record on tape the talk given by some one, it lasts even after his passing away. So, too, even after we pass away, the impressions and impacts of evil thoughts, spiteful words and wicked plots survive physical disappearance. Never, therefore, use or listen to words that ridicule, scandalize, or hurt others.” 15.20 p111
- d) “Do not contaminate the air by voices of acrimony, scandal, insult, or slander. Keep silent when you feel like expressing such ideas; that itself is a service to you and to others.” 13.24 p143
- e) “You must curb the propensity to indulge in inane jabber and idle curiosity.” 2.52 p288
- f) “The word mantra means that which saves, when turned over in the mind. Revolve the mantra ever in the mind; that will keep off wild talk, purposeless conversation, aimless gossip and scandal. Talk only when the talk is most essential and talk only as little as necessary.” 7.10 p55
- g) “The tongue is liable to four big errors: uttering falsehood, scandalizing, finding fault with others and excessive speech. All these have to be avoided if there (is) to be Santhi for the individual as well as for society.” 1.10 p59

10) Talking (“Make the words true and pleasing....”)

- a) “Both unpleasant truth and pleasant un-truth have to be avoided.... if speaking truth will cause grief or pain, keep silent.” 7.46 p233-234
- b) “Even when speaking the truth, one should not inflame passion, diminish enthusiasm, or inflict injury. Speak the truth; speak pleasantly. If unpleasant, do not speak the truth. Though it may be pleasant, do not speak falsehood.” 14.46 p263
- c) “... when you use harsh, cruel, angry, foul words against another, the God in you and the God in the other person is hurt. The tongue is a tool... be very careful; use it only for your good and for the good of others.” 9.9 p43
- d) “Speak, so that your language is as sweet as your feelings are.” 4.21 p119
- e) “Do not shout to a person standing far; go near him or beckon to him to approach you.” 6.28 p143
- f) “Make the words true, and pleasing.... But, for the sake of pleasing another, do not speak falsehood or exaggerate. Cynicism, which leads you to speak about a thing in a carping manner and in order to bring it into disrepute is as bad as flattery which makes you exaggerate and cross the boundaries of truth.” 4.21 p119
- g) “Simply because a statement will be welcome to the hearer, don’t speak it out to win his approval....” 7.46 p233
- h) “... you should not change the face of Truth to please people....” 12.19 p94
- i) “Love knows no fear and so, love needs no falsehood to support it. It is only fear that makes people warp the face of truth to make it pleasant for those whom they fear.” 6.32 p159

11) Talking (“Transact all dealings with minimum speech”)

- a) “Words! Words! Words! The plethora of words!” 15.36 p201
- b) “Transact all dealings with minimum speech.” 6.28 p143

C. Relating to Sensory Cravings (“... your sensory cravings must be burnt away....”)

1) Introduction (“... stay away from... such distractions as weaken and worry you....”)

- a) “Happiness can be won only by proceeding towards God, not by following the urges of the senses.” 12.5 p19
- b) “You have the unfailing spring of Ananda in the Atman, which is your reality; why then ruin your health, your peace of mind, running after senses which drag you through the objective world in pursuit of trivial transient joys?” 9.19 p103

- c) “All things in the outer world of objects are subject to change. Impermanent objects can confer only impermanent joy. How can it ever be otherwise?”
14.33 p181
- d) “Give the world only secondary importance; the primary place should be reserved for loosening its coils. The Jagadjanani (Mother of the Universe) will hurry towards you and caress you only when you cast off the dolls and cry.”
6.36 p181
- e) “I know that you are finding time, in spite of the hard work throughout the day, to attend cinemas, to engage in wayside chats, to promote and partake in factions and quarrels and for many other distractions which add to the sum of your worries. It is best you stay away from companions who drag you to such distractions that weaken and worry you....”
3.38 p217
- f) “Prefer the beneficial to the pleasant, for the pleasant might lead you down the sliding path into the bottomless pit.”
6.7 p38

2) Sensory Entanglements (“... the siren call of the senses....”)

- a) “... man too sees but the charms of material objects; he does not notice the entanglements which they cause.”
7.10 p54
- b) “Man suffers from the fever of the senses and he tries the quack remedies of recreations, pleasures, picnics, banquets, dances etc., only to find that the fever does not subside. The fever can subside only when the hidden virus is rendered ineffective.”
6.7 p37-38
- c) “Without discipline, the mind of man is turned into a wild elephant in rut. You have to catch it young and train it so that its strength and skill can be useful to man and harmless to life around.”
11.5 p28
- d) “The senses are one’s deadly foes; for, they drag your attention away from the source of joy inside you, to objects outside you.”
8.7 p28
- e) “Every act which... honours the siren call of the senses devalues man.”
6.43 p218
- f) “... Man desecrates himself by bartering himself for trivial pleasures.”
15.20 p110
- g) “Why pay undue attention to things you do not need and do not benefit from?”
13.24 p139
- h) “When you are convinced that they are at the bottom of this conspiracy to mislead you, you will certainly stop catering to them.”
8.7 p28

3) Sensory Entanglements (“Too much material comfort is harmful to health....”)

- a) “Do not believe that because you are equipped with the senses nothing harmful can happen through their free exercise.”
14.13 p83

- b) “Instead of making the senses (which are after all very poor guides and informants) his servants, he has made them his masters; he has become a slave of external beauty, evanescent melody, exterior softness, tickling taste, fragile fragrance. He spends all his energies and the fruits of all his toil in the satisfaction of the trivial demands of these untamed underlings.”
6.43 p218
- c) “It is not a sign of culture to overvalue the body, by over indulging in its whims. It is a sign of barbarism.”
9.21 p111
- d) “When the tongue craves for some delicacy, assert that you will not cater to its whims.”
8.45 p240
- e) “If you persist in giving yourself simple food that is not savory or hot, but, amply sustaining, the tongue may squirm for a few days, but, it will soon welcome it. That is the way to subdue it...”
8.45 p240-241
- f) “Too much of material comfort is harmful to health and happiness.”
4.45 p266
- g) “I do not prescribe elaborate Japam and Dhyanam for you, to win Grace. Control your tongue, make it sweet and soft, do not yield to the whims of the senses, dwell always in the thought of God, remind yourself always of the glory and majesty of God-- that is enough religious discipline for you.”
4.52 p301

4) Entertainment (“... do not be tempted to waste time in... vulgar entertainment”)

- a) “This Day is a sacred Day which has to be spent in sacred thoughts and deeds and not in cheap debilitating sensual pleasures and pastimes, like feasting and film-going.”
6.10 p48
- b) “Do not stuff your heads with the trivialities that fill the columns of periodicals, or absurd details of the personal lives of stars in any field. Don’t get excited with external events; or, depressed with events that appear like failures. Keep your head high over the flood waters; do not be carried away like stalks of straw.”
13.14 p72
- c) “Do not seek to listen to vile and vicious stories. This tendency reveals a diseased mind. What is heard is imprinted, like a carbon copy, through the ear, on the heart. One is injuring oneself through indulgence in this evil habit.”
15.21 p117
- d) “... (do) not be tempted to waste time in idle talk or vain pursuits or wanton mischief or vulgar entertainment.”
3.33 p192
- e) “Don’t read enervating or exciting stuff. Don’t attend film shows which exhaust or inflame the mind..... why inflict on yourself the disease of greed and consume tonics to get strength, and to hanker further?”
9.21 p112
- f) “How can you tolerate these obscene pictures, these posters publicizing pornographic films, this most objectionable type of dress, this brazen behaviour and appearance? Do everything possible to root out this evil.”
12.43 p236

- 5) Worldly Things (“Keep away from... everything that contaminates the will to serve....”)
- a) “... when lust envelops the heart of man, truth, justice, compassion and peace flee from it.” 11.45 p263
 - b) “Keep away from impure listening, impure acts, impure words, impure thoughts-- everything that contaminates the will to serve, and the skill to serve.” 5.51 p282
 - c) “... I advise you against ‘the evil of the eye’; do not relish ugly, vulgar, demeaning, degrading sights, sights such as the horrid film posters that are paraded at all city squares to draw you away into vice and crime. You must also avoid the ‘evil of the ear’; relishing scandal, blasphemy, tidings of hate and greed, talk by the godless and the wicked, who have no love in their hearts and brotherliness in their deeds.” 10.14 p93-94
 - d) “... once you go out into the bazaar, all the old urges drag you into the whirlpool of worldly things. If it is comfort you need, you could have stayed at home. If it is Grace, Peace, Knowledge of the Path, Sathsang, that you need, then keep within and be guided by the discipline of the Nilayam.” 7.5 p31
 - e) “If you are drawn into evil in pursuit of momentary pleasure, you will have to suffer misery a thousand-fold as a consequence of the impulse. Wicked thoughts, wild schemes and frolicsome escapades might give pleasure for the moment, but in the long run they are sure to land you in irretrievable ruin.” 12.44 p243
 - f) “That is the consequence of keeping company with the wild and the foolish. However affectionate they are, their ignorance will land you into disaster.” 7.39 p201
 - g) “When you build a house, you install a door in front. What is the purpose of the door? To admit all whom you welcome and to keep out all whom you do not want.... So too, select the impulses, the motives, the incentives that enter your mind; keep out the demeaning, the debasing, the deleterious.” 4.1 p2
- 6) Concluding Comments-- Relating to Sensory Cravings (“... discard anything that threatens to encumber your path”)
- a) “... sages and saints have known that the most noteworthy achievement of the senses of man is the glorification of the God within. ‘They are not eyes, but globules of glass, that do not earn a vision of God,’ says one.” 13.12 p57
 - b) “Cleanse the mind of material desires and sensual longings. Then you will find that the teachings of all religions are sound and satisfying.” 15.12 p67
 - c) “Watch your likes and dislikes with a vigilant eye and discard anything that threatens to encumber your path.” 5.6 p41
 - d) “Whenever the senses demand anything, Intelligence must start discriminating, asking the question, ‘Is this an act in keeping with the Divinity immanent in me?’” 6.43 p219

- e) “Man should be the master of his behaviour; he should not be led away by the impulse of the moment; he must be conscious always of what is good for him.” 2.3 p10
- f) “An old grandfather of seventy was asked by his seven years old grandchild, ‘Grandpa! How old are you?’ and the old man replied, ‘Two!’ The child was struck with wonder and looked a picture of doubt. The old man replied, ‘I have spent only the last two years in the Company of the Lord; until then I was plunged in the marshland of pleasure seeking.’” 4.31 p182
- g) “The waving of the camphor flame at the end of the Bhajan sessions is to remind you that your sensual cravings must be burnt away without leaving any trace behind, and you must offer yourself to God for being merged with His Glory.” 6.23 p120
- h) “Of course, there is the flow of water underneath the ground. But, how to benefit by it unless efforts are made to dig down into that source? A good deal of ‘Desire-for-sense-satisfaction’ has to be removed before that inner Spring of Peace and joy can be tapped.” 12.28 p151

D. Relating to Ego Desires (“Why carry all the load?”)

1) Introduction (“Cut the craving off...”)

- a) “All desires that do not subserve the one supreme need for liberation are to be given up as beneath the dignity of man.” 6.19 p98
- b) “Ideas that are opposed to spiritual tendencies, that narrow the limits of love, that provoke anger or greed, that cause disgust-- these have to be shut out.” 13.24 p139
- c) “You crave for a thing and when you get it, you call it joy; when you don’t you call it grief. Cut the craving off, and there will be no more swinging from joy to grief.” 4.18 p99
- d) “A single seed of Kama (Desire) if it gets stuck in the soil of the heart, is very difficult to dislodge. The thinnest shower of rain, a slight change in circumstance which promises to be favorable, will suddenly make it sprout and spread its tentacles. Kama can be suppressed and mastered only by Rama (attachment to God) and Prema (Love for all beings, prompting sacrifice of joys and comforts for others). Without a hold on Rama and Prema, Kama will upset your faith in standards of morality and righteousness.” 11.11 p63
- e) “Individual likes and dislikes, prejudices and predilections are exaggerated into poisonous fumes of hatred and envy; so, love, faith, enthusiasm, co-operation, are unable to raise their heads. The task of providing health, education and happiness to the villagers is severely curtailed thereby.” 10.11 p72

- f) “Reduce your wants; minimize your desires. All these material knick-knacks are short-lived.” 2.23 p125
- g) “What is the root of worry? Wants; and the efforts to fulfill them; and the fear of not succeeding to the extent desired. Reduce wants and you reduce worry.” 5.2 p13

2) Worldly Desires (“... no illness worse than desire....”)

- a) “When man neglects the Divine aspect of his nature and fails to pursue the spiritual discipline that ensures the awareness of the omnipresent and omnipotent OM, he falls prey to the impulses and instincts dominated by the ego and develops faith in material gains.” 14.9 p58
- b) “Desire is the lust for physical pleasure, for power, for wealth, and for scholarship. And when foiled in these lustful desires, anger results.” 13.26 p149
- c) “You have meditated too long on riches, status, salary, children, relatives, fame and the standard of living.” 4.1 p4
- d) “Now what exactly is yours? To which were you attached so deeply? The house, the fields, the money, the pass book? To none of these things. You were attached to prestige, comfort, show, greed: things that arose in your mind as desire, as urges; to your own ego, basically.” 6.11 p60
- e) “It does not become a Yogi to have Raga (affection) he must be free from favourites, fancies and fondness. Once you attach yourself to some person or habit or mannerism, it will be difficult for you to shake them off.” 5.44 p244
- f) “Do not get too fond of any one or any thing.” 9.9 p45
- g) “There is no illness worse than desire; no foe fiercer than attachment....” 11.29 p165
- h) “Do not bind yourself further by seeking the fruit of Karma; offer the Karma at the Feet of God; let it glorify Him; let it further His Splendour.” 6.10 p55

3) Worldly Desires (“Do not run after fashion and public approval....”)

- a) “Another fatal weakness is ‘dambha,’ conceit, egoism, pride, the desire to be talked about, to be praised; people take delight in tom-tomming their achievements and capacities. This makes them ludicrous and pitiable. They want that their names and deeds should appear in the daily papers in big bold letters, as big as My head of hair!” 4.31 p179
- b) “If you are attracted when people praise you or repelled when they defame you, you become a puppet in their hands.” 5.43 p240
- c) “Limit your desires to your capacity and even among them, have only those that will grant lasting joy. Do not run after fashion and public approval and strain your resources beyond repair.” 4.28 p159

- d) “... no place for hypocrisy and double-dealing in spiritual matters....”
 (“... there, you must walk along the straight and narrow path....”)

“You may talk in a big high-sounding style, but, you are judged, not by your tongue, but by your activity and attitude. There was a lady who attended a whole series of Bhagavatha discourses, and picked up a few cliches. She became too lazy to draw water and slept on till a late hour. When her husband reprimanded her, she quoted a sloka which said that one has in oneself all the holy rivers, Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswathi, as the Ida, Pingala and Sushumna nadis! The husband was astounded at her impudence and pseudospiritual pose. He contrived to feed her on highly salted stuff and he removed all the water pots and jugs from the house. When she suffered from acute thirst, and called out for water desperately, he quoted the same sloka and wanted her to draw from the Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswathi within her! You have no place for hypocrisy and double-dealing in spiritual matters; there, you must walk along the straight and narrow path, with Truth and Love as your guides and companions.”

5.34 p191

- e) “The desire to please others, to win their esteem, or to create in their minds a false picture of yourselves should not arise and grow in your minds.”
10.34 p221
- f) “I have no need to please others and to earn approval or appreciation. For, I and you are not distinct entities.... I am the current that flows into every bulb and illumines it.... Don’t be misled into doubt and distress. Dogs may bark and jackals howl; but Truth moves majestically forward.”
11.43 p255
- g) “... Blessedness can be conferred only by the Divine Source; it can not be acquired from worldly achievements and triumphs.”
15.38 p211
- h) “Do not get entangled in the vain hubbub of the world; the treatment for those who suffer from the aftereffects of that is silence and meditation.”
2.4 p16

4) Pride (“... conceit... makes man forget God who is the inner motivator”)

- a) “Many students develop this pest called pride, for, they have physical charm, educational attainments and monetary resources, but they must be vigilant enough to eradicate it soon.”
15.20 p112
- b) “It is when cleverness increases and chokes sincerity and straightforwardness in spiritual matters and in the relationship between God and Man that the Avathar comes.... cleverness degenerates into conceit, and that makes man forget God who is the inner motivator.”
6.17 p90
- c) “Avoid cleverness and pompous scholarship in the process of spiritual discipline. Verbal jugglery is an unprofitable pastime.”
6.42 p209

- d) “I cannot be deceived by mere playacting. Folding of arms and shedding tears will not make Me take you as a Bhaktha. If you try devious paths pretending to be what you genuinely are not, the punishment will be greater in order to cure you of that trait also.” 2.46 p262
- e) “The fault is: identification with the body. The body is but a dwelling place, a vehicle, an encasement. See yourself as a resident in it and most of your grief will disappear. You will become less ego-centric for, you will then feel kinship with others, who are residents in those other bodies.” 6.5 p23

f) God is the Doer
 (“Faith in this fact is the key to Peace and Joy”)

“No one can succeed in any venture without Divine Grace. It is God’s plan that is being worked out through man but, man prides himself that he has worked for it.

“That reminds me of a story. A poor simple villager made his first rail journey. He purchased a ticket and entered a compartment; he found it occupied already by a few passengers who had kept their boxes, bundles, and odd items of luggage on the racks or under the benches on which they sat. They were unconcerned with the extra effort that the engine would have to make to drag along those boxes and bundles. How cruel of them, the villager thought. The engine has to pull along their weights, and now they are imposing on the train, this additional burden too. He for one was not going to inflict this extra trouble on the poor thing; so he kept his box on his shoulder and his bundle on his head. He believed that he was carrying his box and bundle along, and not the engine.

“Most people behave in the same silly fashion, ignoring the fact that God is All; man is but an instrument in His hands, for the execution of His Plan. Faith in this fact is the key to Peace and Joy.” 12.50 p274-275

- g) “When man grows in physical strength, economic power, mental alacrity, intellectual scholarship and political authority and does not grow in spiritual riches, he becomes a danger to society and a calamity to himself..... A-suras have another name in Sanskrit-- Nakhancharas, those who move about in the dark. This is a fair description of their pathetic condition. They have no light to guide them; they do not recognize that they are in the dark; they do not call out for light; they are unaware of the Light.” 12.19 p91

- h) "... Do not enter the objective world (prakrithi) in the hope of realizing the Atma: enter the objective world, after becoming aware of the Atma; for, then you see Nature in a new light and your very life becomes a long festival of Love." 12.29 p158-159

5) Irreverence ("Do not waste the hours in irrelevance and irreverence")

- a) "Act and then advise; practice first, precept second. Unless you yourself avoid the evil habits, and the undesirable practices, don't talk against them." 11.34 p203
- b) "Let your mind dwell on elevating thoughts; do not waste a single moment of your waking time in idle gossip or vain boasting or demeaning recreations." 4.2 p15
- c) "Make the most profitable use of this present period of your lives. Do not waste the hours in irrelevance and irreverence. Do not indulge in the condemnation of others or in self-condemnation." 15.29 p158
- d) "Some people cannot tolerate glory in others; some are filled with the venom of envy; some are demonic in nature and cannot tolerate holiness and divinity; some are perverted by disappointment and cast the blame on God; such people will indulge in abuse. If you associate with such people and their followers, you will only be contaminating your minds." 12.2 p3
- e) "Do not laugh at others or take delight in insulting them or in carrying tales demeaning them. There is no more heinous sin than hurting the feelings of others." 13.4 p20
- f) "Do not seek to exercise authority over others; seek rather to discover chances to be useful to them. When one neglects his duties, the positions of authority start causing headaches. Be a servant; a servant of God-- then, all strength and joy will be added unto you. Try to be a master; then, you will arouse envy, hatred, anger, and greed in everyone around you." 8.44 p235
- g) "Remember, with each act of Love and Service, you are nearing the Divine Presence; with each act of hate and grab, you are moving farther and farther away." 12.49 p268

6) The Ego ("You congregate here... with a load of wishes in your heart...")

- a) "Knowledge can never ripen into wisdom so long as the ego persists in craving for results which can satisfy desire." 15.22 p122

- b) “You congregate here in the Nilayam verandah, seeking personal interview with Me, with a load of wishes in your heart, wishes that you want Me to fulfill. Why carry all the load? Carry only one load, the desire to win the Grace of God; He will confer what is best for you. Leave the rest to Him.”

5.2 p13

c) The pilgrimage to God
 (“... pour the water out...”)

“Among the Parsis, there is a story, about a Guru and a pupil. The pupil prayed that he may be given some advice to make the pilgrimage to God easier and faster. The Guru sat silent for a while and then, told him, ‘Go, Light that Lamp.’ The pupil tried his best, but he could not light it. It was filled with water, not oil. So, the guru asked him to pour the water out, squeeze the water from the wick, dry the wick, wipe the lamp clean, fill it with oil and then light it. The water is ‘desire’, the Sun that can dry the wick is ‘renunciation’, and the flame of the lamp is ‘Wisdom’. The Guru said, ‘This teaching is enough for you. You can go; may God bless you.’

“Fill your mind with the desire to see God, be with Him, Praise Him, glorify Him, and taste the Glory of His Majesty.”

7.39 p201

7) The Ego (“... give up desire and offer Siva the ashes of its destruction...”)

- a) “Desire creates a mirage where there was none before... it clothes things with desirability... Seva is the best Sadhana for eliminating the nefarious pull of the mind towards desires.” 10.23 p134
- b) “The mainspring of all these faults is egoism, the belief that the little self has to be satisfied at all costs.” 14.42 p237
- c) “You say you are going to Bangalore, but you have boarded the train that goes in the opposite direction towards Guntakal. Ascertain clearly whether the train is the right one and then board it.... the best course is to pray to the God within for illumination and guidance. Then you will get guidance without fail.” 6.42 p212
- d) “If Mathi is reformed, that is to say, if one’s impulses are transmuted, then one’s matha (religion) is praiseworthy. Otherwise, if one obeys the whims of an untutored mind, his ‘religion’ is bound to be a source of evil.” 5.47 p259

- e) "... each act of service is a flower placed at the feet of the Lord, and that, if the act is tainted with ego, it is as if the flower is infested with slimy insect pests! Who will contaminate the Feet with such foul offering? Have no egotism while you serve the people of your district. Be guides in their spiritual struggle. Nourish faith in God in the area; upon that faith, you can build any type of spiritual organization." 11.16 p91

8) The Ego ("... the mission of crucifying the ego on the cross of compassion....")

- a) "This birth has been undertaken by you for this very mission: the mission of crucifying the ego on the cross of compassion." 11.5 p29
- b) "You are happy you have come on pilgrimage here; but let Me tell you one thing, unless you control the stream of desire that springs in the mind, this is just wasted opportunity." 5.10 p63
- c) "The celebration of His birthday has to be marked by your sacrificing at least a desire or two, and conquering at least the more disastrous urges of the ego." 11.54 p309
- d) "The Abhisheka with Vibhuti is done to inspire you to give up desire and offer Siva the ashes of its destruction, as the most valuable of all the articles you have earned." 12.27 p147
- e) "I want that you should all, when the Poorhanhuthi is offered into the fire, stand up and reverentially offer into the same fire every one of the Durgunas that you have: the faults, the failings, the temptations, the transgressions... search for these today, unearth them from their hidden places, bring them with you here tomorrow, nicely packed, and with one final heave of mental exertion, throw them in when the flames of Poornahuthi rise aloft." 2.46 p263
- f) "The vibhuthi which you smear on your forehead is intended to convey this basic spiritual lesson: that every thing will be reduced to ashes, including the brow that wears it." 6.33 p167
- c) "I shall look after the well-being of all who renounce the ego and take refuge in Me." 2.21 p108

9) The Ego ("I would advise you to become the Murali....")

- a) "I would advise you to become the Murali, for then the Lord will come to you, pick you up, put you to His lips and breathe through you and-- out of the hollowness of your heart due to the utter absense of egoism that you have developed-- he will create captivating music for all Creation to hear." 1.4 p25
- b) "Have no desire, empty your mind of all cravings, become hollow and straight-- become a flute-- and Krishna will breathe through you sweet melody to still the agitations of the world." 6.23 p120

c) “O Lucky Murali!”

(“... no feeling of ego left to obstruct the flow of his Prema...”)

“One day Krishna pretended to be fast asleep, with the Flute carelessly aside by His side. Radha approached the fortunate Flute and asked it in plaintive terms, ‘O Lucky Murali! tell me, how you earned this great good fortune. What was the vow you observed, the vigil you kept, the pilgrimage you accomplished? What was the mantra you recited, the idol you worshipped?’ The Flute got tongue through His Grace; ‘I rid myself of all sensual desire, of envy, greed, of ego, that is all. I had no feeling of ego left to obstruct the flow of His Prema through Me to all creation.’”

4.30 p174-175

E. When Relating with Others

(“When you travel towards God, whoever objects has to be bypassed”)

1) Introduction (“Do not damage the faith of any one, in virtue and divinity”)

- a) “No harsh word is to be used when referring to another’s faith, for, faith is a precious plant and harshness might make it wither.” 3.34 p197
- b) “No factious fight should mar the discipline. The Source or the Lord may be given any Name or pictured in any Form.... Foster your faith; do not disturb another’s Faith; why argue with another that Sai is supreme, when the fact is that worship of the Lord in any form, in any name, is worship of Sai?” 6.42 p209
- c) “Do not decry the servants of God; do not obstruct the charity of the generous; do not discourage the study of the scriptures-- even if you cannot positively promote any of these; that is the lesson taught in the land.” 5.12 p71
- d) “... if the child gives up its mother, how can it grow? Keep attached to God, so that you may grow. Do not clip off the sprouts of faith in your heart or in the hearts of others.” 2.51 p284
- e) “Do not damage the faith of any one, in virtue and divinity. Encourage others to have that faith be demonstrating in your own life that virtue is its own reward, that divinity is all-pervasive and all-powerful.” 5.50 p277

- 2) When there is Conflict (“... seek... ways of working together for the common good”)
- a) “Embodiments of Love! Do not seek to find differences between one person and another. Seek rather ways and means to strengthen the bonds of kinship, through Love.” 14.55 p312
 - b) “Be patient; humble; don’t rush to conclusions about others and their motives.” 5.28 p153
 - c) “The presence of God in every being makes every one holy; thinking low of others amounts to thinking low of God.” 6.32 p162
 - d) “Revere any Name; the reverence reaches me, for, I answer to all Names. Denigrate any individual; it affects me; for all individuals are expressions of My Will.” 11.24 p133
 - e) “If you do not like some one, do not mix with him; keep away. But, do not try to blacken his name, and relate stories about him to others.” 9.9 p46
 - f) “Do not seek arguments to keep away from others; seek rather ways of working together for the common good.” 5.58 p313
- 3) Relationships (“Do not fritter away your talents in profitless channels”)
- a) “When you meet each other, do not shout Hello! or Bye-bye, or some silly chatter. Let the moment of meeting be sanctified by the remembrance of God; say, Ram Ram, or Om, or Hari Om, or Sai Ram.” 10.14 p93
 - b) “... practice at least the very first steps in Sadhana, like silence, reciting the Name of God, reading of the scriptures etc. Avoid wasteful and harmful forms of recreation...” 5.52 p285
 - c) “Be kin with all your kind. Expand your sympathies, serve others who stand in need to the extent of your skill and resources. Do not fritter away your talents in profitless channels.” 4.3 p18
 - d) “Be careful, therefore, that the success you have won in the promotion of virtue, in the conquest of baneful habits and in the assumption of the regular disciplines, are not frittered away by trite company, loose talk, cynical criticism or lackadaisical effort.” 1.15 p88
 - e) “Those who drag you into pomp, pedantry, paltry entertainment and petty pranks are enemies, not friends. Friends cannot be got by social status, financial squandermania, outer scintillation and verbal assertions.” 12.18 p84
 - f) “It is just as when an acquaintance visits you, you welcome him with a hand shake and smiles which are largely artificial. But when an old friend drops in, you receive him with an informal hello and show him a seat with a twinkle in your eye and warmth in your heart. In the flood of formal praise, love is mostly absent.... in dealing with the personal God, love is the pre-eminent requisite.” 14.8 p55
 - g) “Do not cultivate close friendship with anybody unless you know that the motives on the other side are pure, unselfish, and spiritual.” 14.10 p61-62

4) Hypocrisy (“Do not ask others to reach a standard which you are loathe to climb up to!”)

- a) “You long to receive from others gratitude, love and respect; but, when the occasion arises for you to offer these you hesitate or refuse. This is wrong.”
12.23 p122
- b) “Do not ask others to reach a standard which you are loathe to climb up to!”
1.8 p48
- c) “You complain that others are disturbing your equanimity; but, you do not know that though your tongue does not speak, your thoughts can unsettle the equanimity of those around you.”
9.1 p3
- d) “If you cannot educate yourself to love your fellow man, how can you follow the path of dedication to God?”
12.5 p18

5) Concluding Comments-- When Relating with Others

(“Do not allow... superficial judgement to undermine your steadfastness”)

- a) “When you mix with volunteers and others who have no deep faith or sweet experience of the value of service, you may get caught up in conversation that might shake your conviction. Do not allow their superficial judgement to undermine your steadfastness. Keep away from such persons...” 13.18 p97-98
- b) “Of course, all beings and all things are Divine-- but, through intelligent analysis, you have to choose the beings and things that will help you and to avoid the beings and things that will hinder you. This is the way of Wisdom.”10.32 p195
- c) “When you travel towards God, whoever objects has to be bypassed...”
11.9 p55

F. Relating to The Mind (“The mind assumes the form of the objects with which it is attached”)

1) Introduction (“The root of all trouble is the uncontrolled ill-directed Mind”)

- a) “The root of all trouble is the uncontrolled ill-directed Mind.” 2.6 p22
- b) “... the mind is either disgusted or drawn towards the objects. This disturbs equanimity...”
7.12 p63
- c) “When I see a person helplessly enslaved to his mind, I get a picture of a dressed up doll squeaking and speaking through a talking disc attached and operated. He acts mechanically, as the strings are pulled by dominant Desire; he talks as directed by that master; he thinks on lines that Desire lays down. Therefore, there is a great deal of artificiality and insincerity.”
12.24 p124
- d) “Why smother your genuine talents under a self-imposed mask?” 4.9 p47
- e) “Deny yourselves many of the things your mind runs after and you will find that you become tough enough to bear both good fortune and bad.” 3.24 p139

f) “Steady perseverance alone will tame your mind; and it is only through a tamed mind that you can experience God.” 2.6 p24

2) About the Mind (“... the vicious game that the mind plays”)

- a) “What is required is awareness of the vicious game that the mind plays. It presents for your attention one source after another of temporary pleasure and does not allow any interval for you to weigh the pros and cons.” 13.8 p34
- b) “The mind has to be watched vigilantly, and warned against its own tricks. It is a clever actor, embroiling you in many a close adventure.... Catch it and inquire wherefrom it secured credentials to order you about; it will disappear in no time!” 12.54 p297
- c) “... the mind is only a bundle of desires....” 14.7 p42
- d) “Matter is but the perpetual communion and separation of particles. The human body has all its component cells replaced by new cells during every seven-year period of time.... So long as he (man) revels in the trivial and the temporary, he cannot be happy.” 14.37 p207
- e) “To get angry is but the effort of a moment; but, to get peace, to become unaffected by the ups and downs of life, is the result of years of training in Vedanta. It can be well established only on the basis of the belief that all material things which fall within the range of sensuous experience are fundamentally non-existent.” 3.5 p34-35
- f) “When the Chitravathis is out of control we call it a flood; when the waters have receded we call it a river. When desires, plans, wishes, and yearnings are out of control, we call it the ‘mind’; when they subside we call it ‘chitta’ (consciousness).” 11.46 p273
- g) “Detach yourselves from the senses; then, only can the Atma shine.... The mind must be withdrawn from its present comrades, the senses; it must be loyal to its real master, the Intellect or Buddhi.” 5.3 p18

3) “Three ways of calming the mercurial mind....”
 (“... to put an end to endless dialogue with the mind”)

“The very first sadhana one must adopt is the cultivation of inner silence, to put an end to endless dialogue with the mind. Let the mind rest for a while. Do not project on the mind irrelevant details and pollute it with fumes of envy and greed. Every idea we entertain, either good or bad, gets impressed on the mind, as on carbon paper. An element of weakness and unsteadiness is thus introduced in the mind. Keep the mind calm and clear. Do not agitate it every moment by your non-stop dialogue.

“There are three ways of calming the mercurial mind: 1) Regulated breathing (Pranayama). Inhale and Exhale in a measured manner, watching its symmetry and balance; that will diminish the eagerness of the inner tongue to wander into conversation. Finally it will give up the tendency, for good. 2) Engage yourselves in loving service of the diseased and distressed. Undertake to teach a few children who have no one to guide them. Let your thoughts and activities be self-less and sincere. The itch to communicate to the mind will be healed thereby. You will feel that one’s energies are more fruitfully engaged in serving one’s fellows than in talking and discussing with one’s wavering mind. 3) The third method of avoiding this type of conversation is Sadhana, spiritual exercise, some one or more of them, resorted to in earnest and with regularity. It can be repetition of the Name, recitation of manthra, chanting hymns or practice of Yogic postures. The Gayathri Manthra can well be resorted to for this purpose. It is certain to yield quick results.”

15.42 p237

4) Projection (“The mind projects on others its own defects and deficiencies”)

- a) “The mind projects on others its own defects and deficiencies. That is its deadliest effect on our progress. One has to overcome this nefarious tendency.” 10.10 p64
- b) “... the faults you see in others are but reflections of your own personality traits...” 1.11 p64
- c) “There are subtle invisible thought-forms that can pass from one person to another...” 2.15 p69

5) We are what we think (“The thoughts we indulge in shape our nature....”)

- a) “The thoughts we indulge in shape our nature...” 14.1 p3
- b) “The mind assumes the form of the objects with which it is attached. If it gets fixed on small things, it becomes small; if on grand things, it becomes grand. The camera takes a picture of whatever it is pointed at: so take care before you click. Discriminate before you develop attachment. If you have attachment towards wife and children, land and buildings, bank accounts and balances, when these decline, you will come to grief. Develop attachment towards the Universal and you too will grow in love and splendour.” 5.3 p20
- c) “Every thought leaves an impression on the mind, so be ever alert that contact with evil is avoided.” 13.24 p139

- d) “When we fix our thoughts on the evil that others do, our mind gets polluted by the evil. When, on the contrary, we fix our mind on the virtues or well-being of others, our mind is cleansed of wrong and entertains only good thoughts. No evil thought can penetrate the mind of a person wholly given to love and compassion.” 14.1 p2-3
- e) “It is better to substitute good thoughts for the bad and cleanse the mind of all evil by dwelling on righteous deeds and holy thoughts.” 4.1 p7

6) Cleansing the Mind with Ekaantha Bhakthi

(“Because of the flow of thoughts in the mind, the breathing also get affected....”)

“To be able to cleanse the mind of impure thoughts is the correct meaning of ‘Ekaantha’. This is a Sadhana to be practiced in a lonely atmosphere, in a quiet place free from noise or disturbance of any kind. The best time for this practice is from 3:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m., which is called ‘Brahmamuhurtha’. Selecting a particular time in this period, closing the door, contacting no one else, one should sit quietly and adjust the rate of inhaling and exhaling of breath. It is important that the pace of inhaling and exhaling must be the same. By gradual practice, the number of breathings per minute must be reduced from eight or ten a minute to two or one. You can take your own time; proceed gradually in the process of reduction of the number of times of inhaling and exhaling.

“Because of the flow of thoughts in the mind (Sankalpa and vikalpa) the breathing also gets affected and disturbed. To control the breath in this manner and direct it in the proper path, there is a very effective discipline that can be followed. The tip of the tongue must gently touch the rear of the teeth. When it is kept in this position, the thoughts in the mind become less and one can concentrate on the control of breath. When you control the Sankalpa and Vikalpa of mind and you detach yourself from thoughts of the body and things around you, you come to the stage when the mind is without thoughts and desires, when it can concentrate on God.

“In the state of Ekaantha Bhakthi the mind is dissolved and is in a still stage. God is every where in every one; when the mind is rid of all impurities, God’s presence alone is experienced by people with Ekaantha Bhakthi.” 15.40 p226-227

7) Concluding Comments-- Relating to The Mind

(“Place before it things more tasty and it will hanker only for those”)

- a) “The mind takes on the form of the desire that fills it.” 4.36 p215-216
- b) “The journey of the word and the voice are far more subtle and significant than the journeys to the moon or around the world in space.” 5.39 p219
- c) “The slightest twig of desire, if it falls on the mind, has to be immediately lifted out of the pure waters and thrown off.” 9.14 p77
- d) “Place before it things more tasty and it will hanker only for those.” 2.3 p13
- e) “Detach the mind from the temporary and attach it to the eternal.” 2.3 p11
- f) “... the greater yearning will dominate and deluge the lesser.” 7.20 p119
- g) “Many things emerge from the mind, when churned; but, the wise wait patiently for the appearance of the guarantor of Immortality, and seize upon it with avidity.” 5.1 p2
- h) “Pour the mind into the crucible of Sadhana and melt it so that you can mould God thereby; then every atom of the mind will become an atom Divine.” 6.34 p171

G. Concluding Comments-- What to Avoid

(“Repent for the errors that you commit and decide never to repeat them....”)

1) (“Test every gesture, every mannerism, every whim of yours, on this touchstone: Will this win the approval of Baba?”)

- a) “... you gravitate to the level to which your deeds drag or lift.” 2.39 p228
- b) “I want each of you to grow into strong, steady, straight persons. Your eyes should not seek evil sights; your ears should not seek evil tales; your tongue should not seek evil speech; your hands should not seek evil acts; your minds should not seek evil thoughts. Be pure, be full of love. Help those who are in worse condition, serve those who need your help.” 9.9 p50
- c) “When these bad traits are evident in others, you feel disgusted; how then can you tolerate them when they fasten themselves on you?” 14.55 p310
- d) “If you long for peace of mind, you must take up the spiritual discipline that will confer peace on you. If, instead, you still engage in old habits, how can peace be yours?” 13.26 p119
- e) “All ills are traceable to faulty living. And what is that traceable to? To ignorance of one’s real Nature, ignorance so deep-rooted that it affects thoughts, words, and deeds.” 3.1 p11
- f) “You stand at the square yonder and, wishing to come to Whitefield, board a bus that moves in the opposite direction and takes you to Hoskote. Is that the sign of an intelligent man?” 13.26 p149
- g) “All desires that do not subserve the one supreme need for liberation are to be given up as beneath the dignity of man.” 6.19 p98

h) "... a Good Boy!"
("... he corrected himself immediately")

"Test every gesture, every mannerism, every whim of yours, on this touchstone: Will this win the approval of Baba?"

"Here is a young man, whom I will call a good boy! Do you know why? Yesterday, when I moved among the thousands gathered in the pandal, he was standing-- a volunteer-- on the outer fringe. I shook my little finger at him. This morning, when I went round the same place, he was at the same post of duty... but, with his side burns removed! He knew what Baba disapproved, and he corrected himself immediately. I appreciate that. Sideburns is a side issue; there are more serious misdemeanours, which you know I do not encourage. Be free from every one of them. When you recognize me as the Dweller in your heart, these will fall off, and you will walk on the path of self-knowledge, self-confidence, self-satisfaction and self-realization." 11.5 p30

2) ("... [give] up all habits that interfere with the constant remembrance of God")

- a) "... you must dedicate your life anew to the discipline enjoined, and resolve to accept it and practice it to the utmost. This involves giving up all habits that interfere with the constant remembrance of God." 11.18 p98
- b) "Earning and spending, laughing and weeping, hurting and healing, and all the various acrobatics of daily life are but subsidiary to the adoration of God, the attainment of Atma." 9.1 p2
- c) "Man has become artificial, crooked, twisted out of his normal shape. He has left behind the simple natural ways and made his mind a lumber-room for ideas, worries, anxieties and terrors. He can live on very much less, with much greater joy for himself and others. If only he remembers that he is a treasure chest with the Divine Spark in it, he will be more loving and more useful." 8.8 p34
- d) "Detach yourself from all that keeps you away from God." 6.28 p143
- e) "Life is a continuous series of sacrifices of the lower for the sake of the higher, of the tiny in favor of the vast." 13.34 p199
- f) "It takes a long time and systematic Sadhana to clear the field of all those growths...." 4.32 p190
- g) "Know most things are of no lasting value and can therefore be brushed aside.... Use your discrimination to discover which things are lumber, and which are treasure." 10.13 p84
- h) "When desire disappears or is concentrated on God, Intelligence is self-luminous, it shines in its pristine splendour, and that splendour reveals the God within-- and without." 9.8 p40

- 3) (“... great days are coming; let not your sloth... deprive you of the chance”)
- a) “Above all, try to win Grace by reforming your habits, reducing your desires, and refining your higher nature. One step makes the next one easier; that is the excellence of the spiritual journey.” 5.35 p197
 - b) “Above all, you must take every step in Sadhana or in Samsaara, only after deep deliberation and satisfying yourself that it will be for your good.” 4.4 p24
 - c) “Repent for the errors that you commit and decide never to repeat them; pray for strength to carry out your resolutions.” 4.34 p205
 - d) “Be pure in word and deed, and keep impure thoughts away. I am in every one of you and so I become aware of your slightest wave of thought.” 9.19 p105
 - e) “... great days are coming; let not your sloth stand across and deprive you of the chance.” 2.17 p87
 - f) “... let your tiny drops of love for things material merge with the stream of Love for God and be elevated.” 6.1 p5 (1st U.S. Edition)

II. More About Difficulties

(“It is My Sankalpa that you progress in spiritual development”)

A. Introduction (“... you have to pay the price”)

- 1) (“It is a transformation of inner nature, won by struggle with inner foes”)
 - a) “God is Love and can be reached and realized through Love. God is Truth and can be reached and realized through Truth. But, are you concentrating on the development of Love and Truth?” 13.2 p12
 - b) “... how far have you put into practice what you have heard from Me?” 2.21 p110
 - c) “You may see all kinds of attractive articles in a Departmental Store; they cannot be yours, merely for the asking. Only those articles for which you pay the price can be secured by you. Realization may be an attractive article for you to carry home with you; but, you have to pay the price.” 7.1 p2
 - d) “You cannot sit back, and expect the Incarnation to bring Peace and Joy into you. The Incarnation comes to warn, to guide, to awaken, to lay down the path, and shed the light of Love on it. But, man has to listen, learn and obey with hope and faith.” 11.54 p310
 - e) “You will all doubtless agree when I say that Ananda is your greatest need. But, you cannot order it from any shop. It has to be earned the hard way-- doing good deeds, moving in good company, desisting from evil, keeping the mind attached to the Glory of God.” 4.10 p54-55
 - f) “India has always stood forth on the side of virtuous character, maintained through vigilance, in perfect trim. Without that steady strong character, achievements like scholarship or siddhis or skill in yogic convolutions are like plastic fruits, deceptive imitations incapable of yielding joy.” 9.27 p146
 - g) “... the sweetness (the Jnana) cannot be injected from outside; it must grow from within. It is a transformation of inner nature, won by struggle with inner foes.” 3.2 p15
- 2) (“... to climb requires strength of will”)
 - a) “To fall is quite easy; to climb requires strength of will.” 15.36 p201
 - b) “Now, you complain of want of appetite for God. You have lost appetite because you have eaten unwholesome food, not because you have had a surfeit of good food. You have no knowledge of which food is wholesome, what are its components, etc. You believe that the unwholesome food you get, through the impure gateways of the sense, will keep you healthy! Learn this lesson from here and return, better equipped, to your places. If you fail to learn this, then you have wasted money and time, coming and staying here.” 5.4 p31-32

- c) “There is a vast gap between what you say and what you do, what you are capable of and what you accomplish.” 5.57 p310
- d) “Are you putting into practice at least one percent of what you read or recite?” 15.26 p140
- e) “At present, educated people are wanting in the grit necessary to act according to their convictions; they know a thing is right but lack the will to carry it through.” 12.44 p241
- f) “You are now able to attain concentration when you walk, talk, write or cycle along. But, you say you are helpless when it is a question of concentrating on God. Why have you to struggle to acquire it? The reason is: you have no yearning, no fond attachment, no Love towards God. But, carry on with the endeavour. By means of continuous culture, it is possible to acquire it.” 11.3 p16
- g) “I do not like people wasting the precious moments of their limited years of life in idle talk or vain pursuits. Nor do I like cowardly hesitation. Act; act with all your might and with all your mind; make full use of the skill, capacity, courage and confidence that you are endowed with. Then God will bless you.” 2.27 p145
- h) “The transformation must begin from this very moment.” 5.37 p209

B. Desires (“... the poison of worldly sensualism....”)

- 1) (“Uprooting the grass of desire is a long, laborious process”)
 - a) “... we cling to the belief that the outer world is the treasure-chest of peace and joy.” 14.33 p180
 - b) “Knowledge can never ripen into wisdom so long as the ego persists in craving for results which can satisfy desire.” 15.22 p122
 - c) “People come to me and declare that they desire only the chance to serve me but, in the very next breath, they pray that they may witness the wedding of their newly born granddaughter!” 10.28 p170
 - d) “You desire one thing in the morning; at noon, you change over to something else. That desire will not persist until evening. If your desire is fulfilled, you praise God and parade your devotion. But, if it does not prevail, you throw God overboard, and parade your unbelief!” 12.37 p207
 - e) “Uprooting the grass of desire is a long, laborious process.” 10.28 p170
 - f) “What is required is the awareness of the vicious game that the mind plays. It presents before the attention, one source after another of temporary pleasure; it does not allow any interval for you to weigh the pros and cons. When hunger for food is appeased, it holds before the eye the attraction of the film, it reminds the ear of the charm of music, and it makes the tongue water for the pleasant taste of something that it craves for. The wish becomes very soon the urge for action, the urge soon gathers strength and the yearning becomes uncontrollable. The burden of desires gradually becomes too heavy and man gets dispirited and sad.” 13.8 p34

- g) "... when the poison of worldly sensualism is there, worship-japam-dhyanam all will taste drab and dismal." 5.43 p241
 - h) "Happiness can be won only by proceeding towards God, not by following the urges of the senses." 12.5 p19
 - i) "Train the mind to turn towards the Intelligence for inspiration and guidance, not towards the senses for adventures and achievements." 13.8 p34
- 2) ("... real bondage... identifying himself with his body....")
- a) "The root cause of his failure is his identification of himself with his body and senses, and his belief that physical and sensual pleasure can give him the bliss which will appease his hunger." 14.43 p242-243
 - b) "How much struggle are you now going through for ensuring physical comfort! You have to struggle much more for ensuring mental peace and spiritual progress...." 12.41 p224
 - c) "Man mistakenly thinks that wealth, a family, etc. are his bondages and that by severing connections with them he will be able to sacrifice everything and become eligible to attain this total liberation. But these are not the real bondage of man. His real bondage is his ignorance in identifying himself with his body.... For cutting off this bondage, a purification of the heart is very necessary." 14.30 p170
 - d) "What can ten baths a day do to cleanse a person, when his mind is fouled by evil thoughts? What can the shaven head and the ochre clothes do to foster spirituality when his mind is riddled by desires and wants?" 15.4 p23
 - e) "... it is easy to do what is pleasant; but it is difficult to be engaged in what is beneficial." 5.5 p34
 - f) "The Lord is Prema, Love-- unsullied, inexhaustible, universal. He has no predilections or prejudices. You have no reason to fear Him; fear rather the tendencies in you that drag you into vice and sin." 7.33 p175
 - g) "The only method by which the delusion of desire can be destroyed is to dedicate all activities to God and engage in them in a spirit of worship, leaving the consequences to Him and ceasing to attach yourselves to them." 13.8 p35

C. Relating to Others (1) ("Do not pay heed to others who may ridicule you")

- 1) "When the community or the safe-guarding sustaining Society is rendered weak, the family too tends to disintegrate and the individual suffers." 12.3 p7
- 2) "Others, not motivated by the spiritual urge, might ridicule you, caricature your activities, and even put obstacles in your path. But do not lose grip over your courage or hate such persons. Do not yield to anger. Watch for the Divinity that is latent in every man; that will give you peace and fortitude." 14.13 p83

- 3) “Your own parents, brothers and sisters, wife and children, kith and kin, friends and favorites, countrymen and others might try to turn you aside by ridicule and threats. You might even develop dislike for God for putting obstacles in the way; atheistic ideas might sprout in you trying to scotch the faith....” 12.36 p200
- 4) “The very people who preach the message of Peace, who talk of the basic principle of child education, who harp on love, harmony and mutual love, and who elaborate on the principles of social progress and national uplift are themselves undermining these hopes by their example.” 13.7 p32-33
- 5) “Follow regular Sadhana in order to control the senses and the emotions. Do not pay heed to others who may ridicule you, for your changed way of life. They may point you to others and laugh, ‘Look at this man! He has become a great Sai Bhakta!’ ‘Look at him with his Japa and Bhajan!’ But have your vision steady and your Will, strong. Do not deviate; march straight on.” 10.34 p217
- 6) “When you travel towards God, whoever objects has to be bypassed....” 11.9 p55
- 7) “... control the vagaries of the mind and direct your emotions and desires along honourable healthy channels, braving even the ridicule of your so-called friends. That is real freedom, real success. If you reach that stage, then you become a seasoned driver and can be trusted with the wheel on any road and with any cargo, however precious. Then you will not cause harm either to yourself or to others. Then you deserve to become a leader.” 1.24 p150
- 8) “Do not get entangled in the vain hubbub of the world; the treatment for those who suffer from the after-effects of that is silence and meditation.... to get over the mental ills consequent on too-long brooding over worldly affairs, the Guru will advise you to have a long spell of Dhyana and Japa.” 2.4 p16

D. Different Faiths (“Prefer the meaning that elevates and you will always be right”)

- 1) (“Who can affirm that God is this or thus?”)
 - a) “Each religion defines God within the limits it demarcates and then claims to have grasped Him.... Who can affirm that God is this or thus?” 12.38 p209
 - b) “Adoration of God has to be through one name and one form; but, that should not limit your loyalty to that particular province only.” 10.14 p87
 - c) “... you must not limit God to any particular Name and Form. How can you fix a label on God and compel Him to conform to your specifications?” 12.16 p76
 - d) “When a religion wants to extend its influence it has to resort to vilification of other religions and exaggeration of its own excellence. Pomp and publicity become more important than practice and faith.” 13.23 p131
 - e) “Pushing your master’s name forward easily degenerates into tarnishing the name of other men’s Guru or God and this leads to defaming both master and disciple.” 5.16 p92

2) (“... Sai wants the votaries of each religion... to realize its validity by their own intense practice”)

- a) “... Sai wants the votaries of each religion to cultivate faith in its own excellence and realize its validity by their own intense practice. That is the Sai religion...” 13.23 p131
- b) “So, you may speak different languages or use different sound-signals and follow different habits of food and dress and even of worship and prayer. But, they are all, believe Me, instruments for your uplift and progress.” 3.38 p216-217
- c) “The Sai spirituality is the harmonious blending through love of all religions. Though some followers of other faiths feel that the Sai spirituality is contrary to theirs, we should not entertain similar feelings.” 14.40 p229
- d) “... in the spiritual path, each one has to move forward from where he already is, according to his own pace, in the light of the lamp which each one holds in his own hand.” 6.7 p37
- e) “Prefer the meaning that elevates and you will always be right.” 2.46 p261

E. Relating with Others (2) (“Inquire into the Will of God... regulate your life accordingly”)

1) (“Do not get caught in the sticky tangles of outer Nature”)

- a) “At the present time, when people meet, a curtain of envy, pride and misunderstanding intervenes between them, exaggerating the foibles of each into obstacles in the path of sympathy and brotherliness.” 9.32 p166
- b) “Factions and fighting emerge among the followers of the same family because they have not learned how to love.” 14.55 p312
- c) “... you observe a big portrait of Swami over the entrance of a house, as you walk along the road. You find that it is the house of a person, who is your relentless foe! But, do you revere the portrait any the less, because the owner of the house does not deserve your love? Of course, you love the portrait, you revere it, wherever it is. Is it not? So too, revere the Atma in every one; it is the God residing in each.” 7.5 p29
- d) “You must try to put up with difference of opinion and variety of temperaments, develop understanding and sympathy.” 10.3 p14
- e) “Drive away the divisive forces that keep man away from man, and prevent hearty co-operation and mutual help.” 12.5 p18
- f) “Why should you pay attention to his wrongs and vices? Your duty is to serve, not search for faults.” 7.5 p29
- g) “Of course, all beings and all things are Divine-- but, through intelligent analysis, you have to choose the beings and things that will help you and avoid the beings and things that will hinder you. This is the way of Wisdom.” 10.32 p195

h) “Inquire into the Will of God, discover the Commands of God, guess what will please him most, and regulate your life accordingly.... Do not get caught in the sticky tangles of outer Nature.” 10.2 p10

2) (“It is only as pilgrims on the Godward path that two can heartily agree....”)

a) “Discarding this perennial Ananda, man imagines the sensual pleasures to be Ananda, and he spends his life in fruitless pursuits.... He humiliates himself and crawls and cringes for favors from all and sundry.” 11.53 p301

b) “... the Bhaktha will communicate his troubles and problems only to his Lord; he will not humiliate himself by talking about them to all and sundry, for what can a man, who is as helpless as himself, do to relieve him?” 1.35 p224

c) “When in difficulty, pray for guidance before jumping in any direction. Men will give you advice only as far as their cleverness can reach; but the Lord who illumines dullness into intelligence will reveal to you the way out of the dilemma.” 2.34 p199-200

d) “When any difference of opinion crops up between you.... You have to reconcile such differences silently and with love, and place Seva in the forefront of your activities.” 15.32 p174

e) “It is only as pilgrims on the Godward path that two can heartily agree and lovingly co-operate.” 8.45 p212

F. Strengthening Sadhana (“... walk along the Path; every step will bring you near”)

1) (“You have to encounter various contrary gusts....”)

a) “There is no short cut to any laudable achievement.... Things that are gained with little or no effort are not worth exulting over.” 8.39 p211

b) “One step at a time and that well climbed, that is enough success to be satisfied with and to give you encouragement for the next one. Do not slide from the step you have got upon. Every step is a Victory to be cherished; every day wasted is a defeat to be ashamed of.” 2.4 p16

c) “Develop the quality of fortitude, the strength to resist the opinions of others unless you find them to be right, and the courage to bear criticism and face slander.” 14.46 p264-265

d) “You have to encounter various contrary gusts of passion, emotion, impulse, and intellectual doubt. Nevertheless, bear them bravely and overcome them through prayer and meditation.” 14.13 p80

e) “A train whistling past in full speed over the rails drawn by a giant locomotive cannot be stopped by a million hands; but by merely pressing a button, the driver can bring it to a halt! Installing that button, that mechanism in your mind that rolls along behind the senses is the purpose of Sadhana; installing and operating it.” 11.6 p36

2) (“... yearn for God, and all lesser yearnings will disappear....”)

- a) “... yearn for God, and all lesser yearnings will disappear.... treat the obstacles as ineffective and futile, and have the goal alone in view.” 7.20 p119
- b) “When you yearn to reach God, you have to observe the guidelines He has marked out. You need not dwell on His name, or His lineaments all the time! That may not take you far. But, walk along the Path; every step will bring you near.” 11.54 p308
- c) “Your heart is your witness; question it, whether you have obeyed the directions of the Lord. A thousand persons may swear that you have not, but, if your conscience affirms that you have, you need not fear.” 7.5 p28

G. The Ego (“God alone is the source and spring of lasting happiness....”)

1) (“... man turns a deaf ear to the counsel....”)

- a) “This conquest of the ego is a very hard task; years of persistent effort are needed to get success in this endeavor. For getting a Degree you struggle in the University for a number of years, poring over books night and day; how much more difficult is this examination, success in which guarantees lasting happiness....” 5.20 p112
- b) “People utter, with apparent faith, ‘Krishna-- Krishna-- Krishna,’ but, they never give up Thrishna (thirst) for the worldly goods of fame.” 7.25 p142
- c) “It is because your aims are worldly, (and) your ideals-- material success, fame and authority over others-- that you breed discord and doubt among the members.” 9.34 p179
- d) “Prema will not well up, if sensual pleasure or personal pride invade the Mind.” 3.39 p223
- e) “Give a dog a morsel of food for two days in a row; it will serve you faithfully for long. Man, however, eats out of God’s hand for a whole lifetime and yet has no gratitude in his heart. He behaves worse than (a) worm.” 15.15 p83
- f) “Though all the sacred books, all the saints of all the lands and all the creeds, and all the teachers and preachers have been saying that God alone is the source and spring of lasting happiness, man turns a deaf ear to the counsel and goes his own blind way.” 12.32 p172
- g) “They cannot tolerate the splendour of the Divine to disturb the darkness they have learnt to like.” 7.26 p144

2) (“... the swelling of his head....”)

a) “Viswamithra was upset that, in spite of years of asceticism, his great rival, Vasishtha addressed him only as Rajarshi, and not by the coveted appellation, Brahmarishi; so, he crouched stealthily behind the seat of Vasishtha one moonlight night, when he was teaching a group of disciples, determined to kill him with the sharp sword he had taken with him. He sat unseen amidst the bushes for a moment to listen to what Vasishtha was telling them. What was his surprise when he heard Vasishtha describing the charming moonlight and comparing it to the heart of Viswamithra, cool, bright, curative, heavenly, universal, all-pleasing! The sword fell from his grasp. He ran forward and prostrating at the feet of his rival, he held the feet. Vasishtha recognized Viswamithra and accosting him, ‘O Brahmirishi, rise up’, he lifted him on to his own seat. Vasishtha explained that he could not be styled Brahmishi, so long as the ego persisted in him. When the swelling of his head disappeared and he fell at the feet of his rival, he became entitled for the honour he no longer coveted, and so deserved.” 5.48 p264

3) (“Pour the egoistic desires... into the flames of dedication and devotion”)

- a) “When man neglects the Divine aspect of his nature and fails to pursue the spiritual discipline that ensures the awareness of the omnipresent and omnipotent Om, he falls prey to the impulses and instincts dominated by the ego and develops faith in material gains.” 14.9 p58
- b) “When you offer God a fraction of your wealth, you do it out of conceit that the wealth is yours....” 6.35 p175
- c) “It is His Will, and your only duty is to shape yourself into a fit instrument. To suppress the assertive ego, disciplines have been laid down in every religion, by every compiler of moral codes, by every educator and reformer of human morals.” 9.34 p175
- d) “If only you surrender your wish and will, your fancies and fantasies to God, He will lead you aright and give you peace and joy. You must not run after diverse ends and flitting pleasures. Leave everything to God; accept whatever happens as His Will.” 14.10 p64
- e) “Pour the egoistic desires and emotions, passions, impulses and acts into the flames of dedication and devotion.” 11.47 p278

4) (“How can you judge?.... Do your best and keep mum”)

- a) “Resign yourself into God’s hands; let Him give success or failure, what does it matter? He may be bent upon toughening you, or it may be for your good, in the long run. How can you judge? Who are you to judge? Why judge? Do your best and keep mum.” 3.30 p176
- b) “...he who can clarify the truth of God has never yet been born; nor will he be ever born.” 2.16 p72

- c) “Once you begin to practice the Githa, such ideas as ‘trying to exhibit your superior scholarship by propounding a new theory or meaning’ will vanish.”
2.10 p45

H. Tests (“... all jobs are His”)

1) (“... mere baits by which you have been brought here....”)

- a) “Many of you have come with problems of health or mental worry of some sort or other. They are mere baits by which you have been brought here, so that you may contact the Grace, and strengthen your faith in the Divine.” 5.11 p70
- b) “God is the guardian and as guardian, He has to warn, and punish to wean people away from harmful habits. If it is necessary, the guardian will resort to the infliction of pain too, as a curative and corrective.” 5.56 p306
- c) “Remember the distress and calamity that the saints underwent with enthusiastic welcome and be calm during every storm. People laughed at them and called them mad; but they knew that they were in the Grace Hospital of God, not the mental hospital of man. They had full faith in their destiny and so they had full faith in God...” 7.9 p50
- d) “... Empress Chandramathi and Damayanthi, who welcomed every disaster as but one more example of the loving interest that the Lord had in their progress towards His Feet.” 6.9 p44
- e) “When something you dislike happens to you, why don’t you take that also to be a sign of God’s Grace?” 3.30 p176
- f) “Take everything that happens to you as the Gift of Grace. Of course, on your part, you must act with all the skill and devotion you are capable of. Do this with as much sincerity as you worship God. Then, leave the result to the All-powerful, All-knowing, All-merciful God. Let whatever ensues ensue! Why do you hold yourself responsible? He prompted it, He got it done, through you; He will give whatever result He feels He must!” 11.18 p98

2) (“Rise up to the demands of the test....”)

- a) “Welcome the test, because thereafter you are awarded the certificate. It is to measure your progress that tests are imposed.” 2.32 p177-178
- b) “The Lord bestows a favour when He decides to test you, for He is impressed by your achievement and wants to put upon it the seal of His Approval. Rise up to the demands of the test, that is the way to please the Lord.” 2.32 p178
- c) “Hardships keep one always alert and in trim. They reveal hidden resources of skill and intelligence; they toughen fortitude and deepen the roots of faith.” 9.35 p184

- d) “Love God, though tribulation may be your lot; love Him though you are refused and rebuked; for, it is only in the crucible of travail that the metal is purified and cleared of blemish.” 10.14 p87
- e) “To run away from the place which you have been assigned is cowardice, it is foolish, it is fruitless.... You can be engaged in any profession, employed in any job-- for all professions are His, all jobs are His. He is the Universal Master, the Universal Provider.... be thankful for the toughening it gives your character... for the trial you are privileged to face.” 12.12 p53
- f) “... it is necessary to lay down certain tests and qualifications, certain broad guide-lines for those who stand forth as workers in this field. Standards and systematic self-examination are necessary at every stage for the success of every effort.” 7.17 p90
- g) “Those sadhaks, who protest and clamour when tests confront them, are only proclaiming themselves as unworthy of higher positions, as content to remain where they are.” 12.35 p189

3) (“... you have tied yourself up with this rock!”)

- a) “There was a monk near Haridwar who had given up since years both hearth and home and was living on alms; he used to heap all the food he collected on a flat rock that jutted out of the Ganga and used it as a plate from which he took his meal.
“One day, he came to his rock and found another monk sitting there, taking food! He got enraged at this trespass on his ‘property’. Then the new-comer said, ‘Alas! you have renounced all sense of ‘I and mine’; you have shaved your head, so that you may not be recognized by erstwhile companions; you yearn to be free from all bonds; but, you have tied yourself up with this rock! How can you swim across this Sea of Samsara with this Rock round your neck? You are leading a life of hypocrisy.’ That opened his eyes to the error.” 8.35 p192

4) (“... He is the sculptor”)

- a) “When the pure metal has been turned into an alloy, it has to be put into the crucible again.” 2.45 p256
- b) “God has no desire to prevent or postpone their spiritual progress; nor has He any apprehension that they might trouble Him if they succeed! He is eager to award them the victory they seek; that is the reason why He puts them through the obstacles.” 12.35 p189
- c) “No worship can succeed unless the heart is pure and the senses are mastered. Ganesa is the God who helps overcome obstacles; but, He will create obstacles when good endeavour is obstructed by bad influences; He will clear the path for the sincere Sadhaka.” 11.32 p191

- d) “Sorrow affects you because you feel you deserved joy and did not acquire it; but, there is one impartial distributor of joy and sorrow, who gives you what you need, rather than what you desire. You may need the tonic of tragedy to set you on the road to recovery.” 10.13 p83-84
- e) “Take the troubles that come to you as tests and opportunities to learn non-attachment.” 2.52 p288
- f) “Offer your entire self, your entire life, to Him; then your adoration will transform and transmute you so fast and completely that you and He can be merged into One.... You will be transformed as a rock is transformed by the sculptor.... In the process you will have to bear many a hammer stroke, many a chisel-wound, for He is the sculptor. He is but releasing you from petrification! Offer your heart to the Lord, let the rest of you suffer transformation at His hands.” 8.45 p244
- g) “These rules we are laying down might appear to some of you as knife-thrusts or hammer-strokes; but, they are meant to heal, and to weld. Bow to them and observe them in action sincerely-- your path will be soft and smooth, like a path strewn with floral petals. I bless you that you adhere to them and receive the benefits of the discipline and the devotion.” 11.35 p216

I. Time (“... there is a time-table for all this”)

1) (“They complain of lack of time....”)

- a) “They complain of lack of time, as if all their waking hours are now utilized for worthwhile purposes!” 5.29 p161
- b) “The steadiness they exhibit in the pursuit of worldly goods and worldly comfort they do not transfer to the pursuit of inner calm.” 5.29 p160-161
- c) “From the moment of waking until the moment when he lays himself down again to sleep, man is engaged in endless errands, unceasing turmoil, never-ending tangles, and boundless anxiety. And what does he gain therefrom? More confusion, more mental agitation.” 13.26 p148-149

2) (“Even the hardest heart can be softened....”)

- a) “Of course, the anxiety to get cured quickly is commendable; but there is a time-table for all this.” 2.17 p86
- b) “I sometimes act as if I keep you at a distance; that is done to reform you quicker. When a stretch of road is being repaired, I go by another detour and I do not use that bit of road for some time. The purpose is to let the repair works proceed more quickly so that I may use that road again.” 1.30 p191
- c) “Even a boulder will, through the action of sun and rain, heat and cold, disintegrate into mud and become food for a tree. Even the hardest heart can be softened so that the Divine can sprout therein.” 9.1 p7

3) (“Be happy that you have this chance of rebuilding yourselves....”)

- a) “... forget the past. It has already elapsed.” 14.2 p9
- b) “Do not entertain thoughts of despair or dejection.” 14.2 p9
- c) “The past is beyond recovery; those days are gone.” 8.16 p74
- d) “The present is the most important time for us. Hold on to truth and follow the right path now....” 14.2 p9
- e) “... tomorrow is coming towards you. Resolve to sanctify it with Love and Service and Sadhana.” 8.16 p74
- f) “Be happy that you have this chance of rebuilding yourselves....” 14.2 p9-10
- g) “The fact that you are alive this day is a blessing, for you can know of these ideals and the means by which you can realize them in your daily life.” 13.11 p53

J. Faith (1) (“The roots go deep and are out of sight”)

1) (“How can they know why a particular event takes place....?”)

- a) “... a large number of spiritual aspirants give up the ascent midway because they lose confidence in their true selves.... The first faint whisper of doubt disheartens them, and they slide back into a life of sensual satisfactions. Spiritual discipline alone can steel such people to forge ahead on the spiritual path.” 14.4 p22
- b) “When you come to me weighted with wants, prayers for boons and materialistic wishes, you stand the risk of losing faith and losing your moorings; for, that faith is frail. Develop the Love that asks for no return; build faith on that basis.” 11.29 p167
- c) “Among those who label themselves as theists (believers) 99 3/4 per hundred can be heard complaining, ‘I believe in God, but, He is making me miserable; that fellow is an unbeliever, but, the same God is heaping one joy after another on him’! Can this be devotion, dedication? Devotion, must be undeviating, whatever happens.” 10.30 p182
- d) “People do not understand the ways of God. How can they know why a particular event takes place at a particular time in a particular manner? He alone can know. But, people try to sit in judgement and talk ill, when for example, some one dies of illness at this place!.... Each has his own burden to carry and lay down. Do not therefore allow any circumstance to affect your faith in God, who is your strength and solace.” 7.7 p43

2) (“Darkness... will be destroyed only when a lamp is lit”)

- a) “Calamities must deepen your courage, enlarge your sympathy, broaden your outlook, and heighten your faith; your Sadhana must be intensified just when the weather is inclement.” 4.15 p86

- b) “When confronted by calamity, you must attach yourself to this Sadhana even more firmly, instead of losing faith in it and getting slack. The drug should not be given up when it is most needed. The pity is, when the first disappointment faces you, you lose courage and confidence and give up Rama or Krishna or Sai Baba.” 6.29 p147
- c) “Nothing ever happens without proper reason, however accidental or mysterious it might appear. The roots go deep and are out of sight.” 11.6 p37
- d) “Darkness will not flee, if you throw stones at it; nor will it disappear if you lay about it with a sword, or shoot it with a gun. It will be destroyed only when a lamp is lit.” 3.12 p73
- e) “Opposition, criticism, even downright condemnation are necessary to confirm, consolidate and promote real faith.” 9.26 p140

K. Karma (“... even the decrees of destiny can be overcome”)

- 1) “Stop a while and examine your habits and activities; analyze them, evaluate them on the touchstone or morality, truth, love and fortitude. Give up all that drags you down into evil, strengthen all that lifts you and takes you nearer to Me. Do not be disheartened that you have to suffer the consequences of what you have done.” 8.35 p193
- 2) “... each second is a fresh chance given you for training the mind, refining the intellect, purifying the emotions, strengthening the will, for getting confirmed in the conviction that you are the deathless Atma. Be thankful to the Lord that He gave you Time, as well as Karma to fill it with.” 4.1 p2
- 3) “Karma must not be felt as a burden, for that feeling is a sure sign, indicating that (which) is against the grain. No Karma which helps your progress will weigh heavily on you. It is only when you go counter to your innermost nature that you feel it a burden. A time comes when you look back on your achievement and sigh at the futility of it all. Entrust to the Lord-- before it is too late-- your mind, and let Him shape it as He likes.” 4.1 p5-6
- 4) “You may say that the burden of past acts and their inevitable consequences have to be borne; but, the Grace of the Lord can burn that burden in a flash; the revelation of reality will, in a flash, save you from that burden.” 5.26 p143-144
- 5) “The Ice-peak of Karma-consequence accumulated by you, will be reduced by the avalanches and glaciers caused by the warming effect of Nama-smarana.... the sun of God’s Glory, shining through the smarana will level the snow-peak to the ground.” 8.15 p68
- 6) “You might say that the Karma of previous birth has to be consumed in this birth and that no amount of Grace can save man from that. Evidently, some one has taught you to believe so. But I assure you, you need not suffer from Karma like that.... Grace can countermand all that; nothing can stand in its way... It is the Grace of the ‘Almighty,’ remember.” 4.38 p225-226
- 7) “If you win the Grace of the Lord, even the decrees of Destiny can be overcome.” 2.14 p65

L. Commitment (“Without concentrated effort, success can never be attained”)

1) (“You have to sow Love and grow Love....”)

- a) “You feel that you have nothing to give Him, and that you are poor and downtrodden.” 12.43 p234
- b) “From the self-same mind, many conflicting feelings emerge. Why? Love has not been nursed and grown therein. You have to sow Love and grow Love and destroy the weeds of fear and hatred that have spread over the world. Make the world the happy Home of Love.” 14.55 p312
- c) “Make your thoughts nobler and engage in some hard work. The more idle time you have at your disposal, the greater opportunities you have to stray away from thoughts of Seva, of Sadhana and of the Inner Truth.” 10.12 p76
- d) “People toil for years to maintain their families and bring up their children, and though they do not succeed as much as they hope or wish, they continue their efforts unabated. But in the effort to gain the grace of God, they do not evince even half the interest. They get dispirited when they do not see signs of grace after short spurts of spiritual discipline.” 13.26 p148
- e) “If your loyalty is to the family, you are a servant of the family; if it is to God, you are a servant of God.” 5.34 p189

2) (“Many people... are afraid of the truth about themselves and others”)

- a) “When the valuable years are frittered away in petty pleasure, flimsy gossip, feast and festivity, idleness and sleep, one becomes unfit to receive or retain spiritual knowledge....” 15.29 p153
- b) “Many people shy away from truth for they are afraid of facing the truth about themselves and others.” 14.4 p23
- c) “At noon, your hunger drags you from the shades of these trees to where food is waiting; nothing so powerful drags you to your shrine-room.” 2.34 p188
- d) “Our brain stores millions of thoughts. Among them only a few are really useful and valuable. As a result of this indiscriminate acquisition, concentration on any beneficial idea becomes difficult.” 15.29 p156
- e) “This is the reason why in past ages, sages left hearth and home and retired into forest hermitages and achieved Divine Grace. Without concentrated effort, success can never be attained.” 15.29 p153

3) (“Only the dedicated come by wisdom”)

- a) “Make the best use of your stay here. Do not treat this chance lightly. You come spending much money, and put yourselves to much trouble to reach here; but, you do not bloom as fragrant offerings at the Lord’s Feet by learning the Sadhana path.” 3.1 p10

- b) “‘Nayam atma balaheenena labhyah,’ the Atma cannot be won by the weak. That is the pronouncement of the Vedas.” 12.44 p242
- c) “Have you yearned, have you pined, have you wept for the Lord as Thyagaraja did, for example?... You might have wept; but who knows for what.... Were they tears shed out of fear or greed or pride, or because the Lord was not near?” 2.31 p163
- d) “You complain, ‘Swami has not softened towards me.’ Well; melt His heart, Yearn! Show Him the warmth of a repentant heart, of a sympathetic heart anxious to alleviate distress.” 8.33 p183
- e) “... if you are resolute in achieving your aims, objectives or desire, you should never give up your efforts till your objectives are achieved and you should not be swayed by all kinds of passing thoughts. Only then will you be a true devotee!” 14.58 p336
- f) “Only the dedicated come by wisdom.” 14.7 p50

M. “When you live the life of Sadhana....”
 (“... you will meet with opposition from various sources’)

“When you live the life of Sadhana, you will meet with opposition from various sources. But, do not attach any importance to such. First, your kith and kin will try to divert you into worldly pursuits. Krishna had his own maternal uncle as his inveterate foe! Rama had a stepmother who sought to exile him into the jungle! Do not be cowed down by (the) cynics or the critics, who may abound in the family. Then there is public opinion, which might decry the spiritual path and subject you to ridicule or worse. Sisupala, Jarasandha and the brood of traducers tried hard to smother the mission of the Lord, when he was here as Krishna. Another obstacle is from the worshippers of Names and Forms different from those which you have adopted as most appealing to you. People who are attached to one particular Name and Form, either through hereditary preference or mere fancy are prone to persecute those who adore other Names and Forms.” 9.35 p185

N. Faith (2) (“Don’t deny the validity of your own experience”)

- 1) “The faith in Divinity essential for any exercise to dwell upon Him, is absent. That faith can come only slowly, by association with the godly, by reading the lives and experiences of godly persons, and by gaining experience oneself.” 9.24 p128
- 2) “Don’t deny the validity of your own experience. Stand on your strength, be unmoved, either by adulation or denigration. Follow My lead: I am unaffected by either, I march on, alone, undeterred and of My own accord. I am My own Guide and Witness; have full faith in this.” 7.37 p193

- 3) “Faith in the Lord one moment; doubt about the consequence another moment-- that was his condition. Well, you are also in the same predicament. One day you feel ‘I must follow Baba’s Commands’, the next day, you start doubting, ‘Is it possible?’ That is why I am adjusting the conditions of your lives so that you can pull yourselves up according to My Orders; that is why I am granting you courage to develop Faith, unshakeable Faith.” 2.34 p194
- 4) “Man is but an instrument in God’s hands; his plans can win through only when they are in line with His. And, what are His plans? His commands? They are declared in the scriptures, which are revelations of His plan made to the purified intellects of saints.” 5.46 p256
- 5) “Simple faith in the words of the wise is more profitable than years of study and discussion.” 3.32 p189
- 6) “Above all, have the faith that Swami is with you, at all times and all places.” 10.10 p69

O. “... cultivated alone and in silence....”
 (“... the decisive lines of argument will... be provided”)

“When raindrops are soiled by the ground, they become undrinkable; that is the conviction of the Chataka. So too, the pure yearning for love, for service, for expansion, for expression, for fulfillment, is soiled by contact with selfish ends, with greed and envy, malice and hatred, lust and pride. It is soiled by one’s egoistic reaction to blame or praise, loss or gain. It is best that this yearning is treasured and cultivated alone and in silence, until it is strong enough to meet failure or success, with composure. Namasmarana, within the silence and solitude of your own heart, is very beneficial for this purpose. When questions arise, the answers too will be vouchsafed unto you; when doubts emerge, as they must in order to strengthen and deepen faith, the decisive lines of argument will also be provided.” 10.35 p229

P. Concluding Comments-- More About Difficulties
 (“... contact Me, and be with Me forever”)

- 1) (“One has to overcome a series of obstacles....”)
 - a) “Believing that the Body is All, and that there is no entity embodied in it-- this is Mistake No. 1. Ignoring or forgetting that there can be no wave without the ocean, nobody without the Atma, is Mistake No. 2.” 11.50 p291
 - b) “And, even if ten more worlds, say 24 in all, lend them their support, their falsehood will not be accepted or established as Truth. Truth can never be tarnished or turned into falsehood.” 10.35 p237

c) “This problem arises in every age-- the conflict between the letter and spirit-- the doctrines that is held to be holy, the various do’s and don’ts that have to be scrupulously followed, and the underlying Truth. In the Vedic Faith also, one can find the conflict between the upholders of ancient tradition and the promoters of deeper understanding.

“The best way to resolve the confusion and conflicts that hamper moral, ethical, material, technological and spiritual progress is for man to live as fully as man ought to, and rise to the height of the Divine, that is his Reality. That is the one eternal, universal teaching.... Thought, word, and deed must be coordinated. The sign of a holy person or Mahatma, is, ‘Manasyekam Vachasyekam Karmanekam’, ‘One mind, one word, one act.’”

14.60 p348

d) “We have to give up both types of contacts-- the repugnant and the pleasant, the separation and the union. Attach yourself to God, and the delusion of the world will automatically fall off.”

14.12 p77

e) “... surrender of the little i to the greater I is a hard process. One has to overcome a series of obstacles.... When you yearn to come to Puttaparthi, you gladly bear all the obstacles; but, when the yearning is absent, you magnify the difficulty.... perhaps you give up the idea, as beyond you! First, cultivate the yearning, foster it, then everything is easy.”

10.24 p149-150

f) “When you get, in spite of best efforts, ugly harmful ideas of hatred or anger, or animalism, you must infer that they are due to faults in food habits, or in the company you keep, either with friends or books or films or other forms of entertainment. Keep away from such and pray to God, your Guardian to save you from the Fall, towards which you are heading.”

10.23 p141

2) (“... whoever objects has to be bypassed”)

a) “You have a ticket for Calcutta but, you are travelling in the train headed for Bombay!”

3.41 p233

b) “You say you are going to Bangalore, but you have boarded the train that goes in the opposite direction towards Guntakal.”

6.42 p212

c) “You stand at the square yonder and, wishing to come to Whitefield, board a bus that moves in the opposite direction and takes you to Hoskote. Is that the sign of an intelligent man?”

13.26 p149

d) “... those who adore the low forces attain them; but, those who adore Me, attain Me.”

10.28 p171

e) “Such is the consequence of departing from Sathya even by a hair’s breadth.”

6.4 p18

f) “When you travel towards God, whoever objects has to be bypassed....”

11.9 p55

3) (“... the Grace of the Lord will smoothen your path”)

- a) “There is a road from each heart to the Source of all Joy, namely, God. Each one will come in his own good time, at his own pace, through his own inner urge, along the path that God will reveal to him as his own.” 4.3 p20
- b) “Just as the beginner learning the violin lapses easily into grinding out distressing sounds from the strings, the Sadhaka also grinds out discordant notes of discontent and grief.” 2.17 p84
- c) “You should not also yield to despair or become dejected. It is My Sankalpa that you progress in spiritual development.” 2.16 p78
- d) “What matters is the determination to climb, the resistance with which the sliding tendency is met, the yearning to rise, to progress, to conquer the lower impulses and instincts. If you have that, hidden springs of power will surge up within you; the Grace of the Lord will smoothen your path. Keep the ideal before you; march on.” 1.24 p150
- e) “God is so merciful that he will come ten steps towards you, if you but take one step towards Him.” 10.24 p151
- f) “If you make the slightest effort to progress along the path of liberation, the Lord will help you a hundred-fold.” 2.31 p172

4) (“... you can gain bliss the very day you decide on dedicated service”)

- a) “... you can gain bliss the very day you decide on dedicated service. Whether you get or do not get the comforts you desire, you should pay attention to the task for which you have come and cultivate the means for realizing the inner God.” 14.6 p40
- b) “Welcome pain and grief, so that you take both success and failure as hammer strokes to shape you into a sturdy Sadhaka.” 5.13 p79
- c) “There are some ultra-modern Sadhaks (!) who do not want to cross their thresholds, or spend a paisa, or move a muscle, but, who yet demand that Self-realization must drop lightly on their laps, from the Guru or from God, whom he should be able to persuade or manipulate!.... You may complain that God is hard and heartless, since He does not respond to prayer, give signs from His Pictures, speak from ‘nowhere’ in clear unambiguous terms, assuaging, assuring, advising-- but, let Me tell you, God is Love; Love is God.... When there is no response, infer that there is something wanting in the cry. Perhaps the cry is hollow, insincere, mere play acting, set to a pattern, addressed to some one alien to oneself, taken to be far away and distant, as a tyrant or taskmaster. Know that God is the One that is dearest and nearest to you, as dear and as near as your own heart and pray to Him; surely, His answer will be vouchsafed immediately.” 9.26 p140-141
- d) “So long as God is believed to be far away, in temples and holy places, Man will feel religion a burden and a hurdle.” 4.8 p41

- e) “It serves no purpose if you merely acknowledge that the Lord has come and do not yearn to benefit by the Advent.” 8.45 p244
- f) “The Ramayana teaches that, when a person is yearning for the precious goal of self-realization, all the forces of Nature and all Creation will help him and render all assistance.” 9.25 p134
- g) “God will serve you; He will save you and be by your side ever-- only you have to cultivate your character and polish your interior so that He might be reflected therein.” 7.2 p11

5) (“Give up and gain, that is the Divine Law”)

- a) “Many do not realize the joy that can be derived from unselfishness; they waste their years and their lives in the pursuit of selfish ends. They are so conceited that they do not revere parents, elders, the saints and the sages. They do not invoke the Grace of God through prayer.” 12.1 p2
- b) “It is due to your wayward mind that you are easily wafted away from Me by some silly persons’ irresponsible words.” 1.30 p191
- c) “How can one attached to the self turn towards the higher Self?” 15.29 p150
- d) “With a lump of salt on one’s tongue, how can any one relish the sweetness of honey or fruits?” 14.1 p3
- e) “You must discard all inferior sources of joy.” 5.33 p186
- f) “The iron weeps that the magnet does not draw it.... The magnet replies, ‘you are encrusted with rust, dust, and layers of mud; get rid of them and automatically, without any other ado, you can contact Me and be with Me forever.’” 12.14 p63-64
- g) “Detachment alone can lead one to the awareness of the immortal Self. That is the price one has to offer to receive the reward. Give up and gain, that is the Divine Law.” 15.29 p150
- h) “Above all, have the faith that Swami is with you, at all times and all places.” 10.10 p69

III. Signs of Grace

(“The more it is shared, the deeper it becomes....”)

A. Introduction (“... steady development towards the denouement....”)

- 1) “Ideals must become higher and grander. Desires must become more and more selfless and sublime. Attachment must be transmuted into nobler and subtler emotions. The story will be gripping only when there is steady development towards the denouement, isn’t it?” 8.35 p194
- 2) “Man caught up in the tangle of desire, craves for much fruit with little effort; the man who is detached from the temptations of the objective world craves for a little fruit, but, is prepared to undergo much effort for the same. Just a little sign of Grace endows him with immeasurable delight, Ananda.” 11.52 p299
- 3) “Is the intention pure, is it born out of Prema, is it based on Truth? Does it result in Santhi? If yes, Dharma is enshrined in that action or law, custom or conduct.” 2.44 p250
- 4) “He who discriminates well before engaging in any activity will naturally be righteous in conduct and behavior.” 13.29 p172
- 5) “Give ear to truth, things that give tranquillity. Then, your Sadhana will succeed.” 10.33 p210
- 6) “When you know the way, endeavour will become more effective. Wandering will be given up.” 8.41 p220
- 7) “Give joy to all. Love is the means to achieve this ideal. When love can bring even God nearer to you, how can it fail where man is involved?” 13.31 p185

B. “What exactly is implied by ‘spiritual?’”

(“... unification with the Divine....”)

“The word ‘spiritual’ is used often by aspirants and instructors. What exactly is implied by ‘spiritual’? Is devotional singing or congregational prayer spiritual? Or does it involve repeating the Lord’s name or meditation? Or does it denote religious rituals and ceremonies? Or does it extend to pilgrimages and holy places? No. These are only beneficial acts. Spiritual, in its real sense, relates to two progressive achievements or at least to sincere attempts towards those two achievements: elimination of the animal traits still clinging to man and unification with the Divine.” 14.27 p145

C. Leaving off worldly desires

(“Be free from the bondage of desire....”)

1) (“... bring... to Me all the poison in you; take from Me... Heaven Itself”)

- a) “The undue importance now attached to the satisfaction of sensual desires must diminish as the result of your association with sacred books and saintly personages.” 2.2 p6
- b) “Every step taken towards the Lord makes you shed bit by bit all attachment to the world.” 3.18 p109
- c) “Do not crave to do what you like, but train yourself to like what you do, or what you have to do. It is Sadhana, when you willingly undertake work that promotes your real welfare.” 10.10 p61
- d) ““You should not hear the ravings of a man who has lost his reason through sorrow; you must listen only to the commands of the King.”” 3.10 p65
- e) “Meditate of Siva, the God whose throat is blue as a result of the poison he drank; poison will then be powerless to harm you. I call upon you to bring and offer to Me all the poison in you; take from Me health, happiness, Heaven Itself.” 8.12 p51
- f) “When you have the Goal in view, wherever you are, it will fill you with genuine joy.” 10.10 p61

2) (“... become a flute... to still the agitations of the world”)

- a) “Be free from the bondage of desire....” 9.14 p77
- b) “Like the child which throws off its toys and starts crying, you too must realize the paltriness of the toys of fame and fortune and call out for the Mother. The child feels that all else is trash before the love of the Mother and the blessedness of Her Presence. One should not aspire for anything less.” 6.17 p89
- c) “Have no desire, empty your mind of all cravings, become hollow and straight-- become a flute and Krishna will breathe through you sweet melody to still the agitations of the world.” 6.23 p120
- d) “Pour the egoistic desires and emotions, passions, impulses and acts into the flames of dedication and devotion.” 11.47 p278
- e) “The first sign of spiritual life is Detachment, Vairagyam. If you have no Vairagyam, you are illiterate so far as spiritual scholarship is concerned. Vairagyam is the A B C of Sadhana.... Just a few minutes of thought will convince any one of the hollowness of earthly riches or fame or happiness.... Vairagyam must become strong enough to make you discard the bondage of the senses.” 3.23 p135-136
- f) “God is not drawn into desire; He has no wants; He is full, free and ever content. He has no aversions or attractions. He has no bonds of kith or kin.” 9.17 p90

D. Sadhana (“... develop love for all beings... and My Grace will reach you”)

1) (“Use the Temple of God only for holy thoughts, words, and deeds”)

- a) “It is impossible to escape from the consequences of one’s actions. The ancient teachings require you, therefore, to ‘prostrate before every activity that you do,’ praying that it may not bring harm to any one or to yourself.” 13.39 p227
- b) “Use the Temple of God only for holy thoughts, words, and deeds.” 13.27 p158
- c) “The sacred word is what saves man, man being but the mana or mind with which he can meditate on the sacred word.” 14.3 p17
- d) “You must realize that devotional singing, reflection on the name of God, and offerings at the lotus feet are not for pleasing or propitiating God, but for your own spiritual progress.” 14.1 p2
- e) “There are some who revel in what they call Sahasranamarchana or Laksharchna-- adoring me, pronouncing 1008 names or even a hundred thousand names! Calling out with sincere yearning once-- that is enough to win Grace.” 10.14 p93

2) (“Hold His Hand and He will pull you on to hard ground”)

- a) “If you develop love for all beings, in the faith that God resides in all, you may be anywhere else, but, your prayers would reach Me and My grace will reach you.” 5.50 p276-277
- b) “Now, people pray to God to relieve them from pain, grief and loss, to confer on them health, strength and wealth; but if you develop an intimate attachment to Him and make Him yours, then He will manage to give you all that you need.” 6.35 p175
- c) “Like a child who has lost his way, you can have joy only when you rejoin your mother.” 6.30 p154
- d) “Hold His Hand and He will pull you on to hard ground.” 3.21 p124

E. On the Path (“Whoever has the... determination to reach the goal will certainly succeed”)

1) (“... steady improvement in your habits and attitudes....”)

- a) “There must be a steady improvement in your habits and attitudes...” 3.6 p44
- b) “Life becomes worth living only when one has disciplined habits, concentration of mind, renunciation of sensual pleasures and faith in the Atma (the Self).” 10.32 p194
- c) “... rise to the demands made on nobler virtues by the Divinity latent in them” 3.2 p14

- d) “March on with your eyes on the goal. Do not worry about the past, its mistakes and its failure. Do not follow the whims and fancies of the mind any longer. They will fill the ear with praise or blame and drag you away from the spiritual path. Follow the call of the Divine arising from the hearts of all living beings. Serve others in an attitude of worship, not expecting something in return. Do not accept even gratitude, having dedicated all your acts to the indwelling God.” 14.9 p57-58
- e) “Whoever has the enthusiasm, the steadfastness, the determination to reach the goal will certainly succeed.” 2.31 p164
- f) “Keep steadily on, do not move forward two steps today and retrace them tomorrow. The ants, poor little weak things, they move one behind the other in an unbroken stream, conscious of the goal and of nothing else, overcoming obstacles that come in the way.” 10.14 p92

2) (“... seize every opportunity to improve... spiritual status”)

- a) “From now on decide that your words shall be soft and sweet, your acts beneficial to others, and your thoughts always about how to serve others who are weaker and less prosperous.” 13.26 p159
- b) “Bring something into your daily practice, as evidence of your having known the secret of the higher life, from Me. Show that you have greater brotherliness, speak less, with more sweetness and self-control, that you can bear defeat as well as victory with calm resignation.” 4.30 p176
- c) “Be what you profess to be; speak what you intend to do; utter what you have experienced, no more, no less.” 5.49 p267
- d) “God loves those who have the self-confidence and the courage of conviction and who seize every opportunity to improve their spiritual status.” 8.10 p46
- e) “... you have to be assured that it is natural for man too to raise himself up, through spiritual discipline, moral elevation, expansion of love and other means to become Narayana.” 12.45 p247

3) (“... concern for the welfare... of the society in which one lives”)

- a) “The moral life is the best prescription for joyful life.” 4.8 p41
- b) “Do what He likes, not what you like-- that is the way to win the Grace of God.” 11.2 p14
- c) “Make your lives simple; fill the daily tasks with love and mutual co-operation; be tolerant towards the errors and failing of others; look upon them with sympathy and understanding; be calm and without agitation, under all conditions. Then, you can be happy, and the country can be happy.” 10.8 p43

- d) “Speak softly, kindly; that is Dharma. Give generously, wisely; wipe the tear and assuage the sigh and groan; that is Dharma. Do not simply throw money at the needy; give with respect and reverence; give with grace. Give also with humility. Try to live with others harmoniously.” 5.23 p127
- e) “Subjective joy can be acquired by harmony at home, mutual cooperation among the members of the family and community, acts of service to others, and concern for the welfare and prosperity of the society in which one lives.” 13.11 p49
- 4) (“A good resolution... sets up a series of such thoughts...”)
- a) “In the corner of a few hearts at least a portion of what I advise may get stuck and from thence, it is bound to transform the daily lives, attitudes and emotions of the persons so affected.” 9.26 p142
- b) “Love is the seed, courage is the blossom and peace is the fruit, that the sages grew in the garden of their hearts.” 10.12 p75
- c) “A good resolution or Sankalpa sets up a series of such thoughts, each contributing its quota to the process of purification and strengthening.” 12.10 p39
- d) “The peace or distraction, calm or anxiety that one gets is the product of one’s thoughts and deeds.” 10.13 p79
- 5) (“... produce Love and export it to... people, in need of it”)
- a) “Man is neither (a) bit of clod, nor a bundle of flesh. He has in him the inexhaustible spring of Divine Bliss, Ananda.” 11.53 p300
- b) “... take the... Grace of the Lord and use it as a rope to churn the ocean; churn it, through Dhyana and Sadhana; then, you are able to acquire the Nectar-- the essence of Veda, of Spiritual Knowledge, of Spiritual Experience.” 5.20 p113
- c) “By means of Sadhana, it is possible to produce Love and export it to millions and millions of people, in need of it. The more it is shared the deeper it becomes, the sweeter its taste, and the vaster the joy.” 11.1 p4-5
- d) “A heart bubbling with bliss and a mind saturated with love may do any tiny bit of service, yet that will win much more Grace than huge projects undertaken in pride and pomp.” 14.13 p84
- e) “He cares more for the transformation of the heart into a reservoir of Love...” 14.59 p339
- f) “Self-confidence, confidence that you are the pure unlimited self, is the great reinforcement that religion can endow you with. When you establish this in your hearts, you can be entrusted with any type of responsibility, and any type of work.” 12.41 p223

F. In All Faiths (“... surest sign of man’s awareness... the bond of kinship with other men”)

1) (“... all are children of God and all are Divine”)

- a) “Merit is when you do good to another; sin is when you do evil to another. When you are fixed in this path, you will welcome all faiths and religions as kith and kin; all faiths attempt to train man along this path.” 9.22 p115
- b) “When you see in a house, on the walls of the shrine room, a picture of Mine, do you not feel a wave of reverence and kinship surging within you? You may not like him for any other reason, but his picture will bring him closer to you though the owner of the house may be your rival in the professional field. So, too know that every other person has in his heart of hearts a picture of the God you revere. Recognize it and reconcile your misunderstandings; close up all gaps and be brothers in pilgrimage, encouraging and inspiring each other along the arduous road.” 7.3 p14
- c) “When your neighbor prays to God, do you not feel kinship with him? Is he not asking in anguish for the same gifts, from the same Giver?” 8.24 p132
- d) “Mutual respect can be built on the faith that all are children of God and all are Divine. Then on that basis, there can be co-operation, and enthusiasm for work. Each will then do his best, knowing his duty and his responsibility.” 13.1 p5
- e) “It is only as pilgrims on the Godward path that two can heartily agree and lovingly co-operate.” 8.45 p242

2) (“Co-operation... guarantees security and stability....”)

- a) “... the basic truths of religion are not affected or tarnished by the evil that men practice or the competitive propaganda they indulge in.” 11.54 p307
- b) “When a sandalwood tree is felled by an axe, the axe edge too smells of sandal! That is the nature of the good; they bless even those who harm them or calumniate them.” 7.7 p42-43
- c) “When your teeth bite your tongue, you do not punish your teeth; both tongue and teeth are yours, and both are equally loved by you.” 11.40 p237
- d) “Combined effort is the natural mode of living. Co-operation among individuals grouped as society guarantees security and stability.... The surest sign of man’s awareness of his Divine Nature is the recognition by him of the bond of kinship with other men.” 15.39 p217

3) (“... the undercurrent of energizing power in all cases is love....”)

- a) “All faiths are inter-related and mutually indebted to each other for the principles they teach, and the disciplines they recommend..... All have Love as the Fundamental Discipline of the Mind, in order to chasten it and merge man with the Divine.” 10.34 p224

- b) “God may be referred to as Allah, prayer may be called namaz, priests may be known as kajis, scholars may be hailed as mullahs, the Bible may be in the form of the Holy Koran. But the undercurrent of energizing power in all cases is love, love of all beings towards all beings.” 13.23 p126
- c) “You have to outgrow the idol, picture and image; they are the kindergarten materials in spiritual schools; seek to know the Divine Energy, that is burdened with no Name and no Form. Rise higher into the empyrean heights of the Pure Attributeless Transcendent One.” 10.30 p184
- d) “Do not damage the faith of any one, in virtue and divinity. Encourage others to have that faith by demonstrating in your own life that virtue is its own reward, that divinity is all-pervasive and all-powerful.” 5.50 p277

G. Faith (“... follow Me. Then, certainly, My Divine Reality will be revealed to you”)

1) (“It all comes in time, through steady Sadhana”)

- a) “You have, each one, the tremendous Sakthi of the Atma in you. Some are able to draw upon it; others just know it is there; others are unaware of the methods of tapping it or even of its existence. It all comes in time, through steady Sadhana.” 2.19 p95
- b) “That faith can come only slowly, by association with the godly, by reading the lives and experiences of godly persons, and by gaining experience oneself.” 9.24 p128
- c) “A tree grows silently for years before it yields fruits.” 15.6 p33

2) (“... My Word will never fail....”)

- a) “Even when Divinity comes down as Avathar, man is unable to pierce the veil and revere the Divine.” 12.42 p228
- b) “Of course, it is only natural that doubt may arise in you on some occasions based on My form or My words or My action....” 10.35 p238
- c) “It is sheer audacity to say... that God has no power to grant Grace; nor is it a sign of intelligence to say that God has no Compassion in Him.” 12.18 p64
- d) “Those who see you here tomorrow may ask; since directions are not strictly followed, and since service is not sublimated into worship by these people, why is the badge given to them year after year? Well, when you continue repeating the lines and trying to sing them, some day, you may succeed in singing them well. Expecting that you will get to know things better and become more and more perfect as the days pass, I am encouraging you to learn, by practice. I do not give you up. This is a sign of My Grace.” 8.33 p181

- f) "I will take My Own Time to carry out My Plan so far as you are concerned....
But My Word will never fail; it must happen as I Will." 1.31 p198
- g) "Examine yourselves, purify the heart and fill it with Love towards all men and
God will be with you." 12.14 p64
- h) "... when you are eager to know My reality, you must observe in action my
teaching and follow Me. Then, certainly, My Divine Reality will be revealed
to you." 10.35 p238
- 3) ("It is the humility that matters....")
- a) "They can be called miracles that lead on to purification, which in turn urge one
on towards a life of service to society, and finally result in God-realization."
13.25 p145
- b) "... there is a limit to the capacity of man to control events. Beyond that, an
unseen hand takes over the wheel of events. You may call it destiny, another
may call it Providence and a third, God. Names do not matter. It is the
humility that matters, the wonder, the sense of awe that matters." 4.2 p13
- c) "Whatever you do, wherever you are, remember that I am with you, in you; that
will save you from conceit and error." 9.12 p65
- d) "Whoever may or may not watch you, I shall be with you, wherever you are, now
or later, here or elsewhere; so, be sincere...." 9.19 p103-104
- e) "Above all, have the faith that Swami is with you, at all times and all places."
10.10 p69
- 4) ("... the Inner Voice is the signal....")
- a) "If you secure the Grace of Madhava, you are reinforced with so much strength
that you can carry out even the most difficult tasks." 1.15 p88
- b) "... if sincere Sadhana is done, even the most difficult thing can be accomplished."
1.33 p207
- c) "So get the Lord on your side and draw upon His Grace for all your needs."
1.15 p88
- d) "The good that you do will guard you...." 12.23 p120
- e) "If we safeguard Dharma, Dharma in its turn will safeguard us...." 11.40 p236
- f) "Where there is Love, there will be Peace." 11.40 p236
- g) "In the environment of Prema, there will always be peace and harmony."
11.40 p237
- h) "When you win the Love of God, His compassion will flow unto you."
13.9 p41
- i) "The Grace of the Lord is as the Ocean: vast, limitless. By your Sadhana, your
Japam, Dhyanam and systematic cultivation of Virtue, this Grace is converted
into clouds of truth; and they rain on humanity as Prema showers, which
collect and flow as the flood of Ananda, back again into the Ocean-- the
Ocean of the Lord's Grace." 1.8 p46-47

- j) “Since God is in every heart, the Inner Voice is the signal that Dharma gives while approving or disapproving any line of action. The Dharma that you have to follow is indicated by that Voice.” 10.12 p77

5) “... the way Grace works”
 (“... she had a single myrobalan fruit....”)

“Sankaracharya stood before a house with his begging bowl. The old lady who lived there was struck by the effulgence on his face that betokened a realized soul; but she had nothing which she could drop in that bowl. She wrung her hands in despair; she cursed herself; she wondered why the distinguished mendicant had come to her door, instead of going to the doors of the affluent. Then she remembered she had a single myrobalan fruit, the last of a handful she had plucked from a tree in the jungle a few days before. When she felt thirsty, she used to eat a fruit. She brought it out and, with tears flowing in her wrinkled cheeks, she dropped it into the bowl. Sankaracharya was touched by her contribution; the Lord willed; a shower of golden myrobalans fell in the yard in front of her hut. She was placed above want, even without her asking for it. That is the way Grace works.” 7.33 p173-174

H. Concluding Comments-- Signs of Grace (“... My Birthday for you”)

- 1) (“The Divine alone persists unchanged....”)
- a) “The Atma in you is unaffected by desire or defeat or victory. They are passing clouds. The Sun is not concerned with their comings and goings.” 15.24 p131-132
 - b) “The Divine alone persists unchanged from the past, through the present into the future. When this flower blossoms in your heart it will reward you with eternal fragrance.” 15.25 p137
 - c) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p164
 - d) “Let Me ask you: what is the one thing that you crave for most? Grace, is it not?.... So long as your words and deeds are in conformity with Sathya and Dharma, so long as your words and deeds are sweetened by Prema and lightened by Santhi, you need have no worry; you have the Grace in ample measure.” 7.14 p70-71

- 2) (“Let all the days of living be a continuous offering of Love....”)
- a) “God is Love and can be won only through the cultivation and exercise of Love.... He yields Grace only when His commands are followed-- commands to love all, to serve all.” 9.12 p62
 - b) “Wear the invisible badge of a volunteer of God at all hours and in all places. Let all the days of living be a continuous offering of Love....” 9.12 p62
 - c) “The day when you resolve to practice My advice, to follow My directives, to translate My message into acts of service, and to engage in spiritual discipline-- that day is My birthday for you.” 13.19 p102
- 3) (“Love will be rewarded with love a thousand-fold”)
- a) “Before you experience the Divine in every being in the Universe and in every cell and atom, you have to experience It in yourselves.” 10.10 p66
 - b) “You can prove that there are still people who believe in truth, righteousness, peace, and love; that acts of loving service rendered in a spirit of humility and reverence are still making people happy; and that the day when the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God will shine bright and beautiful is dawning and drawing near.” 13.18 p93-94
 - c) “Earn by your efficiency and enthusiasm the right to play higher and higher roles-- that is the meaning and purpose of life.” 10.13 p84
 - d) “I want that each one of you must so transform yourself during this period that you will carry with you the atmosphere of the Prasanthi Nilayam wherever you go, for, you cannot live happily in any surrounding that is not fragrant with love and humility, discipline and control. You will naturally endeavour to make the place where you are and the men among whom you move, a bit more spiritual than before.” 5.54 p293
 - e) “Learn the skill of achieving and maintaining inner peace, the art of being ever aware of the Atma, as the inner Reality, and then you can safely gyrate in the world, as fast as you care.” 8.23 p121
 - f) “Love will be rewarded with Love a thousand-fold.” 14.8 p55
 - g) “God is the embodiment of compassion. He watches for a grain of goodness or humility so that He can reward it with tons of Grace.” 12.16 p74

Baba Himself

I. Baba Himself

(“Love is My highest miracle”)

A. Introduction (“... the Master of Creation....”)

- 1) “The Avathara-purusha... has come solely to save mankind, and so, He is aware of the pilgrim, the path and the goal. He is the Master of Creation and He is fully conscious of his power. He knows the past, the present and future of all. He leads and liberates.” 11.15 p88

B. The Name (“... Divine Mother and Father....”)

- 1) “Bhagavan means: Bha (effulgence) ga (manifestation) vaan (he who is capable)-- He who has the power to manifest Effulgence, Jyothi-- the Divine Jyothi... . He from whom this Created Universe has emerged and He who is intent on fostering it.” 15.6 p32
- 2) “Consider the meaning of the name, Sai Baba. *Sa* means ‘Divine’; *ai* or *ayi* means ‘mother’ and Baba means Father. The Name indicates the Divine Mother and Father.... Your physical parents exhibit Love with a dose of selfishness; but, this Sai ‘Mother and Father’ showers affection or reprimands, only for leading you towards victory in the struggle for self-realization.” 12.38 p212-213

C. His Nature (“... the full Divine Incarnation of Love....”)

- 1) (“... ‘all the Names and Forms ascribed by man to God,’ are manifest”)
 - a) “I affirm that this Sai Form is the form of all the various Names that man uses for the adoration of the Divine.” 8.19 p95-96
 - b) “This is a human form, in which every Divine Entity, every Divine Principle, that is to say, all the Names and Forms ascribed by man to God, are manifest.” 8.19 p99
- 2) (“I am the current that illumines all the various bulbs....”)
 - a) “When I know that I am the current that illumines all the various bulbs, I am indifferent to the bulbs, which you consider so important.” 8.19 p96
 - b) “Krishna was the embodiment of love, and His love had no bounds. How fortunate you are that you have today the same Krishna, the full Divine Incarnation of Love, moving among you!” 13.38 p222

- c) “Jesus was Love. Sathya Sai too is Love.... in this Presence, Jews are adoring that very Jesus.” 15.37 p209
- d) “Rama and Krishna and Sai Baba appear different because of the dress each has donned, but it is the Self-same Entity, believe Me.” 2.18 p92
- e) “I do not appreciate in the least, the distinction between the various appearances of Godhead, Sai, Rama, Krishna, etc. I do not proclaim that this is more important or that the other are less important.” 4.28 p161
- f) “So, I am teaching that no distinction should be made between the Name-- Rama, Krishna, Iswara, Sai-- for they are all My Names.” 8.19 p95-96
- 3) (“... all Names are Mine and all Forms are Mine”)
- a) “The Sai spirituality is the harmonious blending through love of all religions. Though some followers of other faiths feel that the Sai spirituality is contrary to theirs, we should not entertain similar feelings.” 14.40 p229
- b) “Do not be under the impression that I will be angry with you if you do not accept Me as (your) Dhyanarupam! I am not concerned at all; you have perfect freedom to select the Name and Form that gives you the necessary encouragement.” 1.5 p30
- c) “Remember, there is no Name I do not bear, there is no Form which is not Mine.” 2.50 p280
- d) “Along the lines already familiar to you, continue the worship of the God of your choice; then you will find, that you are coming nearer and nearer to Me; for, all Names are Mine and all Forms are Mine. There is no need to change, after you have seen Me and heard Me.” 5.22 p122
- 4) (“I am the Seed of all Beings....”)
- a) “I am the Seed of all Beings....” 12.16 p75
- b) “The One has lit the many; the One is shining in and through the many; the One is the many.... the One decided to be many, to enjoy its own manifoldness.... That is the Truth.” 12.44 p240
- c) “As for Me, My nature is distinct; I do not identify with anything.” 2.17 p81
- d) “Though Sai is involved in events conditioned by time and space, Sai is ever established in the Principle that is beyond both time and space.” 15.27 p145
- e) “This body might have a birthday, but I have no birth. You say I am fifty-four years old, but I have no age which can be counted.” 14.43 p248
- f) “My power is immeasurable; My truth is inexplicable, unfathomable. I am announcing this about Me, for, the need *has* arisen.” 12.38 p211

5) (“... the Formless Absolute individualizes Itself...”)

- a) “The Divinity that is Me has not been acquired or earned, nor has it been added or evinced after the lapse of some years in the middle of this life.” 13.25 p145
- b) “As the clouds form droplets and fall upon the fields which they choose to foster, the Formless Absolute individualizes Itself, assumes Form and comes down among Humanity to save and sustain.” 3.1 p3-4
- c) “Do not exaggerate the creation and the manifestation of the Linga; it is only the manifestation of an atom of My Majesty. In Me, who can create worlds, and fill the Universe, there are things more worthy of adoration; universal Love, the teaching of Dharma, the revival of the Vedas, the fostering of the good, the benediction on Sadhakas.” 8.8 p35
- d) “... when the sun rises in all its splendour, there is no need to draw the attention of the world to the event. This is the splendour of the sun. It will itself command attention. No one need be invited to notice it.” 10.35 p237
- e) “The Masters arrive in answer to man’s prayer, ‘Thamso maa jyothir gamaya’ (Lead us from darkness unto Light!)” 11.54 p310
- f) “Whenever there is a languishing of Dharma or righteousness and an upheaval of unrighteousness, I create Myself, for it is part of primal resolution or Sanakalpa to protect the spiritual structure of the Universe. I lay aside My formless essence and assume a name and a form suited to the purpose for which I come.” 7.13 p65

6) (“... the Prema... declares that I am Sai Baba”)

- a) “You will learn... that I am Prema Itself; that I give only one thing, Ananda, through that Prema. My task is to distribute Solace, Courage and Santhi. That is to say, My characteristics are the ancient authentic ones; only the Manifested Form is new.” 2.31 p165-166
- b) “Love knows no fear, no untruth, no anxiety, no grief. I am Love; I shower Love; I share Love...” 12.36 p203
- c) “You elaborate in your lectures the unique powers of Sai, the incidents that are described as ‘miracles’ in books written on Me by some persons. But, I request you not to attach importance to these. Do not exaggerate their significance; the most significant and important power is, let Me tell you, My Prema. I may turn the sky into earth, or earth into sky; but, that is not the sign of Divine Might. It is the Prema, the Sahana, effective, universal, ever-present, that is the unique sign.” 8.19 p98
- d) “You might consider what you call ‘miracles’ as the most direct sign of Divinity; but, the Prema that welcomes you all, that blesses all, that makes Me rush to the presence of the seekers, the suffering and the distressed in distant lands or wherever they are, that is the real sign! It is that which declares that I am Sai Baba.” 7.32 p169-170
- e) “I am the embodiment of Love...” 12.38 p213

7) (“... the love of a thousand mothers”)

- a) “It is the Compassion of the Avathar that prompts His every activity.” 10.23 p136
- b) “Some unfortunate people cannot believe the Reality of this love, the love of a thousand mothers. Those who cannot gauge the depth of a single mother’s affection for her child, how can they ever understand the possibility and the presence of the love of a thousand mothers?” 15.33 p182
- c) “Understand this: Each of you knows the Love of a single mother only. But My affection, My Love towards each one of you is that of a thousand Mothers! Do not deny yourself that affection....” 10.23 p142
- d) “... here in the Prasanthi Nilayam, no invitation has ever been printed and distributed on any occasion, asking people to come. No one has been specially requested to take part. It is Love, the invitations of the Heart to the heart, that has brought you in tens of thousands to this place.” 10.35 p237
- e) “I exhort every one to cultivate Prema, for I am Prema, and when you manifest Prema, you are only expressing Me, the Indweller of your Heart.” 12.33 p179

8) (“... putting a drop on the tongue should be enough....”)

- a) “You clamour for further experiences of My Divine Nature and ask that your faith might be strengthened thereby. To know the taste of sea-water, putting a drop on the tongue should be enough; there is no need to drink the whole lot.” 2.20 p101

D. Omnipresence (“There is only one God; He is omnipresent”)

1) (“I am present everywhere at all times....”)

- a) “There is only one God; He is omnipresent.” 11.54 p312
- b) “... He is the I in all beings.” 10.39 p259
- c) “I am in your heart all the time, whether you know it or not.” 11.14 p86
- d) “I am present everywhere at all times; My Will must prevail over every obstacle. I am aware of the past, present and future, of your innermost thoughts and carefully guarded secrets.” 10.30 p184
- e) “I am in every one of you and so, I become aware of your slightest wave of thought.” 9.19 p105
- f) “I am always aware of the future, the past as well as the present of every one of you.” 4.40 p239

2) (“Serving anyone is serving Me....”)

- a) “I declare that I am in every one, in every being.” 3.22 p133

- b) "I am part of you, a partner and partaker in all your efforts, inspiring and instructing, when you ask or need inspiration and instruction." 10.1 p2
- c) "When you love Me, you love all; for, you begin to feel and know and experience that I am in all." 11.15 p89
- d) "Above all, recognize this truth: Sai is in all. When you hate another, you are hating Sai; when you hate Sai, you are hating yourself." 5.56 p307
- e) "Even if you falter in the adoration of God, do not falter in the service of the living God, who has assumed human shape and is moving all around you in such large numbers and wearing such manifold costumes of apparel and speech!" 10.39 p264
- f) "Serving anyone is serving Me, for I am in all." 10.6 p30
- 3) ("Wherever you go, you will meet only Me")
- a) "I do not measure distance in miles or metres; I am with you, in you, beside you, ever; only you have to be aware of Me and make use of My Presence." 5.11 p68
- b) "You think that I pay attention only to those who sit in front, but, I see all and I am with all, wherever they may be. Only those who have been blessed will know, not the rest." 3.5 p39
- c) "The distance from Him to you is as much as the distance from you to Him." 12.35 p192-193
- d) "All places are equally near for Me and, if they turn away from good ways, all are equally far! For Me, distance is not to be measured by miles. A tank in another continent might be as near to me as a tank across the Chithravathi." 4.14 p81
- e) "When I direct you along a line of action, reflect on My Advice; you have full liberty to do so; in fact, I shall be happy if you do so; I do not like slavish obedience. If you feel that it will help you to reach the Goal, follow it; if not, go to some other place; but, let Me tell you one thing: Wherever you go, you meet only Me. I am everywhere." 4.4 p25
- 4) ("Every act that you dedicate to Me reaches Me")
- a) "Every act that you dedicate to Me reaches Me." 10.30 p188
- b) "... I have no geographical 'far' and 'near'; My 'far' and 'near' are not calculated in miles or yards. Nearness to Me is not acquired by physical nearness. You may be by My side-- yet, far; you may be far, far away-- yet, very near and dear. However far you are, if you but stick to Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, you are close to Me and I am close to you." 7.14 p71-72
- c) "Do not grieve that you are not able to come to Puttaparti to have Darsan. Offer me Namaskaram (the homage of prostration) wherever you are; it reaches me at the same time as it is offered." 10.30 p188

E. Our Common Heritage (“The same God shines in and through every one....”)

- 1) “My Name is Truth, I am the Truth, and since I am in every one of you, you too are everlasting Truth.” 11.14 p85
- 2) “... all individuals are expressions of My Will.” 11.24 p133
- 3) “The Divine principle that is in every one is like the electric current that illuminates the bulbs, before Me here, of different colours and different candle powers. The same God shines in and through every one, whatever be the creed, colour, tribe, or territory. The current animates and activates all bulbs; the Divine animates and activates all.” 8.22 p115
- 4) “This is the inner mystery of Incarnation. God incarnating in all!” 11.54 p312
- 5) “Yes. You too can become Divine; I have nothing that you too do not possess. It is latent in you, it is patent and potent here; that is the only difference!” 7.6 p35
- 6) “Sai Baba’s powers are such that they are not given to anybody else..... Each one’s power is within him; it is not possible to give such power to another person.” 13.6 p27
- 7) “Siva-Sakthi is in all, not only in Me; there is only the difference in power and capacity to manifest. The fire-fly has some power of illumination; it also emits light. We have the oil lamp, the electric bulb, the petromax lamp, the moon, the sun-- all emanate light; that is the common quality.” 3.17 p99

F. Omnipotence (“God can do anything....”)

- 1) (“The power of Sai is limitless....”)
 - a) “The power of Sai is limitless; It manifests for ever. All forms of ‘power’ are resident in this Sai palm.” 12.38 p210
 - b) “There can be no limit for Sai Sakthi, no hindrance, no opposition or obstacle. You may believe it or you may not, but Sai Sakthi can transform earth into sky, the sky into earth.” 10.35 p235
 - c) “Nothing can hold Me up or agitate Me or cast a shadow on Me in this Human Form; be certain of that.” 1.16 p93
 - d) “... I am active and busy all the twenty-four hours of the day.” 10.30 p185
 - e) “... I have never craved for a minute’s rest or sleep or relief.” 8.36 p195
 - f) “As a matter of fact, I am Premaswarupa. I do not need any rest in My efforts to give you Ananda.” 3.34 p199
- 2) (“... there is no need at all to doubt”)
 - a) “God can do anything....” 10.39 p262
 - b) “I can solve any problem however knotty.” 12.38 p212
 - c) “... there is no need at all to doubt. Sai Will must fructify at the specified time.” 15.27 p147

- d) “There is nothing that Divine Power cannot accomplish. It can transmute earth into sky and sky into earth. To doubt this is to prove that you are too weak to grasp the grandeur of the Universal.” 4.49 p286

G. He is Unattached (“... all have Me as their guardian and support”)

- 1) “I have no ego. I do not own any thing.” 15.33 p183
- 2) “I have no likes or dislikes.” 12.9 p37
- 3) “I have no special attachment, to any one; nor, any special aversion.” 8.6 p26
- 4) “I am unattached to any event or plan.” 3.34 p199
- 5) “Not today, but since the beginning, the thought that ‘I must have this or that’ has never arisen in me. It is not rising now. It will not arise at any time. Whatever thoughts arise in Me are only for the peace and welfare of the world, for the progress of youth, and for transforming ideal boys and girls who will lead others along the path.” 15.55 p317
- 6) “Divya Swaroopas, whether you believe it or not, I shall tell you one thing. There is not the slightest trace of self-interest in me. Whatever I do, whatever paths I pursue, everything is intended for the happiness of all, for the good of all and for the improvement of all. Not a single action of mine is undertaken for the satisfaction of My own personal desires. Desire is something alien to Me. All My wishes are only to promote the welfare of the World. ‘Lokassamasthaa Sukhino Bhavanthu’ is the only objective of Sai. (May all the world be happy.)” 14.58 p332-333
- 7) “Remember, all have Me as their guardian and support.” 8.33 p184

H. He is beyond understanding (“My Truth can never be fully grasped”)

- 1) (“... even if heaven and earth combine....”)
 - a) “Do not spend your time trying to understand Me; do not waste your time in the attempt.... It is beyond any one’s capacity to understand Me.” 12.53 p290-291
 - b) “Do not seek to measure Me or evaluate Me. I am beyond your understanding.” 3.22 p133
 - c) “It is beyond you to know how or why I create things in My Hand.” 2.20 p101
 - d) “... every act of Mine has its significance, which you cannot understand.” 3.17 p101
 - e) “It is impossible for any one to understand or explain the meaning and significance of Swami. There can be no possible means of approach to this manifestation, from the stage which you can attain. This is an Incarnation, an Embodiment, which is beyond any one’s comprehension.” 10.28 p170

- f) “In truth, you cannot understand the nature of My Reality either today, or even after a thousand years of steady austerity or ardent inquiry even if all mankind joins in that effort.” 8.19 p99
- g) “... even if heaven and earth combine, My truth can never be fully grasped.” 6.13 p72

2) (“The best you can do is get immersed in it”)

- a) “The ways of the Lord are inscrutable; your duty is to submit to them faithfully, thankfully and joyfully.” 2.32 p179
- b) “You need not waste time in trying to discover Me and My Nature. Understand what I teach, not ‘who is the teacher’ for I am beyond your intellect and your sakthi.” 1.19 p114
- c) “You should not construct a picture of God according to your needs and norms and then complain that God does not conform. God is all powerful, all knowing and all-pervading. How then can limits be prescribed for Him?... No one has the authority to lay down rules regulating God’s deeds.” 15.53 p309
- d) “Baba is beyond the keenest intellect, the sharpest brain.... So, do not try to delve into Me; develop faith and sraddha and derive Ananda through Prema. That is the utmost you can do; do that and benefit.” 2.2 p7-8
- e) “And lastly, about Myself. No one can understand my Mystery. The best you can do is to get immersed in it.” 1.11 p67
- f) “Be convinced of one truth about Me: Swami will never lay his hand on a task without proper reason, and without some profound effect that will flow therefrom.” 11.28 p162
- g) “... when a near and dear relationship is established, one can delve a little deeper into the Sai mystery. That is the highest achievement possible.” 13.21 p116

I. His Mission (“... I turn you towards the Divine....”)

1) (“... Love Itself”)

a) “Why should the Lord Himself incarnate?”

(“... the intensity of affection that the Lord has for good men is so great....”)

“You may ask, why should the Lord Himself incarnate? Why can He not set about the task of restoring Dharma, through the many minor gods He has at His command?

“This question was posed before the courtiers by Akbar himself, for, he laughed at the Hindu idea of the Formless adopting Form, and descending into the world, as an Avathar to save Dharma. Tansen asked for a week’s time to furnish the answer and got it granted by His Imperial Majesty.

“A few days later, when he was in a pleasure boat of the Emperor sailing across the lake with his family, Tansen cleverly threw overboard a doll made to look like the emperor’s little son, crying at the same time, ‘O, the Prince has fallen into the water!’ Hearing this, the emperor jumped into the lake to rescue his son!

“Tansen then disclosed that it was only a doll and that the son was safe. He allayed the anger of Akbar by explaining that he had perforce to enact this drama, in order to demonstrate the truth of the Hindu belief that God takes human form, Himself, to save Dharma, without commissioning some other entity to carry out that task. Dharma is as the son, God loves it so dearly. Akbar could have ordered one among the many personnel he had on board, to jump in and rescue his son; but, his affection was so great and the urgency so acute that the Emperor himself plunged into the lake, to pull out the ‘son’. The Decline in Dharma is so acute a tragedy; the intensity of affection that the Lord has for good men is so great, that He Himself comes.

“The Lord is Love Itself. He comes in human form so that you can talk to Him, move with Him, serve Him, adore Him, and achieve Him, so that you can recognize your kinship with Him.”

4.45 p262

2) (“... illumine the human heart with the Light Divine...”)

- a) “The meaning of Avatar is this: to save mankind, God, out of His Love, affection and compassion, comes down to the level of man and arouses the Divine Consciousness in man. He makes man aware of Him in him, when He finds him desperately searching outside himself for Him who is his very core.”
14.60 p344
- b) “Whenever A-santhi overwhelms the world, the Lord will incarnate in human form to establish the modes of earning Prasanthi and to re-educate the human community in the paths of Peace.”
4.27 p150
- c) “I come always for the sake of reviving Dharma, for tending the virtuous and ensuring them conditions congenial for progress.”
1.34 p218
- d) “I have come in order to repair the ancient highway leading man to God.”
2.36 p213
- e) “I have come to illumine the human heart with the Light Divine and to rid man of the delusion that drags him away from the path of Santhi, the perfect equanimity of Realization.”
1.16 p93

3) (“... so that all... might feel the thrill of His Companionship...”)

- a) “I came in response to the prayers of sages, saints and sadhakas for the restoration of Dharma.”
1.5 p27
- b) “The Lord comes as Avathar when He is anxiously awaited by saints and sages. Sadhus prayed-- and I have come.”
3.1 p9

- c) “The Lord had announced that He would come down for the restoration of Dharma and that He would assume human Form so that all might gather round Him and feel the thrill of His Companionship and Conversation. And the Lord has come, as announced.” 1.25 p154
- 4) (“... so that mankind can feel kinship...”)
- a) “... the Avathar has to come as man among men, and move as friend, well-wisher, kinsman, guide, teacher, healer and participant among men. He has come to restore Dharma...” 10.23 p137
- b) “The Lord too has to come in human form and move about among men, so that He could be listened to, contacted, loved, revered and obeyed. He has to speak the language of men and behave like human beings, as a member of the species. Otherwise, He would be either negated and neglected or feared and avoided.” 1.15 p90
- c) “Since I move about with you, eat like you, and talk with you, you are deluded into the belief that this is but an instance of common humanity. Be warned against this mistake.... any moment, My Divinity may be revealed to you; you have to be ready, prepared for that moment.” 8.19 p99
- d) “The Avathara behaves in a human way so that mankind can feel kinship, but, rises to super-human heights so that mankind can aspire to those heights...” 3.9 p60-61
- 5) (“... instructing all the recognize the common Divine Heritage...”)
- a) “I have come to light the Lamp of Love in your hearts, to see that it shines day by day with added lustre. I have not come to speak on behalf of any particular Dharma, like the Hindu Dharma. I have not come on any mission of publicity for any sect or creed or cause; nor have I come to collect followers for any doctrine. I have no plan to attract disciples or devotees into My fold or any fold. I have come to tell you of this Universal unitary faith, this Atmic principle, this Path of Love, this Dharma of Prema, this Duty of Love, this Obligation to Love.” 8.22 p118
- b) “For, this Sai has come in order to achieve the supreme task of uniting the entire mankind, as one family through the bond of brotherhood, of affirming and illumining the Atmic Reality of each being in order to reveal the Divine which is the Basis on which the entire Cosmos rests, and of instructing all to recognize the common Divine Heritage that binds man to man, so that man can rid himself of the animal, and rise into the Divine which is his goal.” 12.38 p213
- c) “When a religion wants to extend its influence it has to resort to vilification of other religions and exaggeration of its own excellence.... But Sai wants the votaries of each religion to cultivate faith in its own excellence and realize its validity by their own intense practice. That is the Sai religion, the religion that feeds and fosters all religions and emphasizes their common greatness.” 13.23 p131

- d) “The Life of Sai, the Message of Sai, the Ideals Sai holds forth, the Lesson that Sai teaches the world-- are all enshrined in one word, Love.” 14.55 p309
- e) “My teaching is prema, my message is prema, my activity is prema, my way of living is prema. There is nothing more precious than love...” 10.14 p89
- f) “... You become that which you feel. You can get the feeling for the Divine only if you have a taste of the Prema of the Divine. That is why the Avathar has come: to give you a taste of that Prema, so that the yearning for the Lord will be planted in your heart.” 2.26 p139
- 6) (“... repair broken hearts... and fading faith”)
- a) “It is to clear the path of spiritual progress of Man that the Avathar has come.” 1.21 p129
- b) “You cannot sit back, and expect the Incarnation to bring Peace and Joy. The Incarnation comes to warn, to guide, to awaken, to lay down the path, and shed the light of Love on it. But, man has to listen, learn and obey with hope and faith.” 11.54 p310
- c) “Every gesture, word and activity of mine, however casual it may appear, is motivated to move you towards the fulfillment of your lives, and endow you with the Ananda that your Atman is.” 11.11 p64
- d) “... every step in this Avathara is due to My own Sankalpa, not due to the prayer or petition of devotees. The devotees seldom know what is good for them.” 3.29 p170
- e) “Sai directs you to recognize the Atma as your closest kin, closer than the members of your family, your blood-relations and your dearest descendents. When this is done, you will never more stray from the path of Right, which alone can maintain that kinship.” 12.29 p158
- f) “I seek the gifts of truth, virtue, peace and love. I draw you to me and then re-form and re-shape you. I am a kind of smith who repairs broken leaky damaged hardware. I repair broken hearts and fragile minds, warped intellects, feeble resolutions and fading faith.” 5.43 p249
- 7) (“... one whom you can see... and treat with reverence....”)
- a) “I turn you towards the Divine, winning your confidence, your love, your submission, by being among you, as one of yourselves, one whom you can see, listen to, speak, touch and treat with reverence and devotion.” 10.30 p184
- b) “Train your minds to follow... the Divine path, of which I am revealing to you the trail.” 11.11 p64
- c) “An ounce of practice is worth more than a ton of preaching. That is why I declare ‘My Life is My Message.’” 13.8 p36

d) “You can observe Me and My activities; note how I adhere to righteousness, moral order, truth and universal compassion. That is what I desire you to learn from Me. Many of you plead for a ‘Message’ from me, to take to the Samithi of which you are members. Well. My Life is My Message.”

8.19 p94

8) (“... counsel, help... as friend and well-wisher to all....”)

a) “... I have to counsel, help, command, condemn and stand by, as friend and well-wisher to all, so that they may give up evil propensities and recognizing the straight path, tread it and reach the Goal.”

4.38 p224-225

b) “I shall engage myself in giving solace to the mentally and spiritually ill.”

10.6 p32

c) “... I must start meeting those of you who have brought huge loads of grief, discontents, difficulties and problems for My attention. That is also My Work and I shall gladly attend to it.”

3.34 p200

d) “I call upon you to bring and offer to Me all the poison in you; take from Me health, happiness, Heaven Itself.”

8.12 p51

e) “I have this day, the holy day of Shivarathri, granted pardon for all the errors you have fallen into knowingly or unknowingly up to this time.”

14.1 p7

f) “Bring ‘Bhakthi’ and lay it here and take from here ‘Sakthi’ instead! The more such business is done, the more pleased am I. Bring what you have, namely, your sorrows and griefs, worries and anxieties, and take from Me joy and peace, courage and confidence.”

1.2 p15

g) “To take upon myself the sufferings of those who have surrendered to me is My duty! I do My duty, and you may do yours.”

10.39 p263

9) (“... establish Ananda in all countries and all peoples”)

a) “If the body is the temple of God, the world is the body of God. So, He seeks to establish Ananda in all countries and all peoples. That is why I have been giving these Discourses....”

4.16 p91

b) “My task is to bring together the Pundits and make them aware of their noble heritage and their still nobler duty, to develop contact with the rulers who will benefit by the impartial wisdom of the Sastras and the Upanishads and the Vedas-- seen and recorded by masters of detachment-- and thus establish peace and harmony in the world.”

5.20 p111

c) “You and your teachers are destined to achieve tremendous tasks under My guidance, in the execution of the Mission on which I have come.”

12.26 p140

10) (“... instill the ancient ideals... of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema....”)

- a) “I should like to reveal to you how My Love manifests itself so that you may know my true nature. At a time when this great World Conference is being held, I was concerned how to look after the students from all the Sathya Sai educational institutions, who had come from Puttaparthi, Anantapur, Bangalore, Jaipur and Bhopal. All my thoughts have been concentrated on how to make them happy, how to see that they were comfortable and how to improve their discipline and character.”
14..58 p333
- b) “I am ever ready to do everything that will promote the joy and happiness of these students.”
15.20 p114
- c) “I want the Committee in charge of this Institution to propagate the ideals of Service, Love and Sadhana, which Sanathana Dharma embodies. Even a small number of such Institutions will be enough... to serve as examples and guides to others.”
13.1 p6
- d) “I have allowed this college to rise, because it will install in the minds of students the ancient ideals of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, the ideals that are delineated in the Vedas, described in Sastras, illustrated in the Epics, practiced by countless generations of the men and women of this land, and confirmed as the best suited for individual and social progress by its saints and sages, law givers and leaders, for centuries.”
8.26 p139-140
- e) “My Sankalpa (plan of action) is to provide the youth with an education which, while cultivating their intelligence, will also purify their impulses and emotions, and equip them with the physical and mental disciplines needed for drawing upon the springs of calmness and joy that lie in their own hearts. Their higher natures will have to be fostered and encouraged to blossom-- by means of study, prayer and Sadhana, contacts with the sages, saints and spiritual heroes and heroines of their land-- and place them on the path of self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice, and self-knowledge.”
9.31 p162
- f) “The love that these boys have towards Me and the love that I shower upon them are matters that only they and I can know.”
6.33 p167

11) (“... to promote the welfare of the World”)

- a) “God incarnates for the revival of Dharma (Righteousness) which includes morality, truth, virtue, love and a host of other qualities that uphold the communities of man as well as the individual.”
8.8 p34
- b) “Remember, the rules laid down for you are for your own good. Whatever I do, speak, or order is for your good, for rendering your future years happy and fruitful.”
13.36 p212
- c) “All my wishes are only to promote the welfare of the World. ‘Lokassamasthaa Sukhino Bhavanthu’ is the only objective of Sai. (May all the world be happy).”
14.58 p332-333

- d) “I am only asking you to use Me more, to follow My words more steadily, and to approach Me for fulfilling all the plans which you may jointly frame for the welfare of this village.” 3.17 p80 (1st U.S. Edition)
- e) “The way in which the Avathar has to be used for one’s liberation and uplift is: watch His every step, observe His actions and activities, follow the guiding principle of which His life is an elaboration. Mark His Love, His Compassion, His Wisdom, try to bring them into your own life.” 8.8 p34
- f) “I shall not rest until I reform all of you.” 3.30 p176

12) (“... to make you story-less is the scheme of My story”)

- a) “My desire-- if I can put it in so many words-- is this: More and more should yearn for Me. The desire could be realized only if I assume this Form and come among you.” 2.31 p166
- b) “... I never call upon people to worship Me, giving up the Forms they already revere. I have come to establish Dharma and so I do not and will not demand or require your homage. Give it to your Lord or Guru, whoever He is; I am the Witness, come to set right the vision.” 2.18 p89
- c) “When you listen to My story, you forget the story of the world and live only in My story, until there is no separate story for you to relate or live. Well, to make you story-less is the scheme of My story.” 2.17 p87

J. Miracles (“This is My Leela: My nature”)

1) (“... so that you might, with greater enthusiasm... proceed with spiritual Sadhana”)

- a) “The establishment of Dharma is My aim; the teaching of Dharma, the spread of Dharma-- that is my objective. These ‘miracles’ as you call them are just a few means, towards that end.” 4.45 p267
- b) “I am determined to correct you only after informing you of My credentials. That is why I am now and then announcing My Nature by means of miracles; that is, acts which are beyond human capacity and human understanding. Not that I am anxious to show off My Powers. The object is to draw you closer to Me, to cement your hearts to Me.” 2.26 p141
- c) “You might have heard people talk about the miracles; of My ‘making’ this and ‘giving’ that, of My fulfilling all your wants, of my curing your illnesses. But they are not so important as the Sathwaguna I appreciate, promote and instill. Of course, I confer on you these boons of health and prosperity but only so that you might, with greater enthusiasm and with less interruption, proceed with spiritual Sadhana.” 1.11 p62-63

d) “Some people remark that Ramakrishna Paramahansa said that the Siddhis are obstructions in the path of the Sadhaka. Of course they are; he may be led astray by Siddhis; he has to keep straight on, without being involved in them. His ego will increase if he yields to the temptation of demonstrating his siddhis. This is correct advice, which every Sadhaka should heed.” 4.45 p268

2) (“... the pouring of Grace on the devotee”)

a) “Take the illness which came into this body, for example. It is the nature of the human body to generate disease through faulty food or foolish habits. This explains the illness of ordinary men, not the illness that you witnessed during the last two days. That was an illness assumed, willed, in order to relieve a person, who could not have survived it or even borne it without perturbation. This is one of the functions of the Divine, for which it has incarnated-- the pouring of Grace on the devotee. The appendix was inflamed and it became an abscess, which the doctors said could be cured only by an operation immediately done. The devotee could not have borne that agonizing pain; I have come with this body in order to save these other bodies from pain and suffering. This body will ever be free from illness and pain; disease can never affect it. That is the real truth.” 10.37 p248

b) “There is also another reason that lies behind this episode. The Divine is recognized by gifted people in the vast, the magnificent, the beautiful, the mighty, the majestic, the awesome. But, for the generality of mankind, the consciousness that each one is a miracle sustained by God, that each breath is a witness of God’s Providence, that each event is proof of His Presence, comes but rarely in life. When this Body, that is apparently human, behaves as if it is filled with supra-human potentialities, then, amazement draws the attention of all towards the Divine that is its inherent nature. Off and on, it becomes necessary to give this lesson to mankind, so that faith in God and power to recognize Divinity are added to human faculties. Then only can the mind of man be turned from the world to the Master of the Worlds.” 10.37 p250

c) “You must surrender your judgement to the Lord; then, the Lord will assume full responsibility and be the guardian, guide and motive power. It is such a devotee, a person who had surrendered everything, even his judgement, to Me that I had to save, by taking over this illness and going through it. The signs of that illness have disappeared today and they shall not recur again.” 10.37 p249-250

d) “It was the working out of this Assurance that you witnessed today, just now. This had to happen, this stroke and the cure. The assurance given in the Threthayuga had to be honoured. I may tell you now, that, the poor forlorn Bhaktha who had to get the stroke which I took over, was a convenient excuse, which was utilized. You see, a railway engine is not made available to haul just one bogey; they wait until a number of bogeys are to be taken along and then, they put the engine into action. So too, the disease had to be gone through, the Bhaktha had to be saved, the assurance to be carried out, the Mystery had to be cleared, the Divinity had to be more clearly announced by the manifestation of this Grand Miracle. All these were accomplished by this one incident.” 3.15 p91-92

e) “‘Dikku lenivaniki devude gathi:’ for those who have no refuge, God is the refuge. That is exactly the reason why I had to take on the disease that one helpless bhaktha was to get. He had to suffer this dire illness, as well as the four heart attacks that accompanied it; and, he would not have survived it. So, according to My Dharma of Bhakthasamrakshana, I had to rescue him. Of course, this is not the first time that I have taken on the illness of persons whom I wanted to save. Even in the previous Sariram at Shirdi, I had this responsibility. The suffering that you saw was too much for this particular devotee and so, I have to save him, by Myself going through it. This is My Leela: My nature. It is part of the task for which I have come, Sishyarakshana.” 3.15 p88-89

f) “Similarly, the other day, Sriramamurthy who is sitting among you here, shouted, ‘Swamee’ in sincere faith and agony. His wife was writhing in pain, because her clothes had caught fire. She was too panic-stricken to call out My Name. But, this cry was heard by Me. I hurried to the spot, which is, as you say, 400 miles away; I crumpled the fire out, before it was too late.” 3.12 p74

3) (“... to herald the era that has dawned....”)

a) “In order to make known My majesty and My glory as the Divine that has incarnated, miraculous happenings of an amazing nature do take place in certain areas.” 10.35 p234

b) “I shall tell you why I give these rings, talismans, rosaries etc. It is to signalize the bond between Me and those to whom they are given. When calamity befalls them, the article comes to Me in a flash and returns in a flash taking from Me the remedial Grace of protection. That Grace is available to all who call on Me in any Name or Form, not merely to those who wear these gifts. Love is the bond that wins Grace.” 12.38 p212

c) “Arun Kumar Dutt said, that you are all lucky since you have seen many manifestations of My power. But, they are manifested because they have to be, not for exhibiting attainments, nor for drawing clientele! They manifest when needed by the exercise of will, as naturally, as spontaneously as any other physical act.” 11.31 p182

d) “The time will soon come when this huge building or even vaster ones will be too small for the gatherings of those who are called to this place. The sky itself will have to be the roof of the Auditorium of the future; I will have to forego the car and even the aeroplane when I move from place to place, for the crowds pressing around them will be too huge; I will have to move across the sky; yes, that too will happen, believe Me.” 2.18 p92

e) “Those who decry the super-human are the ignorant or the wicked, that is, those who have no authority to judge the spiritual.” 4.45 p267

f) “This is merely the nature of Avathara: the creation of things, ab initio, with intent to protect, guard and give joy, a creation that is spontaneous and lasting. Creation, Preservation and Dissolution-- these three, only the Almighty can accomplish; no one else can.” 4.45 p268

g) “Appearances of splendour, and other signs to herald the era that has dawned are natural when Incarnations happen on Earth.” 11.54 p310

4) (“... for drawing people to the Divine presence....”)

a) “... I am like a shopkeeper whose shop is stocked with all things man needs. But, like the man behind the counter, I give you only what you ask for...”

1.8 p50

b) “Ask for Bhakthi and for Jnana and I shall be happy. Many do not crave for such things now; it is their misfortune. They are merely wasting their chance.”

1.8 p50

c) “Divine miracles like those of Rama (He who pleases and delights) and Krishna (He who attracts) are for drawing people to the Divine presence for the purpose of correcting or cleansing them, or for confirming their faith and then leading them on to the discipline of service so that they may merge in ecstasy, in the source of all ecstasy-- a miracle resulting in sublimation, leading to service to society and finally conferring self-realization.”

14.1 p4

5) (“... a taste of the Prema....”)

a) “You elaborate in your lectures the unique powers of Sai, the incidents that are described as ‘miracles’ in books written on Me by some persons. But, I request you not to attach importance to these. Do not exaggerate their significance; the most significant and important power is, let Me tell you, My Prema.”

8.19 p98

b) “You might consider what you call ‘miracles’ as the most direct sign of Divinity; but, the Prema that welcomes you all, that blesses all, that makes Me rush to the presence of the seekers, the suffering and the distressed in distant lands or wherever they are, that is the real sign! It is that which declares that I am Sai Baba.”

7.32 p169-170

c) “You can get the feeling for the Divine only if you have a taste of the Prema of the Divine. That is why the Avathar has come: to give you a taste of that Prema, so that the yearning for the Lord will be planted in your heart.”

2.26 p139

d) “Love is My highest miracle.”

13.21 p116

K. His Ways (“Love will be rewarded with love a thousand-fold”)

1) (“I take delight in being with you....”)

a) “When I sense your prema, I feel, I must share it and allow you to share My Prema; that is the best of all communications and communions. The mediation of words is then unnecessary.”

8.22 p118

b) “Sai is ever engaged in warning you and guiding you so that you may think, speak and act in this attitude of Love.”

12.29 p158

- c) “Win the Grace of your own sub-conscious, so that it may accept the Grace of God which is ever available. God does not deny any one; it is only you, who deny God. When the gift is proffered, you have to do only one little act, so that you may earn it-- you have to extend your hand to receive it. That is the Grace of the sub-conscious; win it, by teaching it the value of the Grace of God.” 11.14 p86
- d) “You can never grasp the strength of this superworldly bond that ties you to Me. The experience of that bond will come to you, unawares. Your duty is to await the moment. Believe and be Blessed. You are now worshipping Siva or Narayana or Rama or Krishna, is it not? Tell Me how you got started. What experience did you have, ere you began, of Rama’s Daya or Santham or Prema? Or of Krishna’s Karuna or Prema?” 2.20 p102
- e) “... to say that I will respond only if I am called or that I will save only if I am thought of is wrong.” 3.22 p133
- f) “My Grace is showered wherever you are through My infinite Love, without even calculating or measuring the readiness of your sub-conscious to receive it and benefit by it. The Grace itself will confer on you the faith and the strength, the wisdom and the joy. I am in your heart all the time, whether you know it or not.” 11.14 p86
- g) “Treat Me not as one afar, but as very close to you. Insist, demand, claim Grace from Me; do not praise, extol and cringe. Bring your hearts to Me and win My Heart. Not one of you is a stranger to Me. Bring your promises to me and I shall give you My Promise. But first see that your promise is genuine, sincere; see that your heart is pure; that is enough.” 2.15 p71
- h) “... I do not like this praise, for praise places you at some distance, whereas I take delight in being with you, beside you, around you. No father likes his sons to praise him.... Kinship evokes kindness; there is no need or chance for formal ceremonial behaviour.” 3.28 p161

2) (“... exhorting you....”)

- a) “I behave like you, moving, singing, laughing, journeying; but, watch out for the blow I inflict of a sudden, to chastise and to warn. I shall scorch the wrong doer for his wrong and soothe the virtuous for his righteousness. Justice shall be meted out to all.” 8.28 p157
- b) “When I appear to be angry, remember, it is only Love in another form. For, I have not even an atom of Anger in me; I just evince My disappointment that you do not shape as I direct.” 4.4 p25
- c) “... I am exhorting you to take up the vow of Seva as a spiritual Sadhana; I must say that I am not satisfied with your performance yet. But, I have not given up instructing you, and commissioning you, for, I am hoping that you will catch up with the ideal some day or other. This is an example of the quality of mercy that is natural to Me. That quality makes Me appreciate even the little attempts you make to practice the ideal of Seva.” 10.6 p29

d) “Those who see you here tomorrow may ask; since directions are not strictly followed, and since service is not sublimated into worship by these people, why is the badge given to them, year after year? Well, when you continue repeating the lines and trying to sing them, some day, you may succeed in singing them well. Expecting that you will get to know things better and become more and more perfect as the days pass, I am encouraging you to learn, by practice. I do not give you up. That is a sign of My Grace.” 8.33 p181

e) “I have this day, the holy day of Shivarathri, granted pardon for all the errors you have fallen into knowingly or unknowingly up to this time.” 14.1 p7

f) “... there are some who proclaim that I am ‘coming upon some one’ and speaking through them! They pretend to be My mouthpieces and communicate to others My advice and My suggestions, as if I have ‘authorized’ them or as if I am Myself telling so through them. Now hear this. I never speak through another; I never possess another or use another as a vehicle of expression. I come direct, I come straight, I come as I am, to confer Peace and joy.” 5.18 p101-102

3) “I seek to give you joy....”

(“So also, I may ask, ‘How are you?’ though I know....”)

“I ask from the verandah, O, when did you arrive? Others may doubt, why is Baba asking this question? Does He not know? Surely, He must be knowing all about him and us. Why then this query? But you, to whom this question is put, you are elated that ‘Baba spoke to me, as soon as I walked in!’ I seek to give you joy and so, though I know, I ask such questions; if I do not ask, but keep quiet, you feel forlorn and frustrated, don’t you? You know that I am asking you, not for the sake of the answer which I am already aware of, but for the sake of the satisfaction My words give you. So also, I may ask, ‘How are you?’ though I know that you are well and that is why you could come or that you are unwell and that is the very reason that has brought you to Me!

“This is the Maya-sakthi, the spirit that charms; if it speaks, if it casts its eye, if it does something, we derive pleasure thereby!” 10.14 p89-90

4) (“... I carry out what is just, though modified by Grace”)

a) “... you must have noticed that I never call a woman, alone for the ‘interview’. I call women only in groups of ten or fifteen. I want that you should note this and infer that one has to be extremely cautious in dealing with the other sex, for, though I am above and beyond the Gunas, since this body is obviously masculine, I want to teach both men and women how they have to regulate their social behaviour and be above the slightest tinge of suspicion, or of small talk.” 10.30 p185

b) "I know many are puzzled by my practice of listening to your 'korikes', (wants, wishes, desires), calling you individually and spending long hours with you to satisfy you and to speak to you on these 'earthly' demands. They say, no avathara has done this before; it is like catering to worldly things; people come with all kinds of worldly desires and every one is welcomed with sympathy and love. But, I alone know the basic thirst which expresses itself in these desires and wants, the fundamental discontent.... When you approach God and seek his help and guidance, you have taken the first step to save yourself. You are then led to accept His will as your own." 5.43 p238-239

c) "My activities and movements will never be altered, whoever may pass whatever opinion on them. Meanness may prompt people to remark on My Dress, this gown of colour, or they may talk cynically of My Hair, but, I shall not be affected a bit. My discourses, My plans for Dharmasthapana, My movements, I shall not modify at all." 5.42 p234

d) "The man who dies, prays to Me to receive him; the persons who weep at his departure, pray to Me to keep him alive. I know both sides of the picture, the past and the present, the crime and the punishment, the achievement and the reward and so, I carry out what is just, though modified by Grace. I am not affected one way or the other, by the arrival into the world of some or the departure from it of some others. My nature is Nithya-anandam. You can share in that Anandam by following My instructions and practicing what I say." 3.27 p160

5) ("... an overwhelming desire to reform the children....")

a) "I have been repeating every time the same advice to you; and sometimes you may even get the feeling that I have only a few things to say! Well, a mother has to repeat the same directions to the child again and again until the child learns and behaves accordingly.... That is the sign of all mothers, an over-whelming desire to reform the children and to direct them along the path of progress." 1.31 p194

b) "When a mother is feeding her child, you can see her with the child on her hip and the plate in her hand, inducing the child to eat, by means of harsh words or a smile, a joke, a threat or a story, diverting its attention, showing the child a dog or a flower or the moon. I have also to adopt the same tactics to make you listen and assimilate the valuable food, that is so necessary for your growth. That is the reason why I relate stories, sing, recite poems etc., in My discourses!" 4.25 p145

6) ("Each has a different make-up, mental, physical and spiritual....")

a) "I answer to whatever Name you use; I respond to whatever request you make, with a pure heart and a sanctified motive." 3.22 p133

- b) “When I tell one person to follow one line of Sadhana, it is specifically for his benefit; do not take it as prescription for your benefit also, saying, ‘Swami told him thus; let me also adopt it’. Each has a different make-up, mental, physical and spiritual.... When doctors who treat diseases of the body have to prescribe different remedies, how much more specific and personal must be the remedies for the complex and varied conditions of mental situations and spiritual yearnings and aspirations?” 12.30 p167
- c) “I will take My Own time to carry out My Plan so far as you are concerned.” 1.31 p198

7) (“I am ready to help you from the first lesson to the last”)

- a) “I am ready to help you from the first lesson to the last.” 1.32 p206
- b) “God is so merciful that He will come ten steps towards you, if you but take one step towards Him.” 10.24 p151
- c) “Come just one step forward, I shall take a hundred towards you.” 3.5 p39
- d) “Love will be rewarded with love a thousand-fold.” 14.8 p55
- e) “God is the embodiment of compassion. He watches for a grain of goodness or humility so that He can reward it with tons of Grace.” 12.16 p74
- f) “If only you evince some genuine interest in your own real uplift, I am ready to stand by you and crown your efforts with success.” 3.17 p81 (1st U.S. Edition)

L. Baba’s Avathara (“I am Truth....”)

1) (“... directing the World along the path....”)

- a) “After the Yaga was over, they were so pleased that They conferred even more boons on the sage. Siva said that They would take Human form and be born in the Bharadwaja lineage or Gothra thrice: Siva alone as Shirdi Sai Baba, Siva and Sakthi together at Puttaparthi as Sathya Sai Baba, and Sakthi alone as Prema Sai, later.” 3.15 p91
- b) “The first sixteen years of this Life have been, as I have often told you, the period when Balaleela predominated, and the next sixteen is being spent mostly in Mahimas in order to give Santhosha to this generation. Santhosha or joy and contentment are short-lived sensations; you have to catch the mood and make it a permanent possession: Ananda or bliss. After the thirty second-year, you will see Me active more and more in the task of Upadesa or Teaching erring humanity, and in directing the World along the path of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema.” 1.1 p3

- 2) (“... the wicked will not be destroyed, they will be corrected....”)
- a) “Now, I must tell you, that during this Sai Avatar, there is no place for even such ‘drama’ with scenes of failures and defeats! What I will, must take place; what I plan must succeed. I am Truth; and Truth has no need to hesitate, or fear, or bend.” 12.38 p211
 - b) “Note this also. In this Avathar, the wicked will not be destroyed, they will be corrected and reformed and educated and led back to the path from which they have strayed.” 1.2 p15-16
 - c) “Another specialty is this: the Avathar has no affinity or attachment in Its Career with members of the Family wherein It appeared. Unlike the appearances as Rama, Krishna etc. where the Life was played out mostly among and for the family members, this Avathar is for the Bhakthas, the aspirants, the Sadhus and the Sahakas only. It has no japa, dhyana or yoga; It knows no worship. It will not pray to anything, for It is the Highest. It only teaches you to worship and pray.” 1.2 p16
- 3) (“Nothing can impede or halt the work....”)
- a) “The chief characteristic of Sathya Sai is, let Me tell you, equanimity, forbearance, Sahana.” 15.33 p182
 - b) “The Sai Principle, the Sai Divinity can never be affected by any slander; it can never be shaken by any tactics; its progress can never be halted. Do not pay heed to the barkings you hear.” 12.36 p202
 - c) “Embodiments of Love! Even if the entire world opposes unitedly, nothing can affect Me. My mission is essentially mine. I am engaged in doing good. My heart is ever full of benediction. I have no ego. I do not own any thing. This is my Truth. Those who have faith in this, my Truth, will not hesitate to dedicate themselves to it.” 15.33 p183
 - d) “I will be in this mortal human form for 59 years more and I shall certainly achieve the purpose of this Avathar, do not doubt it.”
(from September 29, 1960 discourse) 1.31 p198
 - e) “Let Me tell you one more thing: Nothing can impede or halt the work of this Avathara.” 3.15 p92

M. New Era (“... the Dawn of the Golden Era....”)

- 1) (“Dharma will be... revitalized, in every human community”)
- a) “When the world is on the verge of chaos, the Avathar comes to still the storm raging in the hearts of men. Prasanthi (the higher Peace, the calming of perturbations) will be stabilized soon; the demonic deviations from the straight Divine Path will be corrected. Dharma will be revived, and re-vitalized, in every human community.” 11.31 p186

- b) "... the whole world is today in the throes of anxiety and fear. But, I assure you that very soon the dark clouds shall be scattered and you will witness a happy era all over the world." 11.28 p164
- c) "And again, you can witness very soon the restoration of Sanathan Dharma to its genuine and natural status, the Dharma laid down in the Vedas for the good of all the peoples of the World." 8.19 p100
- d) "This is the Inaugural Meeting of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, established to promote the knowledge and practice among all mankind of the fundamental truths, beliefs and disciplines of Sanathana Dharma.... This is an epoch-making event. For, it is no less than the Dawn of the Golden Era of the Liberation of Humanity." 4.8 p39-40

2) ("Nothing can come in the way of My Smile")

- a) "The success of the task for which I have come will very soon reverberate through out the world." 14.43 p247
- b) "The time is fast coming when the whole world will gather here, and you will have to struggle from miles afar to get even my Darsan." 8.1 p5
- c) "Many hesitate to believe that things will improve, that life for all will be happy and full of joy, that the Golden Age will ever recur. Let Me assure you that this Dharmaswarupa has not come in vain; It will succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon Humanity." 5.11 p70
- d) "I am resolved to foster Ananda through the revival and re-establishment of the Bharatiya way of life. This will happen without fail." 15.55 p318
- e) "My Sankalpa must prevail; My task must be accomplished. My Mission will succeed." 1.16 p93
- f) "This Task will succeed; it will not be impeded by any obstacle. It will not be limited or slowed. When the Lord decides and wills, His Sankalpa cannot be hindered; It will not be hindered." 4.49 p285
- g) "Nothing can come in the way of My Smile." 5.42 p235

N. Present Opportunity for Grace ("... come and know and derive benefit from Me")

1) ("... It is with you, before you")

- a) "The very Divine principle which seekers strive to visualize by means of years of asceticism and renunciation is before you, here and now...." 14.1 p7
- b) "You are very fortunate that you have a chance to experience the Bliss of the Vision of the Sarvadaivathwa-swaroopam (The Form, which is All Forms of all Gods) now, in this life itself." 8.19 p100

- c) “Again, how fortunate you are that you can witness all the countries of the world paying homage to Bharatha; you can hear adoration to Sathya Sai’s Name reverberating throughout the world, even while this Body is existing-- not at some future date but, when It is with you, before you.” 8.19 p100

d) “... the One from which all Forms manifest....”
 (“Dwell on this... holy hour....”)

i) “... the Linga is the One from which all Forms manifest, the Elementary Form which symbolizes the First Emergence of the Will of the Divine.”

12.28 p155-156

ii) “Having had the unique good fortune of witnessing the Emergence of the Time-Space-embodiment in the Linga-Form, I assure you that you are released from the bondage of birth and death. Recollect (and live in the recollection of) that moment of emergence and meditate on the significance of the Linga Form. This is the chance that is seldom gained through the performance of yajnas or yagas or other elaborate rituals; or as a result of years of arduous Sadhana. When you are asked what happened at Prasanthi Nilayam, tell them that your life’s mission has been fulfilled, that you were able to witness the Lingodbhava, see the Linga which emerged during the auspicious Hour.

“The Linga, as you can see, is dasangulam, ten inches in circumference. It has within it, shining with native light the TRISUL of Siva, symbolizing the three phases of Time-- Past, Present and Future-- and the three dimensions of Space-- Earth, Sky and the Nether Regions.... and in this Linga too, as you can see even from where you are sitting, the colour of the Trisul (the three-pronged spear in the hands of Siva) inside this Linga changes into a new one, every ten minutes. The handle of the Trisul demonstrates the One of which the three are manifestations.

“This is the grand Mystery that has been revealed to you. You have witnessed the Divine Creation; you have seen the Divine Symbol; you have shared the Bliss. Out of the world’s population of many crores, you alone secured this fortune.... You have seen the Splendour when the Linga emerged; you have seen the triple Jyothi in the Linga Itself. No greater fortune can befall a man.”

12.28 p154-155

iii) “I repeat that you who have experienced the sublimity and splendour of this Divine Event have acquired thereby merit enormous enough to save you from the cycle of birth and death. Dwell on this mighty moment, this holy hour that you were privileged to spend here; contemplate the majesty of the event that you witnessed; sanctify your days by thoughts that are sacred, words that are suffused with love, and deeds that are in accordance with the Grace you have won this day.”

12.28 p156

iv) “Live hereafter as befits the recipient of this rare Grace.”

12.28 p155

2) (“Make full use of Me....”)

- a) People come to this Presence to get rid of sin and accumulate spiritual merit....”
12.49 p268
- b) “I am worried that people are not benefiting from Me as much as I would like to confer.”
5.54 p298
- c) “I invite all to come and know and derive benefit from Me. Dive and know the depth; watch and discriminate; eat and know the taste. I long for people who do that.”
6.20 p108
- d) “Ask Me about steps in spiritual discipline, not petty, trivial, binding desires.”
8.1 p5
- e) “He is Love, He is Mercy, He is Goodness, He is Wisdom, He is Power. He gives what you ask; so, be careful what you ask. Learn to ask (for) the really beneficial boons. Do not go to the Wish-fulfilling Tree and come back in glee, with a towel that you asked (for) and got!”
4.52 p301
- f) “Make full use of Me, that is all that I ask of you.”
6.20 p108
- g) “Your lives are intertwined with My Earthly Career. Act always in accordance with that great privilege.”
2.18 p92

3) (“No Avathara has done like this before....”)

- a) “... it has now become clear to him that there is no generation more fortunate than his; that declaration is true. It is thrice true. For during no previous Age did man have this unique chance. No organization of this nature was established, no Conference of this character was held in the Presence and no opportunity was given then to derive Ananda through such close association, through conversation and singing together. Undoubtedly, you are all singularly fortunate. Therefore, do not let the opportunity slip through your hands.”
10.35 p238
- b) “No Avathara has done like this before, going among the people, the masses, the millions and counseling them, guiding them, consoling them, uplifting them, directing them along the path of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, and Prema.”
5.42 p233
- c) “I have been declaring since six or seven years ago (from 4/8/72 discourse) that the day when millions will gather to benefit from the Avatar is fast coming; I am advising you to garner and treasure all the Grace and all the Bliss you can, while you may....”
11.41 p246
- d) “Embodiments of the Divine Atma: you may not be able to see it, but it is clear before my eyes. As days pass, even those who are not now able to recognize the truth of Swami will have to approach with tears of repentance and experience Me. Very soon, this will be worldwide (from 11/23/82 discourse). Swami is now restraining this development. When once it is allowed to manifest, the whole world will be transformed into Prashanthi Nilayam. So, come forward, all of you, determined to practice in daily living the ideals laid before you; in the coming years, you may not get the chances you are having now.”
15.55 p318

Mergence

I. Seva

(“Let not the bulb think that it is shining through its own will....”)

A. Introduction (“... God Himself... comes down to serve mankind....”)

- 1) “The easiest and the most fruitful expression of Dharma today consists in Seva, service as worship of the Divine around you. Dedicate all your skill, talents, wealth, and scholarship to the living embodiments of Divinity that are around you.” 11.28 p156
- 2) ““You must love all whom I love, remember.”” 2.51 p284
- 3) “Avatars of God are engaged in service, that is why Avatars happen. Hence, when you offer service to mankind, the Avatar will naturally be pleased and you can win grace.” 13.29 p173
- 4) “Seva is the highest Sadhana for, God Himself takes human form and comes down to serve mankind and lead it to the ideals it has ignored. Therefore, consider, how delighted God will be when man serves man!” 7.5 p26
- 5) “Life is best spent in alleviating pain, assuaging distress, and promoting peace and joy.” 6.4 p19
- 6) “Divinity, when expressed in action, blossoms into loving service of fellow-beings.” 14.60 p347
- 7) “I know you have the enthusiasm to carry My message among the people of this country and other countries. Let me remind you that the best and the only successful way in which you can do it is to translate the message into your own lives. Your thoughts, words, and deeds must be saturated with the message. Then, they will spread effortlessly and efficiently, and the face of the world will be transformed.” 8.19 p87

B. Service to the Community (1)

(“Do unto others only as you would like them to do unto you”)

- 1) (“Try to console, encourage, strengthen, and enlighten....”)
 - a) “... the Gita advises that service to the Sangha or community is the highest Seva, as well as the most beneficial Sadhana. You cannot run away from this obligation; you have to use the community of men wherein you are born for sublimating your egoism and saving yourself.” 8.1 p1-2
 - b) “Try to console, encourage, strengthen, and enlighten those who are miserable, downhearted, weak or ill-informed.” 5.6 p42
 - c) “Have compassion in your hearts for the unfortunate brothers and sisters who are unlearned, ill, or suffering. Try your best to open their eyes, to cure their ills, and to alleviate their distress.” 13.5 p26

- d) “Find out the difficulties and troubles burdening others and help them, to the extent you can, to tide them over, and, to lead their lives so that they may not recur.” 12.5 p18
- e) “Seva must be directed towards the removal of physical distress, the alleviation of mental agony, and the fulfillment of spiritual yearning.” 7.18 p102
- f) “Embodiments of the Divine Atma! When you feel the desire to give away in charity, direct your minds towards the development of good educational institutions, the provision of healing facilities for the sick, and the amelioration of distress among the poor.... Feel that this work, wherever carried out, is work that pleases Me.” 12.53 p293
- g) “You have formed a study circle, so study the best means of bringing peace, and apply those means in a few villages to prove their validity. Then they can be taught to people in other lands also.” 14.47 p270

2) (“Give them God in whatever form will assuage fear, pain and sorrow”)
 (“It is only when this is done can spirituality soak into the heart”)

“If you pour spirituality into the ears of those who are tortured by hunger, it will not be assimilated. First, quench the hunger. Give them God in the form of food. Give them God in the form of clothes. Give God in the form of peace to those who are afflicted with anxiety. Give God in the form of medicine to those who are suffering from ill health. Give God in whatever form which will assuage fear, pain and sorrow. It is only when this is done that spirituality can soak into the heart. If you act contrarywise, instead of spiritual feelings you will be promoting atheism itself.” 15.55 p315-316

3) (“Always endeavor to do good to others....”)

- a) “Wherever you see a sick person, a dispirited disconsolate diseased person, there, is your field of service.” 10.6 p28
- b) “The patients in hospitals who have no one to speak a kind, reassuring word to them will be tear-full with gratitude if you carry the light of compassion to their bedsides.” 10.3 p15
- c) “Go to the slum areas, move like lighted lamps full of love and sympathy, and help the people there to get things done which will improve their health, add to their income, and advance their education.” 12.14 p63
- d) “Take some good books and read them out to illiterate brothers and sisters, spread the Message of our culture among all those who have no chance to know about it.” 13.2 p13
- e) “You must examine every act to find out whether it will cause pain to others; if it does, withdraw from it. Don’t do to others what you do not like (them) to do unto you. This is called the Golden Rule. Yes, it is the best test for distinguishing right from wrong.” 12.13 p58

- f) “Always endeavour to do good to others, to think well of them and to speak well of others.” 5.27 p147
- g) “Sympathy, service, putting yourselves in the place of your neighbor and trying to assuage pain and sorrow-- that is what wins Grace. Through Love and Service, the mind is cleared of ego and God is reflected therein.” 6.5 p24

4) (“... spend your lives in sacred pursuits....”)

- a) “Share with others around you the good things you are given.” 13.3 p16
- b) “Look upon them as your own kith and kin, as your special guests, and as your closest friends, and attend to them lovingly and with unflinching care. I call upon you to maintain this attitude in every situation.” 13.22 p120
- c) “Do unto others only as you would like them to do unto you.” 9.9 p45
- d) “... spend your lives in sacred pursuits, like service to the distressed, the diseased, and the deprived. That is My advice, and that will ensure you My blessings.” 13.21 p116

C. Examine Your Motives (“Selfless service brings you nearer to Me”)

1) (“What was the intention that prompted you?”)

- a) “Krishna says, ‘I have no need to be engaged in work but I do work in order to activate the world.’” 15.31 p168
- b) “God will not ask you, when and where did you do service? He will ask, With what motive did you do it? What was the intention that prompted you?” 15.31 p169
- c) “‘Are you maintaining Dharma in the kingdom of Ayodhya, respecting the subjects, the poor, the elders, the scholars, the saints and the sages?’” 5.33 p182
- d) “Help should come from pious hearts, from well-earned money, from persons who know and appreciate the purpose for which they give. That is why I oppose all benefit shows, where you tempt people with a dance or a drama or a film and collect money for your pet plan. I am also against lotteries, where the lure of getting a big prize, for which one does not do anything, a prize collected out of other people’s earnings, is used for the collection of funds. Let each one give, out of the fullness of his heart, on his own initiative, whatever he can give gladly, after studying well the present work and the future possibilities of the institution.” 3.26 p155-156
- e) “You must examine yourselves every moment whether you are observing the disciplines I have laid down, the programmes of service I have marked out. That is the way to earn My Love. Love others and serve them; then, you can win My Love.” 12.37 p208

2) (“Are you doing it with God-consciousness?”)

- a) “Have you connected your act of service with the reservoir of Love in the heart? Are you doing it with God-consciousness? Or is it merely a superficial ceremonial routine act, done for publicity or personal pride?” 11.22 p117
- b) “As a preliminary to service you have to gain purity of heart. You must examine your motives and skills, your intentions and qualifications, and discover for yourself what you hope to achieve through service. You should ferret out any trace of egoism and also the desire for fame or even of being near Swami.” 14.13 p81
- c) “Judge rather the motive that led to (you) to serve, the genuineness of the love and compassion with which the service was saturated. You may explain that it was your duty and so you had to do it; you may say that it was a responsibility which was imposed on you by the scarf and badge. But the explanation that appeals to Swami is that you did the service with no taint of ego and that you derived unsurpassed bliss as a result.” 14.13 p82

3) (“Serve because you are urged by love”)

- a) “Do not think of the fame or praise you win; think of the good that people derive.” 13.18 p92
- b) “While engaged in Service or Seva, it is wrong to yield to lower cravings or to follow one’s own impetuosity.” 7.18 p94
- c) “... burn to ashes the pride that comes of the feeling that you are offering service to someone poorer and less fortunate.” 14.13 p82
- d) “Do not serve for the sake of reward, attracting attention, or earning gratitude, or from a sense of pride at your own superiority in skill, wealth, status or authority. Serve because you are urged by love.” 9.10 p52

4) (“... let Him shape you and use you as He knows best”)

- a) “... yearn for service of the divine forms that move around you.” 11.47 p279
- b) “Cooperation, among people in a society, motivated by spontaneity and by pure intentions is the hall-mark of Seva (service). Seva can be identified by means of two basic characteristics: Compassion and Willingness to sacrifice.” 15.31 p165
- c) “Selfless service brings you nearer to Me. The flower that is your heart gets fragrance by means of the service you do, and so it becomes more acceptable to Me. Love is the essence of that fragrance.” 13.18 p92
- d) “Be a servant; a servant of God-- then, all strength and joy will be added unto you. Try to be a master; then, you will arouse envy, hatred, anger, and greed in every one around you. Feel that you are an instrument in His Hand; let Him shape you and use you as He knows best.” 8.44 p235

D. Be conscientious

(“Earn by your efficiency... the right to play higher and higher roles....”)

1) (“... increase the ways in which you can help others....”)

- a) “It is a call and a challenge, for you, to provide comfort and consolation to those in need, to seek out means and methods to increase the ways in which you can help others and contribute to their joy.” 12.49 p268
- b) “You must have not merely enthusiasm to serve, but, the intelligence and the skill; then only can you be efficient and useful.” 5.54 p293
- c) “Be alert to the call, everywhere, at all times; be ready with the smile, the kind word, the useful suggestion, the knowledgeable care, the pleasant reply. Look about for chances to relieve, rescue or resuscitate. Train yourselves that you may render help quickly and well.” 9.10 p53
- d) “Of course, one should not treat all equally, have the same prescription for all. Serve each according to specific need and capacity to benefit by the help.” 5.51 p281
- e) “... try to discover whether it has been intelligently rendered with full appreciation of the peculiar circumstances of the individual who needed it.” 13.18 p95
- f) “Earn by your efficiency and enthusiasm the right to play higher and higher roles-- that is the meaning and purpose of life.” 10.13 p84
- g) “The Lord will be watching with a thousand eyes the least activity of man to discover any slight trace of self-less Love sweetening it.” 12.48 p264

2) (“Serve people, with no thought of high or low....”)

- a) “Do not consider any act of service as demeaning. Sweeping the streets, for example is not below your dignity.... Why be ashamed to be good?” 15.57 p330
- b) “Serve people, with no thought of high or low; no Seva is high, no Seva is low, each act of Seva is equal in the eye of the Lord; it is the readiness, the joy, the efficiency, the skill with which you rush to do it that matters.” 7.31 p163
- c) “Do not be ashamed that you have been asked to watch a heap of sandals, or carry water to the thirsty, or stand at the gate.” 10.6 p30
- d) “It is the attitude that is essential. The particular item of service might be small. You may not get a chance to partake in some gigantic scheme of service through which millions may be benefited; you can lift a lame lamb over a stile, or, lead a blind child across a busy road. That too is an act of worship.” 10.6 p28
- e) “The act of service is not to be judged, according to the cost or publicity it entails; it may be only the offering of a cup of water in the depth of a jungle. But, the need of the recipient, the mood of the person who offers-- these decide whether the act is gold or lead.” 7.23 p134
- f) “The cup can be of any shape or design; the joy consists in the nectar that it is able to convey to the person who is thirsty and anguished.” 9.11 p56

3) (“... do not worry about the result”)

- a) “A sevak must be neither elated nor dejected.... when Rama asked Hanuman to proceed towards the Southern region and described the dangers of the route, he was not dejected; when He gave him the ring to be handed over to Sitha, he was not elated that he had been chosen for the supreme task and given the glorious chance. He just obeyed. Sufficient unto him was the order of his Master, ‘Go’. Hanuman is the ideal volunteer: efficient, humble, silent, serviceable, intelligent, eager, devoted.” 7.14 p75
- b) “Forget all else, and stick to the orders that I give; I want only to initiate you into the spiritual path of Seva and Love.” 11.6 p29-30
- c) “Efforts to serve must spring from agony at the suffering of others, and the service must be the genuine effort to get rid of that anguish. And there is another point too to remember: do not worry about the result. Help as much as you can, as efficiently as you can, as silently as you can, as lovingly as you can; leave the rest to God, who gave you the chance to serve.” 6.25 p116 (1st U.S. Edition)

E. Service as Sadhana (“Seva... is primarily Sadhana!”)

1) (“... engage yourselves in relieving distress....”)

- a) “You will note that the seventh step (along the path of dedication and surrender) is Dasyam, the Servant Stage. That is the stage of service, which every person calling himself a social worker, or volunteer, or sevak has to reach. It is more fruitful than reciting the Name or counting beads, or spending hours in meditation, though one’s service will be richer and more satisfying if done on the basis of spiritual discipline.” 10.4 p18
- b) “Get up, place the rosary in its bag, and engage yourselves in relieving distress-- that is the true spiritual path.” 6.34 p148 (1st U.S. Edition)
- c) “... by devoting the hand to the service of the sick, you are purifying it, you are justifying it. Direct the senses towards these ends; they become beneficial instruments.” 8.4 p15
- d) “For, if a person is imbued with the urge to serve and the belief that all are embodiments of the Divine Principle, that is itself the most potent Japa, the most beneficent Dhyana.” 9.10 p55
- e) “... I like the Puja that is done not for the sake of the individual but for the sake of humanity. By all means, do puja in order to promote the happiness and peace of living beings. Develop that Love for men everywhere. That is My Mission too, My Resolution, My Sankalpa, My Deeksha-- the planting of Love in every human heart.” 2.28 p150
- f) “... do not pay heed to what others might say when you engage in service activities. When you are doing good acts, why hesitate, why feel ashamed, why fear?” 15.31 p169

2) Service and Pure Consciousness

(“Watch what happens!”)

“I shall illustrate this point. Take an ordinary postal envelope. Upon it in golden ink write the address of a person in very artistic calligraphy. Insert a beautifully worded letter full of amazing sentiments, and then drop it into a post-box. What happens to it? It will not move even a yard away from that box. Now take a mere post card, the cheap unimpressive kind. Write the address with no special care. Scribble the news you wish to convey. Affix a stamp and drop it into the same box. Watch what happens! The artistically ornamented envelope is inert, while this inartistic, cheap document travels a thousand miles towards the person indicated. Therefore, whatever may be the uniqueness or importance, the furor or attractiveness, the service that you can do will yield no fruit if it is done without a pure consciousness.”

13.29 p168

3) (“Are you serving God? Or is God serving you?”)

- a) “Remember, there is no morality higher than truth; there is no prayer more fruitful than service.” 13.29 p172
- b) “... service is the best form of worship.” 3.25 p148
- c) “Many do such things now as ‘social service’, not as a Sadhana in a fullhearted manner.” 15.31 p167
- d) “Have this so inscribed on your heart-- the axiom that ‘serving others is meritorious, that harming others or remaining unaffected and idle while others suffer, is sin.’” 9.12 p61
- e) “Dharma purifies the mind and leads you to God. It creates a taste for the Name and the Form of God.” 5.12 p74
- f) “Seva in all its forms, all the world over, is primarily Sadhana! It is spiritual discipline, mental clean-up. Without the inspiration given by that attitude, the urge is bound to ebb and grow dry; or, it may meander into pride and pomp. Just think for a moment: Are you serving God? Or is God serving you?” 9.10 p52

4) (“I am hoping you will catch up with the ideal...”)

“... I am exhorting you to take up the vow of Seva as a spiritual Sadhana; I must say that I am not satisfied with your performance yet. But, I have not given up instructing you, and commissioning you, for, I am hoping that you will catch up with the ideal some day or other. This is an example of the quality of mercy that is natural to me. That quality makes me appreciate even the little attempts you make to practice the ideal of Seva.”

10.6 p29

F. Service to the Community (2) (“... the world outside reacting on the inner urges....”)

1) (“Give... what God has given you....”)

- a) “Whatever you do, wherever you are placed, believe that God has put you there for that work.” 12.24 p128
- b) “Each limb has to perform its task, the task for which it has specialized. You cannot walk on your head or think with your feet. It is a co-operative commonwealth...” 4.39 p230
- c) “An opportunity to be of some service to fellowmen comes to you as a gift from God.” 11.5 p29
- d) “Seva is a great opportunity to see the God indwelling in all. Rama could have rescued Sitha unaided; but He chose to grant the Seva to the Vanara hordes, for they were the gods who had come to claim that chance.” 7.14 p70
- e) “Whatever information, instruction, or inspiration man has gained, or whatever wealth, riches or material possessions he has earned, he should share them with others in an unselfish manner. This is his primary duty.” 14.39 p216-217
- f) “Give, as an act of worship to the Divine that you wish to adore in the person to whom you are offering what God has given you for this very purpose!” 10.19 p118
- g) “Share-- then the sense of One-ness gets established; you lose all fear and shed all envy, and grow greatly in Love.” 11.52 p299

2) (“the very eagerness to serve others will endow you with the... skill necessary....”)

- a) “The person who has undergone samskara becomes a humble servant of those who need help. This is the stage of service to society. Service of this kind, done with reverence and selflessness, prepares man to realize the One that pervades the many.” 13.25 p145-146
- b) “... ‘Heads in the forest, hands in Society.’” 14.13 p81
- c) “Your heart should be like glass, with the spiritual light inside illuminating the world outside; the world outside reacting on the inner urges and making them lean towards service, sympathy and mutual help.” 1.28 p173
- d) “Pay attention to your duties and responsibilities. This is no ordinary burden that you have been privileged to carry. Do not carry your head high, and taunt people. Stoop, so that you can pick your burden up and place it on the shoulders. Bend as the branch bends, it is heavy with fruit! Each duty well done is a deposit to your credit in the Bank of God! Fatten that deposit; you can draw on it by means of cheques; you can claim payment as of right.” 9.32 p168

e) Hanuman

(“... dedicated... every twitch of muscle, to his Master...”)

“The Ramayana gives two examples of such consecrated lives, those of Anjaneya and Lakshmana. Anjaneya or Hanuman dedicated every moment of his life, every wave of thought, every twitch of muscle, to his Master, Rama. When Rama sent him in the southerly direction on the mission to search for Sitha, he was neither elated on being thus recognized as an efficient instrument nor depressed at the dangerous nature of his task. He knew that Rama would confer on him the skill and strength needed to fulfill the errand; in fact all his skill and all his strength were ‘His gifts’. To feel that he was too weak an instrument was, he concluded, an insult to Rama’s Omniscience and Grace.” 12.28 p152

- f) “With a genuine keenness or readiness to serve others, you can be happy in any group or community.” 14.7 p46
- g) “The very eagerness to serve others will endow you with the power and skill necessary for the required service.” 14.7 p46

G. All is God (“... the living God... moving all around you....”)

- 1) “You long for serving Me; let Me tell you, serving those who serve Me gives Me as much satisfaction as serving Me. Serving anyone is serving Me, for, I am in all.” 10.6 p30
- 2) “Paraseva (Service of others) is the negative pole; Atma-seva (Service to one-self) is the positive pole; and when they meet, the Flash of Ananda (Bliss) emanates.” 11.23 p126
- 3) “... you are sanctifying the grain you have harvested by offering the food prepared out of it to these Gods (Narayana) in human form. Call it Narayana Seva!....” 13.4 p21
- 4) “Do not treat them as nara (human); treat them as Narayana, the Lord Himself. You are not alleviating the distress of that other person; you are offering worship to the Lord, in that Form, in that body.” 8.33 p181
- 5) “When you feel that it is not the ‘other’ whom you are serving-- but, yourself, then, your service will be better and more effective. Establish this attitude more and more firmly in your mind.” 10.34 p216
- 6) “Even if you falter in the adoration of God, do not falter in the service of the living God, who has assumed human shape and is moving all around you in such large numbers and wearing such manifold costumes of apparel and speech!” 10.39 p264

- 7) “Service... broadens your vision, widens your awareness, deepens your compassion. All waves are on the same Sea, from the same Sea, merge in the same Sea. Seva teaches you to be firm in this knowledge.” 10.16 p99-100

H. The Spiritual Discipline of Service (“... your own treasure...”)

“The spiritual discipline of service is quite distinct. In service you devote all your energy and attention to the task at hand, for it is a dedicated task. You forget the body and ignore its demands. You set aside your individuality and its prestige and perquisites. You pluck your ego by its roots and cast it away. You give up your status, conceit, your name, and form and all that they demand from others. This process makes the consciousness pure. Whatever the task you are performing, renounce your personal individuality and share its travails and troubles, its fruits and benefits, with God. You need not bring in God from somewhere outside you; He is in you, all the while. This truth must be your own discovery, your own treasure, your own strength.” 13.29 p169

I. In God’s Presence (“Where there is Love... God is certainly evident”)

- 1) (“... worship Him through selfless service to humanity”)
- a) “Look upon everyone as an embodiment of the Divine and worship each as such, by offering love, understanding, and service.” 13.8 p35
 - b) “The relief and joy that you give to the sick and the sad, reach Me, for I am in their hearts, and I am the One they call out for.” 10.6 p30
 - c) “God appears before you as a blind beggar, an idiot, a leper, a child, a decrepit old man, a criminal, or a madman. You must look behind those veils for the Divine embodiment of love, power, and wisdom-- the Sai-- and worship Him through selfless service to humanity.” 13.8 p38
 - d) “Prahlada knew the truth, ‘Sarvam vishnu mayam jagath’; ‘This world is all filled with the immanent God’. He knew it by study and by experience; he knew it as an everpresent fact. So, when he was asked to frame a boon to be granted by the Lord who concretized before him, he asked neither for the revival of his father, or the restoration of his kingdom, or long life or wealth or fame; he asked for the chance of assuaging the pain and sorrow of all beings! God, he knew, was manifest as those beings and the best form of serving God was to serve those manifestations and give them relief and joy.” 6.5 p24

- e) “I want to tell you that the Ananda you derive from service is something you can never get through any other activity. The thrill that a kind word, a small gift, a good gesture, a sign of sympathy, a sign of compassion can bring about on a distressed heart is something that is beyond words to describe.” 9.22 p118
- f) “It is an act of merit to be of service to others; it is a sin to harm others.’
Believing in this, if you sincerely, unhesitatingly, constantly, gladly, lovingly, offer all your skill and strength to the service of others, God will melt and move and manifest Himself in you, before you, with spontaneous Grace.”
7.21 p122

2) “What exactly is Seva?”
 (“... the very essence of Bhakthi....”)

“What exactly is Seva? Is it the way in which Bhakthi manifests itself, a consequence of devotion? Or is it the cause of Bhakthi, one of the methods by which Bhakthi is expressed and developed? It is neither. It is not the sine qua non of Bhakthi, nor is it the result. It is the very essence of Bhakthi, the very breath of a Bhaktha, his very nature. It springs from the actual experience of the Bhaktha-- an experience that convinces him that all beings are God’s children, that all bodies are altars where God is installed, that all places are His Residences.”
7.14 p69

- 3) (“... the Seva of the Lord keeps you always in His Presence....”)
- a) “The service of man is the only means by which you can serve God.” 10.6 p30
- b) “All your life, you must be Love, with Love, for Love. That is to say, love expressed through service to those that draw that love from you, and by drawing, help to increase it and deepen it.” 9.30 p158
- c) “Love is God, God is Love. Where there is Love, there, God is certainly evident. Love more and more people, love them more and more intensely; transform the love into service, transform the service into worship; that is the highest Sadhana.” 5.17 p96
- d) “Like a lighted lamp, God’s Grace spreads all round, on all who approach Him and love to be near him....” 6.10 p53
- e) “You must be happy that the Seva of the Lord keeps you always in His Presence and ever vigilant to carry out His behests.” 4.24 p137
- f) “... wherever you are, even in the farthest corner, if you are cheerfully discharging the duty entrusted to you, I shall be with you, by your side; do not doubt this.” 7.5 p26
- g) “... the Seva of the Lord alone matters and it is its own reward....” 1.8 p46
- h) “It is an inner urge to experience the kinship.” 9.18 p99

J. Concluding Comments-- Seva (“Recognize that spring....”)

- 1) (“The real value of Seva... is that it re-forms you....”)
 - a) “The individual by his thoughts, words and deeds develops or undermines the welfare of Society, and thus affects the World.” 11.34 p199
 - b) “The fulfillment of man’s life on earth consists in filling oneself with Love of God and transmuting that Love into acts of Service, Service of man who is the embodiment of God.” 10.34 p211
 - c) “The task is no less than the manifestation of the Divinity latent in man. The easiest and the most pleasant means by which this can be accomplished is Seva-- the service of man, done in a spirit of dedication and devotion.” 13.4 p18
 - d) “... do not believe that you can by means of Seva re-form or re-shape the world. You may or you may not. That does not matter. The real value of Seva, its most visible result, is that it re-forms you, re-shapes you. Do Seva as a Sadhana; then you will be humble and happy. Do not strut about that you are improving others; improve yourself.” 7.14 p70
 - e) “Let not the bulb think that it is shining through its own will; let it be humble, that it is but an instrument, used by the current, to shed light.” 7.38 p195
 - f) “God is there as Love and you are only drawing on Him, when you are sharing Love with others.” 11.7 p42

- 2) (“... see Me in all beings and serve them....”)
 - a) “Service to man will help your divinity to blossom, for, it will gladden your heart and make you feel that life has been worthwhile.” 4.43 p251
 - b) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p164
 - c) “... yearn for service of the divine forms that move around you. Do every deed as an act of worship; make every thought a longing for Him; charge every word that comes from your tongue into a hymn in His praise.” 11.47 p279
 - d) “One single act of service offered to the God whom you visualize in another is worth all the years of yearning for God.” 7.5 p29
 - e) “... the best way to please Me is to see Me in all beings and serve them just as you would like to serve Me.” 8.33 p181
 - f) “A wave of service, if it sweeps over the land, catching every one in its enthusiasm, will be able to wipe off the mounds of hatred, malice and greed that infest the world.” 9.18 p95
 - g) “March on to that consummation, through Sadhana and Seva. That is My Blessing to each of you.” 11.23 p126

3) (“... see it in all, serve it in all”)

- a) “Know it; delve into it; draw sustenance from it; see it in all; serve it in all.”
5.58 p315
- b) “Gather it, garner it, develop it and irrigate parched hearts with it, while you can.”
6.5 p20
- c) “... earn the treasure of Love, store it in your heart and invite all to share in it.”
12.54 p298
- d) “Every blood cell, every nerve, must tingle with Love, with eagerness to share that Love with the forlorn.”
10.6 p28
- e) “Above all, cultivate love, express love.... Let love be your very breath. Let the sun of love help the lotus of your heart to blossom. May you be victorious in all your undertakings of service. That is My blessing for each one of you.”
13.18 p98
- f) “To realize the One, the Universal Absolute, which personalizes Itself into God and Creation, there is no discipline more valuable and more effective than SEVA.... All the 1000 names of thousand-faced society connote only the One God that plays in those 1000 roles. The One appears as if it is enshrined in the 1000 bodies. This is the truth you have to realize and cherish as the most precious in life.”
11.47 p278

4) (“... every act is His”)

- a) “‘Sarvathah pani padam, sarvathokshi siro mukham’, says the Githa. All hands are His, all feet, all eyes and all faces and mouths are His; He works through all hands, He walks through all feet, He sees through each eye, He eats and speaks through every mouth. Everything is He. Every step is His, every look, every speech, every act is His. That is the lesson that Seva instills.”
11.22 p115-116
- b) “Without that spring of Love that bubbles in your heart, you will not be prompted to love at all. Recognize that spring, rely on it more and more, develop its possibilities, try to irrigate the whole world with it, discard all touch of self from it, do not seek anything in return for it from those to whom you extend it.”
5.17 p96-97

II. Bhakthi

(“... no other Goal, no other Ideal, no other Wish”)

A. Introduction (“Prema directed toward the Lord is called Bhakthi....”)

1) (“Bhakthi is Prema, unsullied by any tinge of desire for the benefit....”)

- a) “Prema directed toward the Lord is called Bhakthi....” 1.8 p46
- b) “Bhakthi is not to be calculated on the basis of the institutions one has started or helped, the temples one has built or renovated, the donations one has given away, nor does it depend on the number of times one has written the Name of the Lord or on the time and energy one has spent in the worship of the Lord. Those are not vital at all, no, not even secondary. Bhakthi is Prema, unsullied by any tinge of desire for the benefit that flows from it or the fruit or consequence of that love. It is love that knows no particular reason for its manifestation.” 4.12 p67
- c) “Bhakthi or Devotion has been defined as, ‘Saa Paraa anurakthih Esware’, ‘It is supreme single-pointed attachment to the Lord.’” 11.41 p241

2) (“The Call of the Divine echoes in every heart....”)

- a) “Bhakthi believes that God is Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, that He is to be adored, and propitiated by deeds that He appreciates, that God is Master and you are privileged to serve.” 10.31 p192
- b) “The Grace of the Lord is a subject dear to every one. It is a subject that is within the grasp of all.... So, any story that brings into your consciousness, His Glory, His Grace and His Beauty must perforce appeal to you.” 3.18 p104-105
- c) “You are now worshipping Siva or Narayana or Rama or Krishna, is it not? Tell Me how you got started. What experience did you have, ere you began, of Rama’s Daya or Santham or Prema? Or of Krishna’s Karuna or Prema?.... The experience of that bond will come to you, unawares.... Believe and Be Blessed.” 2.20 p102
- d) “The Call of the Divine echoes in every heart; it provokes the reaction of awe, reverence, affection love and sacrifice-- all ingredients of Bhakthi. It translates itself into acts of worship, of praise, of adoration and of rituals symbolizing the majesty of God. Thus, the mind gets saturated with Divine thoughts, it is recast in the Divine Mould, until the flow of Ananda is unabated.” 10.25 p153

B. Bhakthi-Marga (“... the yearning for Light, for illumination”)

1) (“It is an inner revolution....”)

- a) “When you need to reach God, rise and move, as He has directed you to.”
11.54 p308
- b) “To get grounded in Bhakthi, good activity, good company, good listening and good behaviour are essential.”
5.18 p99
- c) “When Bhakthi is just emerging as a sapling, a fence is needed to protect the tender plant; that fence is Sanathana Dharma and its rules, regulations and restrictions, directions and commands.”
1.2 p16 (1st U.S. Edition)
- d) “Do not think that only those who worship a picture of image with a pompous paraphernalia are devotees. Whoever walks straight along the moral path, whoever acts as he speaks and speaks as he has seen, whoever melts at another’s woe and exults at another’s joy... is a devotee, perhaps a greater devotee.”
2.2 p7
- e) “Bhakthi is not measured by the outward signs of tears and exhilaration. It is an inner revolution, a transformation of all values and outlooks.”
2.35 p203

2) “Maanasa Bhajare”

(“... offer Him the fruits of your actions....”)

“... that day when I came out publicly as Sai Baba, the first song I taught the gathering in the garden to which I went from the Telugu Pandit’s house was: ‘Maanasa bhajare guru charanam, Dustara bhava sagara tharanam’. I called on all those suffering in this endless round of birth and death to worship the Feet of the Guru, the Guru that was announcing Himself, who had come again for taking upon Himself the burden of those who took refuge in Him. That was the very first Message of Mine to Humanity. ‘Maanasa bhajare’. ‘Worship in the mind!’ I do not need your flower garlands and fruits.... Give Me something that is yours, something which is clean and fragrant with the perfume of virtue and innocence, and washed in the tears of repentance! Garlands and fruits you bring as items in the Show, as an exhibition of your devotion; poorer devotees who cannot afford to bring them are humiliated and they feel sorry that... they cannot demonstrate their devotion in the grand way in which you are doing it. Install the Lord in your heart and offer Him the fruits of your actions and the flowers of your inner thoughts and feelings. That is the worship I like most, the devotion I appreciate most.” 1.1 p1-2

- 3) (“A man with Bhakthi will do every act as worship of the Lord....”)
- a) “When you claim to have Bhakthi, the question naturally arises, where have you placed your attachment, your affection, your unswerving loyalty and why.”
4.34 p201
 - b) “A man with Bhakthi will do every act as worship of the Lord....” 1.23 p143
 - c) “Like the needle of the compass always pointing to the North, never deviating from that direction, returning to it, readily, gladly, quickly, whenever it is shaken off that line, so too the Bhaktha must face the Lord ever, must be happy only when he is set towards Him.”
3.41 p232
 - d) “... the thoughts and feelings should be ever immersed in the contemplation of the Glory of the Lord.”
1.35 p224
 - e) “The world and its attractions may appeal to your instincts and impulse but, God draws out your Love, as no worldly thing can.”
13.12 p57-58
 - f) “The genuine outer signs of Bhakthi are three: faith, humility, and apprehension. Faith in the ultimate victory of truth and love; humility before elders and the wise; apprehension in the presence of evil; fear to mix with bad company, to enter into evil designs, to act counter to the whisperings of conscience.”
5.50 p274
 - g) “So, learn to be happy and content where you are; do not run towards towns hoping to secure happiness and contentment there; have inner riches, not outer acquisitions.... That is the sign of the genuine Bhaktha, not unrestricted speech and movements.”
5.15 p88
- 4) (“... the devotee does not wince or exult, when ill or well”)
- a) “My tasks are.... Fostering of the Vedas and Fostering of Bhakthas. Now, what is Bhakthi? Who are Bhakthas? It is faith, steadiness, virtue, fearlessness, surrender, absence of egoism.”
3.1 p9-10
 - b) “You sometimes talk as if the Bhaktha leads a life beset with hardships and sorrows and that the man who does not bend before a Higher Power is care-free and prosperous; but this is a totally wrong idea. The Bhaktha sails on an even keel; he has inner peace, a spring of joy which sustains him and keeps him together.”
1.34 p218
 - c) “The true sign of a Sai Bhakta is this steadiness. He cannot swerve from this chosen path, by cynicism or the call of luxurious pomp. He puts spiritual teachings into practice and knows the immeasurable gain it gives.”
8.28 p155
 - d) “Bhakthi is something sweet, soothing, refreshing and restoring. It must confer patience and fortitude. The Bhaktha will not be perturbed, if another gets the interview first or if another is given greater consideration. He is humble and bides his time....”
1.35 p224

- e) “Just as the same Sun causes both day and night, the same Divine Will causes joy and grief; so, the devotee does not wince or exult, when ill or well.”
12.42 p227
- f) “Devotion to the Divine will give you Bliss, and Prosperity and Peace.”
12.36 p202
- 5) (“Bhakthi is really unswerving loyalty to God....”)
- a) “Devotion fosters the highest virtue; it is the most precious treasure.... For, Bhakthi is Love of the purest and the noblest variety.” 12.36 p195
- b) “Bhakthi is really unswerving loyalty to God, with Form and Attributes, and a Name.” 4.34 p201
- c) “Bhakthi is not to be ‘performed’ during certain periods every day, and superseded by other fashionable attractions. Bhakthi is a constant, continuous bent of mind, a habit of thought, a way of life. It must be loyally adhered to whatever may happen-- dishonour, distress, despair, deprivation, pleasure, prosperity, power and pomp.” 8.24 p127
- d) “Love is the attachment to God that does not allow anything to interfere or diminish its quality or depth. God is loved by the devoted for His sake, and not for any incidental benefit or blessing. This love is spontaneous, sustaining, and sublime, like a child before the mirror enjoying the reflections of its own pranks and gestures.” 13.23 p128
- e) “The true devotee... will not slide or climb whatever happens. He knows that the God whom he adores is the indweller in the blade of grass and in the most distant star.” 8.24 p127
- 6) (“It is a full time Sadhana”)
- a) “Bhakthi, however, has been watered down into a routine ritual-- like turning the beads of a rosary, squatting a specified number of hours before an image, offering of incense, waving of lights, ringing of bells, dipping in holy waters or climbing hills to reach shrines.” 8.24 p126
- b) “You believe that the time spent in church or temple or the domestic shrine in adoration and in ritual worship is devoted to God, and the rest is spent for other purposes. But, you cannot demarcate and delimit the realms of God and man like that.” 12.15 p70
- c) “Bhakthi or devotion to God is not to be judged or measured by rosaries or candles, daubings on the forehead or matted hair or jingles on the ankles....” 5.50 p274
- d) “Devotion should not be confined to the four walls of the shrine-room, or the few minutes you perform Dhyana.” 12.5 p18
- e) “Bhakthi is not a uniform to be worn on Thursday evenings, when you gather for bhajana, and to be laid aside when the Bhajana is over.” 3.41 p231

- f) “Bhakthi is not obtained by locking yourself in a room and worshipping an idol with devotion.” 15.40 p227
- g) “Bhakthi is not like lime pickle, to be used only when you have fever; it is man’s daily substance, the vitamin he must needs have for physical and mental health.” 3.37 p212
- h) “It is a fulltime Sadhana. Your devotion has to be expressed as worship of every one, as a living embodiment of Divinity. See God in every one, even in persons whom you regard as your enemies. Practice that broad, inclusive type of Love.” 12.5 p18
- i) “... purity of motives is essential, so that Prema which is the one component of Bhakthi does not leak out of the heart.” 5.50 p274
- 7) (“It advises him to rid himself of egotism, to curb sensual desires”)
- a) “Bhakthi is derived from bha or Bhagavan or God. It directs man to have God ever in mind and to cultivate Love for God within him. It advises him to rid himself of egotism, to curb sensual desires.” 12.36 p194
- b) “Do not waver; do not go today to devotion, tomorrow to sensual gratification, and the day after again to devotion.” 14.1 p7
- c) “Bhakthi is not simply the worship of the Lord; it is much more than that. Primarily it is the control of the senses; for, when Life is offered as worship, the senses do not run after transient things.” 4.42 p246
- d) “Vairagya means ‘renunciation’-- not renouncing property and family ties, but renouncing the hold that the mind, and the desire it breeds, have on you.” 15.1 p5
- e) “Seek something supreme, something of the highest value, something that is beyond diminution and decline-- that is true Bhakthi.” 12.21 p101-102
- f) “The mind is a mischief-maker.... It weaves a net and gets entangled in it.... Place before it things more tasty and it will hanker only for those.” 2.3 p13
- g) “Bhakthi is... a Yoga, a process of eliminating the mind or transforming the mind into an instrument for realizing God.” 8.24 p126
- 8) (“I appreciate... devotion that is too deep... to care for publicity”)
- a) “But, even before your Bhakthi ripens, you strive to lead others; you collect donations and subscriptions and plan Mandirs and Sanghas; all this is mere show, which brings spiritual loss, rather than spiritual gain.” 4.35 p210
- b) “You may claim to be a Bhaktha and declare yourself as such, when you speak; but, unless your egoism has gone and you love all equally, the Lord will not acknowledge your Bhakthi!” 5.15 p88
- c) “To feel proud that you are a Bhaktha is also a blot.” 4.44 p255

- d) “I am not enamoured of the devotion that desires to show off, to impress others of its depth! I do not appreciate Aadambara-bhakthi (Pompous parading of devotion); I appreciate Aananda-bhakthi (Devotion that is too deep for words and too intense to care for publicity).” 10.14 p91
- e) “Without gaining purity of thought and intention, compassion, and the urge to serve, these outward expressions and exhibitions are but ways of cheating yourself in order to have society applaud you as a great devotee.” 13.11 p53-54
- f) “He who shouts and swears and advertises his worries to every one he meets and craves for sympathy, such a one can never be a Bhaktha.” 1.35 p224
- g) “... the Bhaktha will communicate his troubles and problems only to his Lord; he will not humiliate himself by talking about them to all and sundry, for what can a man, who is as helpless as himself, do to relieve him?” 1.35 p224
- h) “Bring ‘Bhakthi’ and lay it here and take from here ‘Sakthi’ instead! The more such business is done, the more pleased am I. Bring what you have, namely, your sorrows and griefs, worries and anxieties, and take from Me joy and peace, courage and confidence.” 1.2 p15

9) (“Devotion has to be guided and controlled by discipline and duty”)

- a) “India is the land where the triple spirituality of discipline, devotion, and duty was first laid down and where it has had the largest number of votaries through the ages.” 13.8 p97
- b) “Devotion has to be guided and controlled by discipline and duty. What exactly is duty in this context? By duty I do not mean the items of work entrusted to you by your superiors or society. Duty means your responsibility not to hinder or harm anyone by your movements, speech, behaviour, or activities.” 13.20 p107-108
- c) “You may have Devotion, you may discharge the Duty entrusted to you. But, unless you are saturated in Discipline, the other two are useless.” 12.23 p121
- d) “Many of you rushed forward when I walked along the passage this morning and tried to reach out your hands for touching My Feet, falling over others while so doing.” 12.23 p121-122
- e) “Do not run about excitedly and fall on the car as I move out, causing injuries to women, old men, and children.” 5.15 p88
- f) “This is definitely an instance of devotion outrunning discipline.” 12.23 p122
- g) “Devotion, when it knows no bounds, easily falls into hysteria.” 8.25 p137
- h) “Discipline must regulate and control... every activity of your life.” 12.23 p122
- i) “However far I moved among the huge gatherings, people never ventured to rise and fall at My Feet; they did not as much as lean forward to touch them, unless I indicated that they could. They paid homage in their hearts only.” 8.25 p137
- j) “The depth of devotion can be clearly gauged from your faces.” 12.5 p19

- 10) (“This place of God must be approached in the true spirit of humility....”)
- a) “That is the subtle alchemy of the surroundings and the company. Some places have a tremendous impact on the mind.” 2.34 p198
 - b) “The truths they practice, the hymns they sing, the prayers they voice forth, are filling the atmosphere here with Divine Fragrance.” 14.50 p284
 - c) “This place of God must be approached in the true spirit of humility and prayer. Picnic parties and tourists have no place here.” 3.36 p206-207
- 11) (“Purify the heart by being good and kind to all”)
- a) “I want that you should yearn also for the illumination of your inner world, the restoration of the current to shed light on the dark recesses of your minds. That is what is called Bhakthi, the yearning for Light, for illumination.” 2.35 p204-205
 - b) “I am not attracted by learning or scholarship, which does not lead anywhere except towards egoism and pride. I am drawn only by devotion. Bring to Me whatever troubles you have; I shall take them on and give you Ananda.” 4.6 p32
 - c) “When I like My Bhakthas, I like their faults too, though some here turn up their noses and laugh at the peculiar follies and foibles of people who come from all the various provinces. I am drawn by the Love which brings you here from long distances through great difficulties....” 4.6 p32
 - d) “I must intensify your bhakthi, reinforce your faith and rebuild the foundations of your moral nature, so that you can counter temptations with greater confidence.” 1.30 p190-191
 - e) “When the Lord does not approach the devotee, the fault lies in the heart of the devotee; it is not pure enough. Purify the heart by being good and kind to all.” 4.34 p205
- 12) (“He is eager to satisfy the yearning of the genuine seeker”)
- a) “It is said that the Bhaktha can get the Lord everywhere easily but the Lord cannot get a Bhaktha so easily. Yes, it is difficult to secure a Bhaktha who has that unshaken faith, that attitude of complete self-surrender. Such an attitude can come ony by Namasmarana, constant, sincere and continuous; as continuous as the act of breathing and felt to be as essential for life.” 1.35 p225
 - b) “... Bhakthas require some Name and Form (which they can run to) for consolation and courage and advice.” 2.27 p146
 - c) “Wherever My name is sung, there I install Myself.” 2.27 p146
 - d) “The Grace of God cannot be won by mere repetition of His Glories; utter the name of God, with its halo of meaning clear in the mind and soaking into your acts and feelings.” 10.16 p100

- e) “The inner motive which prompts the deed-- that is what the Lord seeks to weigh.” 5.57 p310
- f) “When you call out in all sincerity, the response will certainly come.” 5.57 p310
- g) “Children go to the sweet shop and select sweets representing the animals they love: some ask for the dog, some the peacock, some the horse, some chose the elephant. But, what they desire is the sweetness therein. To say that one Form alone can be sweet is to deny the compassion of God.” 8.30 p168
- h) “I have no sense of distinction between Bhaktas who worship this Form or that. All can come near....” 8.28 p156
- i) “The Lord takes the Form that the seekers crave for; He is above all Name and Form.” 8.30 p168
- j) “He is eager to satisfy the yearning of the genuine seeker.” 8.30 p168

13) (“Become rich... in devotion to the Higher Power”)

- a) “For treading the Bhakthimarga, one needs no scholarship, nor wealth nor riches, nor ascetic rigours. Tell me what was the lineage of Valmiki, the wealth of Kuchela, the scholarship of Sabari, the age of Prahlada, the status of Gajaraja, the attainments of Vidura? Prema-- that was all they had and that was all they needed. The Grace of the Lord is as the Ocean: vast, limitless.” 1.8 p46
- b) “I wish to emphasize that purity of the heart, the mind, and the consciousness is more important for progress than even meditation and prayer. Purity alone can convince you of the Divine within you, of the God immanent in this body. Love all, adore all, serve all. That is the discipline of worship to win purity and earn grace.” 14.35 p198-199
- c) “Reason makes devotion a sharp instrument. Reason out the purpose of your sojourn on the earth, the purpose of the intelligence with which you have been endowed. Then, devotion will encourage you to fill your days with steady, controlled activity, towards Liberation.” 5.19 p107
- d) “... when the Vedas and Sastras enter into the daily life of her children.... Then, the children will have faith in the Supreme, and in their destiny of ultimate merger with it. This will make them true Bhakthas or devotees, for they will then be devoted to their true Goal.” 4.50 p291
- e) “Devotees do not deserve that status, merely by doing out charity or visiting holy places, or attending religious discourses; fill the mind with Love, remove hatred and envy; adopt straight thinking and planning, that alone can justify the status of devotee. Walk steadily and silently towards the Goal, merging with God.” 12.36 p197-198
- f) “It is not mere Bhakthi that I want, I want action motivated by Bhakthi, Throw off all your present responsibilities and take up this new responsibility of saving yourself; then you will see the wonder; even the responsibilities will be discharged smoothly and to your satisfaction.” 2.40 p235
- g) “Become rich rather in virtue, in the spirit of service, in devotion to the Higher Power. That is what pleases Me and saves you.” 2.23 p125

C. Forms of Bhakthi (“... the entire Creation is Cosmic Leela of God...”)

1) Saguna Bhakthi and Nirguna Bhakthi

(“... adoration of some one Sugar Doll.... contemplation on the sugar....”)

“Bhakthi can flow along two paths: Saguna Bhakthi and Nirguna Bhakthi. When you feel that God is far away, far higher, far beyond you and when you plead for mercy, petition for Grace, and pray for boons, it is Saguna; you adore Him as Lord and Master, as guardian and Saviour. You go through the ceremonials of praise, propitiation and prostration, submission and service. When you practice the discipline of seeing Him in all beings as the core of every cell or atom, alive and aware, and experience Unity with all Creation (for Creation is but His Body and you are also in it and of it) then, it is Nirguna. The Nirguna is the contemplation on the sugar; the Saguna is the adoration of some one Sugar Doll, which has caught your fancy and attracted your love and loyalty.”

12.21 p102

2) Prema

(“... the sweetest, the most charming....”)

“Prema or Love is a much-misused word. Any positive response to the attraction is called Love; any feeling of attachment, however trivial or transitory is characterized as Prema. We must certainly coin new words or set aside specific words to indicate the forms of love.

“The attachment of parents to their children or of children to the parents must be called affection. The response to the attraction of sex can be best described as fancy, fascination, or delusion, Moha. The feeling of kinship or comradeship evokes dearness. The pleasure one gets through a sense of possession, especially of material objects can be known as satisfaction. The yearning to reach for the sublimity that lies inherent in Truth-- this alone is entitled to be called by that holy word, Prema. For, that is the sweetest, the most charming, the most satisfying possession of Man.

“Prema is strong and steady enough to overleap all obstacles, confront with equanimity all changes of fortune, and defeat all attempts to delay or deviate. It does not judge one incident as good and another as bad; it does not ascribe them to different agencies.”

12.42 p227

3) (“The heart filled with compassion....”)

- a) “I came to the Githa Sathsang to see all of you, because I bless all efforts by man to raise himself by study and Sadhana. ‘Madbhakthaah yathra gaayanthi, thathra thishtaami, Naarada’ is the declaration. ‘Wherever My Bhakthas sing of Me, there I install Myself.’ Why, the Lord is always there and everywhere, whether you sing of Him or not. The singing only makes Him manifest, like the radio receiver which catches the tune from the ether when it is switched to the correct wavelength. The current is flowing ever; when you fix the bulb, you will get the light.” 2.10 p41-42
- b) “The Lord told Narada that he can find Him installed wherever His glory is sung by His devotees. Does it mean that He is installed in the thousands of places where devotional singing is sung? No. The precondition is ‘sung by devotees’. The devotees sing to please God, to acclaim His majesty; they do not crave for exhibition, appreciation, or fame, nor have they any envy or pride in their hearts.” 10.28 p177-78 (1st U.S. Edition)
- c) “The heart filled with compassion is the temple in which He likes to install Himself.” 14.59 p339

4) Bhajan

(“... devotional singing is of four types....”)

- a) “Samkirtan or devotional singing is of four types: guna-samkirtan, leela-samkirtan, bhava-samkirtan, and nama-samkirtan....
- i) Guna means ‘attributes’ (of God). So guna-samkirtan is the adoration in song of the manifold attributes of God-- omnipresence, omniscience, compassion, majesty, etc.
- ii) Leela means ‘sport’, therefore leela-samkirtan is the adoration in song of the various expressions of these attributes as evidenced by the accounts of sages and seers of all faiths.
- iii) Bhava means ‘attitude’ (of the mind). So bhava-samkirtan means the adoration in song of God pictured and contacted under various relationships. Some may prefer to adore Him as the giver of equanimity, others as a friend, guide, and guardian, still others as the child one loves and tends, and yet others as the lover whom one loves with sovereign love.
- iv) Nama means the name of God, and so nama-sankirtan means the adoration of God, calling upon Him by various names, each describing His glory, His achievements, His relationship with the individual.” 13.24 p135

5) Samkeerthanam

(“The melody must emerge from the heart, from genuine Love....”)

“Keerthanam is singing the Names which denote the glory of the Lord and Samkeerthanam means ‘singing the Names continuously, aloud, without interruption, and without hesitation’. Whereas Keerthana can be by one individual and can promote one’s own spiritual progress, Sam-keerthanam is by a group of people. It can help the process of liberation not only for the members of the group, but it will also be beneficial to those who listen and even to those beyond the circle of listeners; the whole world can benefit by the vibrations.

“Samkeerthanam is generally described as of four types, with distinct characteristics. They are:

- 1) Guna Samkeerthanam
- 2) Leela Samkeerthanam,
- 3) Bhaava Samkeerthanam
- 4) Naama Sankeerthanam.

“Let us examine these types in some detail.

“Guna Samkeerthanam aims at describing and adoring the gunas or Attributes and Qualities of God, in order to exalt Him and win His Grace. But God is Gunaatheetha, beyond Sathway, Rajas and Thamas; he is really attributeless. Ascribing qualities to Him is lowering His Glory. They exist in the imagination of the devotee and praising God as possessing them can give the devotee only momentary satisfaction.

“Leela Samkeerthanam is the second. The entire Creation represents the Leela of God. Not only that. Its maintenance (Sthithi) and Dissolution (Laya) are also God’s Leela. How can anyone describe the manifold Leelas of God? They take diverse forms. As Leelas, one can imagine the entire Universe can disappear! His Sankalpa is All-powerful. Whatever happens good or bad, is God’s Leela! Unless one has cultivated an attitude of equanimity towards good and bad, one cannot claim to have understood God. The sadakas of today are happy when something good happens; when something bad comes about, they slide into contrary thoughts. When the entire Creation is Cosmic Leela of God, to demarcate a few and sing in terms of those few reveals only feebleness of vision.

“The third type is Bhaava Samkeerthanam. Devotees who are attached to this path of adoration adopt one or other of six special (Bhaava) approaches, attitudes or relationship to God and attempt to derive consummation there by. It must be said that all the six are deficient and based upon limited conception of Godhead.

a) “The Saantha Bhaava. This emphasizes that the devotee endures whatever happens to him gladly as coming from His Grace. In the Mahabharatha, Bhishma is pictured as the supreme model of this type. But, he on his own volition, postponed the moment of his death in order to acquire the merit of having cast off the body on an auspicious day! He believed that the Uttarayana half of the year was more holy and that death before the Sun crosses the Tropic of Capricorn would result in an evil future! When God is both Time and beyond Time, who is man to divide Time into good time and bad? The happiness or misery awaiting one cannot depend on the time of death. Believing so is a sign of weakness in the devotees of God.

b) “Sakhya Bhakthi is devotion to God as a close friend. Arjuna is quoted as the one who was liberated through this type of relationship. But, Arjuna was mostly lost in the human aspects of friendship and kinship and often strayed away from the devotion due to the Divine. He attained closeness to the Lord too easily, so that he failed to recognize the significance of the proximity that was awarded to him. They were such friends that Arjuna addressed Krishna familiarly using the word for ‘brother-in-law’. This indicated only a human kinship....

c) “Daasya Bhakthi is the name of the next type. This highlights the attitude of the servant to the master. Hanuman is the classic example of a devotee embodying this type of devotion. He was at the service of Rama at all times. Though encased in the form of a monkey, he had mastered the sixty-four branches of learning and the meaning of the four Vedas; he could recite the six Sastras. He was physically, mentally and spiritually a redoubtable hero. Nevertheless, he served Rama with no trace of ego in thought, word, and deed. He had achieved purity of all three. But, the Daasa bhakthi of Hanuman was not free from defects. His service was steadfast and total to God as Rama. He was not attached to God as Krishna or as bearing any other name. The Vedas declare that God has a thousand names and He can assume a thousand forms. Hanuman’s allegiance was limited to one name and one form. Daasya Bhakthi, therefore, leads to a partial vision of the Universal Absolute.

d) “Vaathsalya Bhakthi, the fourth, advises the sadhaka to adopt the relationship of a mother to her child. The example held before the aspirant is that of Yasoda and her adoration of the child Krishna. She recognized only this one relationship, though others praised Krishna as Mathura--puri--nivaasa (He who lives in the city of Mathura) and worshipped Him as Gopihridaya--vaasi (He who is installed in the hearts of the Gopis). When Uddhava came from Mathura, Yasoda enquired about her Gopala. ‘I do not know the Krishna who lives in Mathura or in the hearts of Gopis. I am asking you about my child Gopala’, she insisted. Thus, the Vaathsalya Bhakti too leads to a certain amount of exclusiveness.

e) “The next type of devotion is called Anuraaga bhakti. The Gopis of Brindavan are the best examples of votaries of this path. Many crooked, prejudiced and perverted people do not recognize the purity and value of this path. Many interpret it wrongly according to their own bent of mind and take to wrong paths. Narrow minds and narrow ideas can ruin one’s life and the lives of others, like pests destroying the crop. The gopis had the dual feeling of both lover and loved. Duality is caused by ignorance; the mind breeds the duality of likes and dislikes....

f) “Madhura Bhakthi is the last path; Radha is the unique example of Madhura Bhava. The moment the name of Krishna was uttered, she lost herself in indescribable Bliss. In spite of this, even Madhura Bhakthi posits duality. So, Bhaava Samkeerthanam in its various forms does not confer total awareness of God.

“Let us consider the fourth form-- Naama Samkeerthanam. This can grant full happiness to all people, in all places and at all times. There can be nothing greater or more gratifying. The Names Rama, Hari, Hara, Sai, Baba, Krishna--having each two syllables are all derived from the word Prema, which is the essence and core of the Atma. Prema or Love has to prompt our thoughts, penetrate our words and promote our actions....

“Samkeerthanam must be done with emphasis on tone, tune, and timing, attitude and attachment, and the attainment of the highest good. It is not singing for singing’s sake. The melody must emerge from the heart, from genuine Love, which is so ardent that it is thapas itself. Samkeerthanam from such sadhakas will certainly liberate the individual and transform the community and the world.

“Premaswarupas! Even if you are unable to do dhyana or japa, engage yourselves in singing the name of God, without fear and with faith.” 15.41 p231-235

6) Six Streams of Devotion (“... all flowing towards the Lord....”)

“There are six streams of devotion, all flowing towards the Lord and characteristic of six different types of spiritual attitudes. They are peace, comradeship, stewardship, motherly affection, attachment, and sweetness.

“Sweetness is the highest of the six, since it gives the maximum bliss. Milk is curdled and churned, and butter is produced and clarified into ghee. Ghee is the end, the final stage. So, too, sweet devotion is the last stage in the experience of merging in the Lord. The journey ends and the feet stop when the goal is reached. When this sweet experience is achieved, there is nowhere else to go, nothing more to do. The totality of God is experienced in sweet devotion; His full moon aspect, His pure love aspect.

“In devotion of peace, the aspirant practices equanimity and considers all that happens to him as a gift of the grace of God. Therefore, he is unaffected by success or failure; he is ever grateful for whatever God grants him. In devotion of comradeship, the aspirant takes God as his constant counsellor, confidante, companion, and mate. He feels the constant presence of the Lord and is never unaware of Him. In devotion of stewardship, the aspirant feels that he is the servant, the instrument of the Lord, and revels in the role that God gives him on the stage of life. In devotion of motherly love, the aspirant loves the Lord as the mother loves her child-- with tenderness, anxiety, compassion, and vigilance. In devotion of attachment, the aspirant is deeply attached to the manifestation of the Lord, to all emanations of Divinity, and he is highly pleased when he gets a chance to serve them.”

14.5 p28-29

7) “... the highest form of Bhakthi”

“Saranagathi, leaving everything to His Will, is the highest form of Bhakthi.”

1.2 p8

D. Bhakthi-Karma-Jnana (“... emotional adoration... service to man.... the awareness that God is all”)

1) (“... composite and complementary”)

- a) “There are three paths laid down for the awareness of the Immanence of the Divine: Karma, Bhakthi and Jnana. These three are not distinct and diverse; they are composite and complementary.” 10.10 p58
- b) “In this Kali Yuga, the Paths of Devotion, of Righteous Deeds and of the Acquisition of Wisdom are all declared equally effective, so that people of different dispositions and temperaments can have the fortunate chance of the Truth being revealed to them.” 11.39 p232

c) Bhakthi-Karma-Jnana

(“... like the confluence of the three holy rivers at Prayag.....”)

“There is a great deal of useless discussion and controversy about the paths to attain God; some demarcate three paths, Bhakthi, Karma and Jnana. But there need be no controversy on their relative efficacy. They are like the confluence of the three

holy rivers at Prayag, the Ganga, the Yamuna, and the unseen underground Saraswathi. Ganga is the Bhakthi-Marga (the Path of Devotion)-- surrender, control of selfish, sensual pursuits; Yamuna is the Karma-Marga (Path of ritual and ceremonial worship, of dedicatory acts)-- engaging in activities, irrespective of the benefits therefrom, doing all duties as worship, eliminating all attachment, all pride of I-am-the-doer type; Saraswathi is the Jnana-Marga (the Path of knowledge, of acquiring true awareness of the reality)-- cognizing that ideas of bondage are all delusion, that One is ever Free, devoid of change, full of Ananda.” 7.35 p180-181

d) Bhakthi-Karma-Jnana

(“... the Heart of Buddha, the Hands of Emperor Janaka and the Head of Sankaracharya”)

“Man’s feelings and activities move along three courses: the emotional, the actional and the rational, otherwise denoted as Bhakthi, Karma and Jnana paths. The first type does everything in a dedicatory spirit of worship, which promote purity and goodness. The second type does actions which are service-oriented, either towards the individual, or the society or the nation. They derive joy through such activity and realize their life-goals therefrom. They feel that activity is the purpose of living, its justification, its goal. The third type is moved by the spirit of inquiry into the basic principles governing life and nature, or as Vedanta states, into the ‘thatthwa’... (the highest and fullest knowledge)....

“These three types are actually three strands intertwined into one rope. They cannot be untwined. A house is built of brick, mortar and wood. So too, for the mansion called human life, Bhakthi, Karma and Jnana are essential, all three, just as Heart, Hand and Head. For spiritual success one should possess the Heart of Buddha, the Hands of Emperor Janaka and the Head of Sankaracharya. The three together in one form the Love of Sai.” 15.19 p104-105

2) (“The three Paths are like the wheels of a tricycle....”)

a) “The three Paths are like the wheels of a tricycle-- the wooden push cart, which children are given, to train them to take the first steps, while learning to walk. Bhakthi and Jnana are two wheels in one line at the back and the forward one is Karma. The child learns the steps and walks towards the ‘City of Freedom from Fear and Illusion.’” 7.35 p181

b) “Bhakthi and Karma are the two feet and the head is Jnanam....” 4.31 p178

c) “Life is a see-saw, with man sitting on a plank, poised on the round log-- Jnana sakthi, his basic nature of Wisdom. When the plank comes down to one side, it is Iccha sakthi, Bhakthi yoga, emotional adoration; when it comes down on the other side, it is Kriya-sakthi, Karma Yoga, activity to adore men as embodiments of divinity, service to man, adoration of nature by fostering love and tenderness. So long as the see-saw is based on Jnana, one is safe. Jnana or Wisdom is the awareness that God is all.” 11.46 p274

d) “A tree has a trunk and the trunk, branches, far and wide, into boughs, with leaves and flowers. Karma Yoga is the trunk for the tree of Life; the branches, leaves and the fragrant flowers symbolize the Bhakthi Yoga; and the ripe fruit and the sweetness therein, that is the Jnana Yoga, the Wisdom. If the tree yields no fruit and if the fruit is not sweet, then, it could as well not grow at all.” 12.21 p102

3) (“... sanctify every one of the minutes that have fallen to your lot...”)

a) “All ills are traceable to faulty living. And what is that traceable to? To ignorance of one’s real Nature, ignorance so deeprooted that it affects thoughts, words and deeds. The drug that can cure it is patented under different names: Jnana, Karma, Upasana, Bhakthi. They are all the same in potency, and curative power. The difference lies only in the method of administration, either as mixture or as tablet or injection.” 3.1 p11-12

b) “Mere Jnana will make the heart dry; Bhakthi makes it soft with sympathy and Karma gives the hands something to do, something which will sanctify every one of the minutes that have fallen to your lot to live here.” 3.16 p97

c) “The curtain of Maya made of these three strands has to be either brushed aside, or rent asunder, or raised, so that the reality may be revealed. Bhakthimarga raises it, for God who let it down has the compassion to raise it for you! Karmamarga rends it, by means of activity aimed at tearing the strands. Jnana-marga brushes it aside, for it moves about as if it did not really exist; it brushes it aside as a mere figment of the imagination! And, it disappears....” 10.13 p80

d) “Believe that All are God, through Jnana; even then, compassion compels you to love and serve. Believe that God is Master or Father and that you are His children or servants, through Bhakthi. Even then, His command is to wipe the tears, nourish the sick and help the lame to climb over the Stile, through pity and sympathy. Believe, through faith in Karma, that God has to be adored through dedication; even then, Love says the highest form of adoration is by means of Seva, done in Love. Love, therefore, is the breath of the Sadhaka....” 10.31 p192

e) “So too, the three colours, Jnana, Bhakthi, and Karma are different only when the white light of God is passed through the prism of human reason and mind. Activate them in deed, they are but parts of one ray.” 10.31 p192

- f) “The Githa is the greatest harmonizer of all Yogas. As a matter of fact, once the Githa is made the guiding star of your life, the way you act will be Karma Yoga, the way you feel (will) be Bhakthi Yoga, and the way you reason will be Jnana Yoga. It will become automatically so.” 2.10 p45
- g) “The mind must become Bhakthimaya, saturated with devotion; the intelligence must be transformed into Jnana-deepthi, the splendour of universal wisdom, or Jnana; the body must be a willing and efficient instrument for Saddharmaacharana, the practice of Dharma. Such a life is indeed the crown and glory of humanity.” 4.23 p129

E. Stages of Bhakthi (“... [culminating] in total surrender and mergence with [the] Divine Ideal”)

1) (“Bhakthi is... discovering the Divine Reality within each being”)

- a) “Bhakthi is defined as the means of discovering the Divine Reality within each being. Four steps are laid down in the scriptures to help man succeed in this effort: discrimination between the permanent and the impermanent, withdrawal from the process of catering to the senses, positive control of the feelings, thoughts and pursuits, and incessant yearning for Liberation from all bonds. Bhakthi is the urge which manifests as all these four endeavours.” 12.36 p194

2) (“God showers His Grace when the Nine Steps of Bhakthi are observed”)

- a) “There are nine stages of devotion, through which the seeker has to ascend, before he culminates in total surrender and mergence with his Divine Ideal.” 11.10 p58

b) “... the Nine Steps of Devotion”

“Sravanam (hearing the Glory of the Lord), Kirtanam (singing the glory oneself), Vishnosmaranam (allowing the mind to dwell on that Glory), Padasevanam (adoring the feet of the Lord), Vandanam (experiencing gratitude and joy at His Grace), Dasyam (feeling oneself as His instrument), Sakhyam (awareness of His being one’s constant and closest companion), and Atmaivedanam (dedicating one’s full being to Him)-- these are the nine steps in the path of devotion.” 13.24 p132

- c) “God showers Grace when the Nine Steps of Bhakthi are observed.” 12.27 p149

F. Examples (“They never swerved from the path of Bhakthi....”)

1) (“... the Ideal Devotee”)

a) “At this, Agasthya, one of the renowned sages who was assembled in the hall, rose up and challenged Hanuman with the question, ‘Hanuman! You say that you will not wear or bear, eat or carry anything that does not sound of Rama. Well, you carry about this body, don’t you? Does it sound of Rama to you?’ Hanuman accepted the challenge. He pulled a single hair from his wrist and held it to the ear of the sage. Lo! it was reciting ‘Rama, Rama’, without interruption. This was how deep and sincere Hanuman’s loyalty and devotion was to all that belonged to his Master. That is the reason why he achieved success, whatever the assignment.”

13.28 p164

b) “When Rama is installed in the heart, everything will be added unto you-- fame, fortune, freedom, fullness. Hanuman was a mere monkey leader until he met Rama; he was a minister in the court of his master; but, when Rama gave him the commission to seek Sita and sent him, that is to say, when Rama was installed in his heart as guide and guardian, Hanuman became immortal, as the Ideal Devotee.”

13.11 p52

2) (“... they saw and experienced the Krishna Principle in every speck of dust....”)

a) “Look at the Gopis and their yearning for the Lord! They never swerved from the path of Bhakthi, of continuous Smarana of the Lord. When in pain, you shout ‘Ayyo, Appa or Amma’; but, the Gopis always called on Krishna only, whether in joy or in grief.”

4.23 p127

b) “A gopi was moving along the streets of Brindavan selling butter and ghee and milk; but, she was not crying aloud the names of her ware; she was calling aloud the names of Krishna, ‘Govinda! Damodara! Madhava!’ The gopis forgot the very purpose of their visit to Brindavan, their very livelihood, their task of selling and earning. They stood watching Krishna, running along with a hoop and ignoring all else, they ran behind him with a ball of butter in the hand, offering it to the Divine Child who had captured their hearts, calling on Him to receive the gift; ‘Govinda! Damadara! Madhava!’”

4.23 p127

c) “The Gopis of Brindavan were inextricably involved in the Avatar. They had Him indelibly imprinted on their Hearts. He alone was real; the rest were also He.”

11.45 p265

d) “The Gopis were so filled with the highest type of love that they saw and experienced the Krishna Principle in every speck of dust and blade of green that they saw. Love of Krishna makes the whole world Krishna.”

11.15 p89

3) (“They saw only Krishna wherever they turned....”)

- a) “Every gopi had the highest type of Bhakthi in her heart. They saw only Krishna wherever they turned....” 3.18 p110
- b) “The Gopis desired to listen only to Krishna’s Glory, Krishna’s Charm, Krishna’s Words, Krishna’s Pranks, Plays, Pastimes, Krishna’s Achievements, His Attainments.” 5.34 p193
- c) “When Narada went to Gokul and called the Gopis to gather around him so that they can listen to his teachings about the attainment of Jnana, the Gopis gave no heed; they said, they did not like to waste precious minutes. ‘The hours of day and night are not enough for us to dwell on the Name of the Lord. We do not require your verbal acrobatics to convince us that God is Sath-chit-anand-swarupa; we know, we feel, we experience the Bliss every moment’. It was after this revelation of the supremacy of Bhakthi that Narada composed the Bhakthi Sutras, which have become the guiding lamps for the aspirants.” 8.27 p147

4) Krishna develops a stomach-ache

(“... dust of the feet of any real devotee; that will stop the pain....”)

“One day, Krishna developed a type of agonizing stomach-ache! The sage, Narada, happened to put in his appearance and witness the suffering. He was upset, and he prayed that he may be commissioned to bring to Him the drug that will cure the pain. ‘There is just one drug that can assuage it, but can you bring it for me?’, asked Krishna. Narada said, ‘Tell me; it will be done!’ ‘Bring for me the dust of the feet of any real devotee; that will stop the pain,’ replied the Lord.

“Narada moved out very fast to procure it, but, at the door, he remembered that he himself was the most earnest and sincere devotee. So, he turned back and suggested to the Lord that the dust of his own feet may be used. But, the Lord said, ‘No; no. Egoism has tainted it and so it has contaminated the drug.’ So, Narada had perforce to go abroad and seek it from others whom he knew as great devotees. But, no one of them gave him the dust! Some were afraid, some were ashamed, some withdrew fearing sacrilege, some asserted they were not devotees, being only mere aspirants of Grace.

“Then, Narada went into Brindavan, where the simple Gopis were. He told them of his plight and Krishna’s pain. At this, each one of them collected the dust of (their) feet and within seconds, Narada’s hands were full of packets. ‘Rush with these; may the pain cease!’-- that was their response. The petty little ideas of superiority or inferiority, of pride or humility, of shame or fear did not enter their minds. ‘The Lord is in pain; it must be cured’, that was all they knew and cared to know. They did not stop to inquire whether the Lord could really be suffering, whether the dust of their feet had any curative property, whether the mission on

which Narada had come had any deeper meaning for them or the world! They heard, they gave, they prayed, they were happy. They felt the pain that Krishna had; they responded to the command. They were all equally affected, and their reactions were all equally prompt and sincere.” 10.37 p248-249

5) (“... they knew He was the Lord and they needed no other”)

- a) “Study the devotion of the Gopis; you will find it constituted wholly out of Prema.... they knew He was the Lord and they needed no other.” 5.45 p249
- b) “The Gopis, however, are a class of devotees by themselves. They reached the highest peak of devotion. They had no consciousness of anything other than the Lord; they had renounced the consciousness of the senses and the body. They were attached only to the Principle of Krishna that was resident in that body.” 5.36 p205
- c) “The Gopis had no other Goal, no other Ideal, no other Wish. It was a Surrender of the Self-- complete, unquestioned, unwavering.” 2.51 p283
- d) “The Gopis knew the secret of spiritual surrender.... Feel that you are the Lord’s own.... The master will maintain you in bliss... Leave the rest to Him... He is All, the joy of having Him is enough reward.... Na me bhakthah pranasayathi, says Krishna; ‘My devotee never suffers sorrow’.” 5.36 p206

G. Gratitude and Joy (“... it is all His Leela....”)

1) (“... the chance... to walk along the path that leads to Him!”)

- a) “The Vedas teach that man should adore and worship God in gratitude for His benedictions.” 14.3 p15
- b) “The original will wished all this to be manifested. He who is the embodiment of that will has to be adored and remembered in gratitude....” 14.4 p19
- c) “Think of God, and the gratitude you owe to him for the human life He has gifted you and the various material, moral and intellectual talents He has endowed you with; do this before you commence any task or piece of work. You will certainly experience great benefit, and you will have peace, joy and success in your endeavours through Divine Grace.” 12.5 p19
- d) “... what can be purer and more precious than your tears, shed, not in grief, mind you, but, in rapture at the chance to serve the Lord and to walk along the path that leads to Him!” 3.6 p44

2) (“... tears of joy....”)

- a) “The hearts of the Bhakthas gathered here are all blossoming now like lotuses when the Sun rises, for they believe this is the Day when the Lord was born in human form.” 4.37 p220
- b) “The sight of Rama and Lakshmana had removed all his sins; their touch burnt away all the consequences of his deeds in previous lives; and their conversation filled his mind with joy. That is the experience of all who welcome the impact of Divinity.” 13.28 p160
- c) “Let tears of joy be the holy water with which you seek to wash the Feet of the Lord.” 4.39 p232
- d) “What you should place before Me as offering is Pure Love; only that.” 12.53 p294
- e) “The joy of the Bhaktha satisfies the Lord; the joy of the Lord is the reward of the Bhaktha.” 2.30 p160

3) (“The ear must exult... to hear the wonderful tales of God”)

- a) “The ear must exult when it gets a chance to hear the wonderful tales of God.” 6.3 p10
- b) “Fill your mind with the desire to see God, be with Him, Praise Him, glorify Him, and taste the Glory of His Majesty. There is no bliss higher than that.” 7.39 p201
- c) “Whatever Form He may be shining in, that intensity will make you recognize Him.” 3.4 p32
- d) “... when you take everything as the Leela of the Lord you love, you clap your hands in Ananda whatever may happen, for it is all His Leela and you are as happy as He is, when His plans are going through!” 4.4 p21-22
- e) “A Bhaktha must be full of joy, whatever may happen, for he knows it is the will of the Lord that is being worked out.” 4.35 p209
- f) “When you have the Goal in view, wherever you are, it will fill you with genuine joy.” 10.10 p61

4) (“Rejoice that it is given to you to recognize God in all....”)

- a) “Be convinced that God can and will appear in any form and so all forms are His. Don’t refuse to recognize Divinity in the form you dislike or did not expect! He can appear as a fox, as a dog, as a beggar, any form. When you call on God, whatever form appears, treat it as God.” 11.29 p175
- b) “The Krishna devotees saw in Krishna the embodiment of truth, love and righteousness. What He said was truth; what He was, was love; what He did was righteous. They were so immersed in Krishna-consciousness that they saw everywhere and in everything nothing but Krishna.” 14.4 p24
- c) “Hanuman was a good example of this outlook.... He realized that the Rama principle (Atmarama) was illumining every being, and he adored it above all else.” 13.28 p159

- d) “God has a million names, Sages and Saints have seen Him in a million Forms; they have seen Him with eyes closed and eyes open. They have extolled Him in all the languages and dialects of man; but yet, His Glory is not exhausted.”
8.22 p119
- e) “Bhakthi reveals to you that God is in every one; so, the Love that surges in your heart towards God must flow towards all, for, all are embodiments of the self-same Divine.”
12.36 p196
- f) “Rejoice that it is given to you to recognize God in all and welcome all chances to sing His Glory, to hear His chronicle, to share His Presence with others.”
8.12 p52
- g) “... every one is the embodiment of Prema.... love is its own reward.... When it is directed to God, it is called Bhakthi.”
6.32 p159

H. Yearnings of Bhakthis (“Strive to arrive at the stage when His Wish alone will count....”)

1) (“Ask for Bhakthi and for Jnana and I shall be happy”)

- a) “The heart should be set on achieving the task of realizing the Lord within you, as the motivator.”
3.9 p61
- b) “Well, I am like a shopkeeper whose shop is stocked with all things man needs. But, like the man behind the counter, I give you only what you ask for.... Ask for Bhakthi and for Jnana and I shall be happy.”
1.8 p50
- c) “You are all waiting anxiously to know from when I am granting you the ‘interviews’, so that you can place before Me the long lists of ‘korikes’ (wishes) which you have brought. These wishes go on multiplying; they never end. The fulfillment of one leads to a new series. Strive to arrive at the stage when His Wish alone will count and you are an instrument in His Hands.”
5.34 p192-193
- d) “Ask and get what will save you, not what will bind you. You ask from Me a thousand things of the world, but rarely do you ask for ‘Me.’ That is why I seldom address you as Bhakthas....”
3.3 p26
- e) “Dams, factories, universities-- these too will prosper, and attain the targets, only if the men and women involved in them and benefitting by them have the earnestness, the sincerity, the humanity and the reverence which Bhakthi can build into them.”
9.31 p163

2) (“Of what profit is all... this striving... if... you do not get... joy in the heart?”)

- a) “The spiritual Atma Sakthi that is also everywhere is stored in a body and passed through the thin wires or nerves... it illumines and directs activity. These activities have to be oriented towards Ananda, and not attachments to temporary pleasures.”
11.35 p208

- b) “You should not pray to God for secular advantages. You should pray only for Grace.” 7.21 p122
- c) “... Of what profit is all this feeding and growing, this striving and struggling, this earning and saving and spending, this losing and gaining, this speeding in cars and planes, if by these means you do not get peace in the mind, joy in the heart?” 3.41 p234
- d) “Yearn for the Love that will bring you the Love of God, Prema, Love. I have no power mightier than that.” 11.31 p187

3) (“... when the child writes to the mother... she appreciates... with tears of joy”)

a) The Simple Sincere ‘Postage Stamp’

(“... Bhakthi is what makes the prayer reach the destination, God...”)

“A letter on some scrap scribbled over in illegible style carrying some absurd bit of information will be carried by mail and will be delivered at the address with care and exactitude, provided it has the exact stamp fixed on it! A letter on costly note-paper carrying exquisite calligraphy and florid with a weighty message, worth its weight in gold, will lie neglected and condemned, if it has not affixed on it the stamp, which the postal regulation requires! The stamp of Bhakthi is what makes the prayer reach the destination, God; not the festoons, the fanfare, the heap of flowers or the festive nature of the feast-offerings. The simple sincere heart is the stamp, which makes the prayer travel fast.” 10.14 p91-92

b) When the child writes to the mother

(“She values feeling, not external display”)

“The envelope might cost a naya paisa only; inside it, the bit of paper might be shoddy and soiled. The scribbling on it might be full of blotches; the letters might be higgledy piggledy, but, when the child writes to the mother, she reads and appreciates the letters with tears of joy. The envelope might be a deluxe one costing five rupees, the letters may be of gold, printed in choice antique type in an aristocratic press; but, she will not be interested even to look at it.

“The mother seeks love, craves for gratitude, thirsts after sympathy. She values feeling, not external display. The Divine Mother too is moved by the same feeling. She does not appreciate demonstrative trappings like matted hair, rosaries, marks on forehead or sacerdotal robes. She values sincerity, yearning, virtue, compassion, love.” 11.52 p297-298

c) “Like the kitten calling the mother to where it sits, by mere mewing, the Bhaktha has only to yearn, to mew with the pain of separation.” 3.1 p3

4) (“... it... will make you desire the Lord and nothing else”)

a) “... as for Bhakthi... it is a quality that will make you desire the Lord and nothing else.” 3.3 p26

b) The Weeping Saris

(“They could not get appreciation from Me....”)

“I related this story to Hislop, when he asked Me whether inanimate things to had emotions and feelings of disappointment and despair. The occasion at Dharma-kshetra was: I asked that about a hundred saris be brought, so that I could select some for distribution to the women workers at Anantapur who are helping build the Sathya Sai College there! I selected 96 and asked them to return 4 to the shop. I kept the 4 aside and the 96 were placed in My room.

“Later, when I passed the table on which the four discarded saris were kept (Hislop was standing by the side of that table), it was noticed that the cardboard box which contained the four was dripping tears! The saris were weeping (!) that they could not get appreciation from Me and were declared unfit. Yes! They had shed tears. You may ask whether this is ever possible. I answer, there is nothing in this world which has no heart, which is incapable of feeling joy or grief! Only, you must have the eye to see, the ear to listen, the heart to respond!” 11.6 p38

c) “I want each one of you to search within yourself... examine your own effort and achievement and judge your own Sadhana, unaided by Me. Have you yearned, have you pined, have you wept for the Lord....?” 2.31 p163

d) “Come, I am the repairer of broken hearts....” 2.16 p77

e) “Ten years ago, a devotee prayed to Me in song, ‘My heart has gone dry, my lamp has gone out, my path is dark, my brain is confused. Lord, make me fit again for life’s arduous journey.’ The Lord will be waiting outside the door of the Puja room of the Bhaktha, anxious to fulfill his wish!” 2.16 p77

f) “I want that you should yearn also for the illumination of your inner world, the restoration of the current to shed light on the dark recesses of your minds. That is what is called Bhakthi, the yearning for Light, for illumination.”

2.35 p204-205

- g) “This Prema cannot be cultivated by reading guidebooks and made-easies and learning the steps by rote. It has to begin with a great yearning for the Light, an unbearable agony to escape from the Darkness, as in the prayer, ‘Thamso maa jyothir gamaya.’ The yearning itself will draw down the Light. The Love will grow of itself and by its slow and inevitable alchemy turn you into Gold.” 1.34 p214

5) (“... yearn to be blessed with that earnestness... and that devotion”)

- a) “... the path of devotion... is a spiritual discipline of the heart and results in love and service to all as fellow pilgrims to the same divine goal.” 13.24 p136
- b) “You should pursue your path to Liberation with one-pointed effort.” 3.1 p5
- c) “You must yearn to be blessed with that earnestness, that dedication and that devotion.” 12.36 p196
- d) “... yearn for service of the divine forms that move around you. Do every deed as an act of worship; make every thought a longing for Him; change every word that comes from your tongue into a hymn in His praise.” 11.47 p279
- e) “... Start the Day with Love; Spend the Day with Love; Fill the Day with Love; end the Day with Love; That is the Way of God.” 11.35 p212
- f) “... if you are resolute in achieving your aims, objectives or desire, you should never give up your efforts till your objectives are achieved and you should not be swayed by all kinds of passing thoughts. Only then will you be a true devotee!” 14.58 p336

6) (“The deepest yearning of man is to experience the One....”)

- a) “The deepest yearning of man is to experience the One....” 14.59 p343
- b) “The genuine seeker will pray for nothing else than God. This longing must fill all the various acts of his-- Puja, Bhajan, Dhyan etc.” 14.59 p343
- c) “The spiritual stream must flow in the heart as the source and spring of all endeavor.” 15.1 p3
- d) “You feel like purifying yourselves and making your entire life one fragrant flame. That is real worship, real Bhakthi.” 2.23 p123
- e) “Pray, ‘Lord! Let me fall at Thy Lotus Feet!’ and the Feet will present themselves before you. They are at all places, at all times. Your call compels the manifestation, that is all.” 11.22 p116
- f) “He is eager to satisfy the yearning of the genuine seeker.” 8.30 p168
- g) “The Bhaktha yearns for Bhagavan, but, believe Me, Bhagavan also yearns for the Bhaktha. That is why he assumes human form and moves among them. He derives as much Ananda as the Bhaktha derives when He moves with him. In fact, when the bhaktha takes one step towards Him, He takes ten towards him. That is the measure of His Grace and His Ananda.” 4.51 p296
- h) “Once people know how great is the Love that God gives, they will not desire anything else.” 9.9 p46

I. "... real Bhakthi..."

("Wherever there is a vacuum, in any heart, Love flows into it...")

"Love should not be rationed, on the basis of caste, creed or economic status or intellectual attainment of the recipient. It should flow full and free, regardless of consequence, for, it is one's nature to love, to seek out the dry dreary wastes which love can water and make fertile.

"Wherever there is a vacuum, in any heart, Love flows into it and is glad that it can fill the emptiness. It is never held back; it is offered in abundance, without guile or deceit; it does not wear the cloak of falsehood, flattery or fear. Then tendrils of Love aspire to cling only to the garments of God; it senses that God resides, in His Infinite Splendour, in every heart; so, it probes silently into the innermost recesses of all personalities around it to discover the seat of God, so that it may bloom therein. That is real Bhakthi (devotion)."

11.12 p70-71

J. Surrender ("Recognize that God is the person at the wheel...")

1) ("... rely on none other than Him as master and protector")

- a) "The ego is most easily destroyed by Bhakthi; by dwelling on the magnificence of the Lord and by humility and service of others as children of the Lord."
1.9 p56
- b) "No one can become a Bhaktha by naming himself so; nor, by others calling him so. Bhakthi involves dedication, with nothing held back; not even a wisp of ego should remain."
3.1 p2
- c) "This is the reason why I do not address your gathering as, 'Bhakthulaaraa!' You can lay claim to that name only when you have placed yourself in My Hands, fully, completely, with no trace of ego kept back to cater to your vanity."
3.1 p11
- d) "To visualize the Lord as resident in all and as responsible for everything... is the hallmark of Bhakthi."
5.38 p212
- e) "They were ever aware of the Divine principle, the warp and woof, the cause and effect, the beginning and end of the entire cosmos. They did not deviate even a little from the path of devotion to and absorption in God. They had, each one of them, known once and for all that they could rely on none other than Him as master and protector."
14.8 p51-52

- 2) (“... fall at the Feet of the Lord, irrespective of what... might happen to you”)
- a) “Control, curb your tendency to wish for this and that. Tell the Lord, ‘You are enough for me. I do not wish for anything else.’” 3.31 p182
 - b) “Recognise that God is the person at the wheel.... Have faith in Him.... Surrender to Him. His grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles.” 15.24 p133
 - c) “Faith in God must induce you to run and fall at the Feet of the Lord, irrespective of what others might say or even what might happen to you.” 7.38 p196
 - d) “The Lord rushes towards the Bhaktha faster than the Bhaktha rushes towards Him. If you take one step towards Him, He takes a hundred steps towards you! He will be more than a mother or father. He will foster you from within you, as He has saved and fostered so many saints who have placed faith in Him.” 3.23 p137
 - e) “Whoever surrenders, Rama accepts, on the spot, without reservations.” 10.24 p152
 - f) “Develop Bhakthi and you are free, for, the Lord takes on the burden you carry. The Ramayana is the great text for all who yearn to surrender to God and win Him. From beginning to end, it illustrates the various steps leading to it and the blessedness acquired when one accomplishes it.” 6.18 p92
 - g) “Do not waste even a single second.... Bend your head before God, welcoming whatever be His Will; then, you too can have the Lord as your guide and guard.” 10.19 p120
- 3) (“... leaving everything to His Will, is the highest form of Bhakthi”)
- a) “Saranagathi, leaving everything to His Will, is the highest form of Bhakthi.” 1.2 p8
 - b) “... so too, we have in the spiritual path, the stages of Work, Worship, Wisdom and finally, Sacrifice. Sacrifice is when the ripe fruit falls from the tree, sacrificing its affection and attachment....” 11.35 p209

4) “O Lucky Murali!”

(“... no feeling of ego left to obstruct the flow of his Prema....”)

“One day Krishna pretended to be fast asleep, with the Flute carelessly aside by His side. Radha approached the fortunate Flute and asked it in plaintive terms, ‘O Lucky Murali! tell me, how you earned this great good fortune. What was the vow you observed, the vigil you kept, the pilgrimage you accomplished? What was the manthra you recited, the idol you worshipped?’ The Flute got tongue through His Grace; ‘I rid myself of all sensual desire, of envy, greed, of ego, that is all. I had no feeling of ego left to obstruct the flow of His Prema through Me to all creation.’” 4.30 p174-175

5) “The Grace of God...”

(“... no triumph more praiseworthy than surrender”)

“The Grace of God cannot be won through the gymnastics of reason, the contortions of Yoga or the denials of asceticism. Love alone can win it, Love that needs no bargaining, Love that is paid gladly, as tribute to the All Loving, Love that is unwavering. Love alone can overcome obstacles, however many and mighty. There is no strength more effective than Purity, no bliss more satisfying than Love, No joy more restoring than Bhakthi, no triumph more praiseworthy than surrender.”

11.12 p69-70

K. Mergence (“Become Sai, be Sai”)

1) (“The Bhaktha must ignore his identity... and merge with the Ideal”)

- a) “The Bhaktha must ignore his identity and separateness and merge with the Ideal...” 2.19 p94
- b) “The Bhaktha must form himself on the model of Bhagavan...” 4.40 p235
- c) “You must be as golden as the gold you idealize, though you may be a tiny jewel and He, a vast treasure.” 4.40 p235
- d) “If you are devoted to God, how should you manifest that devotion? Let me tell you how. By manifesting divine qualities, divine virtues, divine love, divine strength. Become Sai, be Sai.” 11.46 p273
- e) “... Radha is the Becoming and Krishna is the Being; the desire of the Being to become, the longing of the Became for the being-- this is the Radha-Krishan relationship, which has been sung by seers and poets, calumniated and caricatured by ignorant critics, appreciated and apprehended by aspirants, analyzed and realized by sincere scholars of spiritual lore.” 10.10 p72
- f) “Sanctify every word and deed by filling it with Prema for Krishna or whatever Name and Form you give to the Lord you love.” 3.21 p126
- g) “The thought of Rama was so intense in him that people saw Rama in the form of Bharatha. Ceaseless contemplation had made him an exact replica. That is the depth of Bhakthi which is fruitful.” 3.3 p22
- h) “When at last, he gave up that desire also and was overwhelmed with the thirst for Him and Him alone, Krishna manifested before him, from within him.” 7.36 p186

2) (“... the dearer the devotee holds God, the more this distance disappears”)

- a) “The path of devotion was laid down to enable man to merge with God. The goal is mergence, as the rivers know and strive for.... Merging in the source from which one took form is the ultimate destiny. The river has the passion of overwhelming love which leads it down the slopes until it reaches the Loved One.” 13.23 p127-128
- b) “Develop a love for God, then you can recognize Him very near you, in your own Self. That is the assurance I am giving to all of you.” 3.41 p234
- c) “... the dearer the devotee holds God, the more this distance disappears. It is just as when an acquaintance visits you, you welcome him with a hand shake and smiles which are largely artificial. But when an old friend drops in, you receive him with an informal hello and show him a seat with a twinkle in your eye and warmth in your heart.” 14.8 p55
- d) “The attraction that the vast Brahman has for the anu or the small is the attraction of the whole for the part. It is the basis of all Love-- the love of the mother and towards the mother, of the father and son, the friend, the spouse, and even of the devotee towards God. The jiva or the individualized part loves the Brahman or the totality of which it is a part. See all as parts of the same whole to which you belong; then there can be no hatred....” 12.40 p220
- e) “There is no one who is devoid of Bhakthi, deep down in his core, every one has the feeling of kinship with all creatures.” 4.33 p194

L. Concluding Comments-- Bhakthi

(“... the Avathar has come... to give you a taste of... Prema....”)

1) (“... so that the yearning for the Lord will be planted in your heart”)

- a) “Bhakthi is the state of mind, in which one has no separate existence apart from God. His very breath is God; his every act is by God, for God; his thoughts are of God; his words are uttered by God, about God.” 7.42 p217
- b) “‘Yad bhaavam thad bhavathi’... You become that which you feel. You can get the feeling for the Divine only if you have a taste of the Prema of the Divine. That is why the Avathar has come: to give you a taste of that Prema, so that the yearning for the Lord will be planted in your heart.” 2.26 p139
- c) “The Call of the Divine echoes in every heart; it provokes the reaction of awe, reverence, affection, love and sacrifice-- all ingredients of Bhakthi. It translates itself into acts of worship, of praise, of adoration and of rituals symbolizing the majesty of God. Thus, the mind gets saturated with Divine thoughts, it is recast in the Divine Mould, until the flow of Ananda is unabated.” 10.25 p153

2) (“... feel Love in every nerve”)

- a) “My Glory is spread daily through those who call themselves My Bhakthas. Your virtue, your self-control, your detachment, your faith, your steadfastness-- these are the signs by which people read of My Glory.” 3.1 p11
- b) “See with the eyes of Love; hear with the ears of Love; work with the hands of Love; think thoughts of Love; feel Love in every nerve. The God of Love, Krishna, will come to you on the wave of Love and fill your hearts with Himself!” 11.31 p187
- c) “Bhakthi will force the Lord to give you Himself as the Gift.” 3.13 p79
- d) “Pray, ‘Lord! Let me fall at Thy Lotus Feet!’ and the Feet will present themselves before you. They are at all places, at all times. Your call compels the manifestation, that is all.” 11.22 p116

3) (“God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for”)

- a) “The mind takes on the form of the desire that fills it.” 4.36 p215-216
- b) “... those who adore the low Forces attain them; but, those who adore Me, attain Me.” 10.28 p171
- c) “When you love Me, you love all; for, you begin to feel and know and experience that I am in all.” 11.15 p89
- d) “God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for.” 14.59 p343

4) The Path of Bhakthi

(“For such dedicated seekers, all else will seem bitter and unattractive”)

“This is the path of Bhakthi. Through listening to the glories of the Lord, you become avid to praise Him; serve Him and His devotees, worship Him as if He is present before you, and be in His company all your life, with no other thought than that Joy. For such dedicated seekers all else will seem bitter and unattractive.”

8.2 p7

5) (“... the most desirable form of wealth is the Grace of God”)

- a) “... the most desirable form of wealth is the Grace of God.” 4.45 p264
- b) “Once people know how great is the Love that God gives, they will not desire anything else.” 9.9 p46

III. Giving Up the “I”

(“The greatest joy springs from the utmost sacrifice”)

A. Introduction (“Love can transform man into a Divine Being....”)

- 1) (“Act, dedicate, and adore-- that is the way to acquire a pure consciousness”)
 - a) “Life has as its sole purpose the divinizing of man, the transformation of the ‘man’ we profess to be into the God we really are.” 15.15 p84
 - b) “To reach the Presence of the source of Bliss, that is, God, you must tread the foot-steps of the great saints and seekers....” 6.36 p178
 - c) “The path of dedicated activity, of surrender to the Highest, of incomparable Love towards the embodiment of Prema-- that is the sweetest path, giving joy at every step that is won.” 6.36 p178-179
 - d) “The river strives, yearns, and struggles to merge with the sea from which it originally came. It has that consummation ever alert in its consciousness. It attempts to make itself pure and pellucid so that it may be welcomed by its source. It overcomes every obstacle of terrain in order to journey successfully towards its goal.” 13.30 p178
 - e) “Act, dedicate, and adore-- that is the way to acquire a pure consciousness.” 13.29 p173
 - f) “Love can transform man into a Divine Being....” 12.36 p195
- 2) (“Every act... has to be done as an adoration of the Source of Truth....”)
 - a) “You must develop this attitude of ‘merging with the divine’ in all that you do, this attitude of dedication, of surrender to His Will. This is the best means of realizing Him.” 5.26 p142
 - b) “Every act has to be dedicated to the Lord; that is to say, it has to be true, just, virtuous and saturated with love, and it has to be done as an adoration of the Source of Truth, Justice, Virtue and Love....” 6.42 p209
 - c) “In the beginning, the Adored and the Adorer are distant and different; but, as the Sadhana becomes more confirmed and consolidated, they co-mingle and become more and more composite.” 7.28 p240

B. Gratitude (“During our lives we have to accept help rendered by many thousands”)

- 1) (“... revere... all the instruments... as essential for His work”)
 - a) “In order to enable you to reach the highest goal of merging with the Absolute, this chance has been granted to you as the reward for merit acquired in many previous lives.” 14.60 p344

b) “He has endowed you with this wonderful body, this sweet tongue, this amazing instrument called mind. He has granted you intelligence, the powers of analysis and synthesis, the capacity to receive and give up, to remember and to forget.

Acknowledge these gratefully and use them to the best advantage. Use them to see Him everywhere in all beings, to seek Him through all the ups and downs, the joys and griefs, the doubts and decisions of life.” 10.35 p236

c) “When you dedicate yourselves to the glorification of the Lord, you will revere the body, the senses, the intelligence, the will, and all the instruments of knowledge, action and feeling as essential for His work.” 8.45 p243

d) “... earn the treasure of Love, store it in your heart and invite all to share in it.” 12.54 p298

e) “Work in the spirit of Love; it leads you on to Worship, that is to say, work without any regard to the proportion of benefit you derive from it. Work, since it is your duty; work, since you love to work; work, since that is the way you can offer God the gratitude for the skills God has endowed upon you. This kind of work leads to Wisdom. Wisdom means the recognition of the immanence of the Divine in every being.” 11.1 p6

f) “Be happy that you have within you the source of power, wisdom and joy.” 10.2 p10

2) (“Whatever happens, accept it gladly as His Handiwork, a sign of His Compassion”)

a) “During our lives we have to accept help rendered by many thousands.” 14.7 p46

b) “Whatever happens, accept it gladly as His Handiwork, a sign of His Compassion. Tukaram was always in that mood. When he did not get something to eat, he thanked God for the chance to fast granted by Him. When he got some food, he thanked God for coming to him in that Form, and sustaining him so that he may sing His Glory. His Glory, His Compassion, His Grace-- these are inscrutable; they shape themselves in manifold forms, as He wills.” 8.28 p159

c) “When you realize that He is the innermost Reality of all, you can worship one another, with as much fervour as you now employ when you worship an Idol.” 5.39 p220

d) “Take the simple rite of Namaskaram, the folded palms with which you greet reverentially elders and others. What does it signify, that gesture?” 4.41 p242

e) “You must realize by constant contemplation that the world is the Body of God. And, you are a cell, in that Body. The prosperity of the world is your prosperity; feel so, act in that spirit; think in those terms. That is real spirituality.” 12.8 p29

f) “The Body is a chalice, wherein you collect the nectar of Divine Grace. That is the prime purpose for which it has been gifted to you. For, without a cup of chalice, a casket or jug, how can the nectar be taken?” 13.15 p75

3) (“... deal with everyone in a humble, revered manner”)

- a) “When you know that the Lord is the cause, the source of all, you deal with everyone in a humble revered manner. That is the path which will lead you quick to the Goal.” 6.5 p28
- b) “Think of God, and the gratitude you owe to him for the human life He has gifted you and the various material, moral and intellectual talents He has endowed you with; do this before you commence any task or piece of work. You will certainly experience great benefit, and you will have peace, joy and success in your endeavours through Divine Grace.” 12.5 p19

C. Following Dharma (“... dedicate yourself to the service of God’s Plan”)

1) (“... hold intimate and constant communion with the Divine....”)

- a) “Let the petty wishes for which you now approach God be realized or not; let the plans for promotion and progress which you place before God, be fulfilled or not; they are not so important after all. The primary aim should be to become Masters of yourselves, to hold intimate and constant communion with the Divine that is in you as well as in the Universe of which you are a part.” 10.8 p43-44
- b) “People have specialized in the various methods of worshipping God; there is a host of rites, ceremonials, hymns, festivals, fasts, vows, pilgrimages; but, the best form of worship, the one that will bring the Grace of God in ample measure, is to obey the commands of God.” 10.8 p42
- c) “... when I ask you to do a thing, it must be instantly and willingly obeyed. You can give the go-bye to Dhyanam or Japam; it does not matter. The fruit of obedience is more valuable than those disciplines.” 8.33 p181-182

2) (“... your duty is to be good, do good, and see good”)

- a) “You have to busy yourselves with activity, in order to use time and skill to the best advantage. That is your duty and duty is God. The dull and the inert will hesitate to be active, for fear of exhaustion of failure, or loss. The emotional passionate individuals will plunge headlong and crave for quick results and will be disappointed if they do not come in. The balanced persons will be active, because it is their duty, they will not be agitated by anything-- failure or success. The godly will take up activity as a means of worshipping God, and they leave the result to God. They know that they are but instruments in the hands of God.” 11.46 p273-274
- b) “The secret of liberation lies, not in the mystic formula that is whispered in the ear and rotated on the rosary; it lies in the stepping out into action, the walking forward in practice, the pious pilgrim route and the triumphant reaching of the Goal.” 10.23 p140

- c) "... active participation in society in a spirit of dedication and surrender, conceiving all acts as acts of worship, all men as embodiments of the Supreme, is a more beneficial form of Sadhana..." 12.16 p73-74
- d) "When you join the Bhajan as you did some time ago, you had to sing in tune with the rest, is it not? Otherwise, your voice becomes harsh to the ear; it grates. So too, unless your life is in tune with the plan that the Lord has laid down, it spoils the melody; it grates; it is felt to be a disturbance. Hence, follow the Divine Plan." 2.2 p8
- e) "Your thoughts, words and deeds will shape others, and theirs will shape you. It is your duty to be good, do good, and see good. That is the way to make the world good and be yourself good." 12.8 p29
- 3) ("... believe this body is the residence of God...")
- a) "Nothing pleases man more than his Atma, which is an eternal unfailing source of Joy. One must prefer the awareness of the Atma and the Bliss that the awareness confers, to all other minor momentary joys." 15.6 p33
- b) "The best method of carrying out the sage's direction is to believe that this body is the residence of God; that the food you take is the offering you make to Him; your act of bathing is the ceremonial bathing of Him who is in you; the ground you walk on is His domain; the joy you gain is His gift; the grief you experience is His lesson." 7.19 p111
- c) "Use the eyes to watch wholesome things, the feet to proceed to the House of God, the hands to serve the embodiments of God moving around you as men, the tongue to soothe pain, praise virtue, and glorify God." 10.17 p108
- d) "The Atma shines and all the inner organs of perception awaken to their duty of gathering knowledge and revealing Bliss. It is their duty to function according to their nature; the result is not to be aimed at. It follows when the duty is done efficiently to the best of one's ability and will." 12.51 p283
- e) "Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths." 9.31 p164
- 4) ("Grace is showered on all who obey instructions and follow orders")
- a) "The variety of Forms, the variety of emotions and attitudes, the variety of communities and loyalties are the result of man's ignoring his fundamental Unity in the Divine Will, and his acting contrary to that Unity." 11.54 p306
- b) "Believe that the Lord is living in every heart and so, when you inflict pain, physical or mental, on anyone, you are slighting the Lord or denying Him." 4.34 p205

- c) “Division, difference and distinction cuts one off from the life-giving Grace, that feeds, every cell of the body and every individual in the World. The World is sustained by the Self-same grace.” 11.54 p305
- d) “Grace is showered on all who obey instructions and follow orders.” 2.36 p217

5) Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema

(“... confirmed as best suited for individual and social progress by its saints and sages, law-givers and leaders, for centuries”)

a) “Practice Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema....”

(“That can confer on you the summum bonum of Mergence....”)

“So, utilize the chance of association with Me as much as possible, and endeavour as quickly and as best as you can, to follow the directions that I have been giving. Obeying My instructions is enough; it will benefit you, more than the most rigorous asceticism. Practice Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, which are dear to Me; resolve to keep those ideals before you, ever, in all your thoughts, words and deeds. That can confer on you the summum bonum of Mergence in the Supreme Substance of Divinity.” 8.19 p101

- b) Sathya (“... it is only through the practice of Truth that the great Truth can be experienced”)
 - i) “Let Me tell you what the true nature of man is, so that you may make an all-out effort to guard it and develop it. Truth is man’s nature; to be untrue is to be false to one’s nature.” 12.5 p17
 - ii) “... it is only through the practice of Truth that the great TRUTH can be experienced.” 10.38 p253
 - iii) “Before you experience the Divine in every being in the Universe and in every cell and atom, you have to experience It in yourselves. Each act, word and thought must be charged with that awareness.” 10.10 p66
 - iv) “The Vedic injunction, given through the sages, is ‘Sathyam vada; Dharmam chara.’ Speak the Truth; walk in the path of Virtue.” 5.11 p67
- c) Dharma (“... utilize the mind to follow the Plan of the Lord to re-establish Dharma in the world”)
 - i) “Imagine the enormous efforts of these seers, as a result of which the path of spiritual progress has been cleared by them for the good of all! Why do you not proceed along it? If you take the very first step, you will immediately recognize that their experience is authentic.” 5.26 p145

- ii) “You must examine yourselves every moment whether you are observing the disciplines I have laid down, the programmes of service I have marked out.” 12.37 p208
 - iv) “... Let Dharma be the inspiration behind every thought, deed and word of yours. Let the knowledge that all are repositories of the Divine inspire you with love, tolerance, sympathy and reverence.” 8.27 p148
 - v) “... utilize the mind to follow the Plan of the Lord to re-establish Dharma in the world.” 2.43 p246
 - vi) “Do what He likes, not what you like....” 11.2 p14
 - vii) “Let the will of the Lord prevail; one’s duty is to connect oneself with the current of His Grace.” 1.3 p18-19
- d) Prema (“Your task... is to grow in love... and finally become Love....”)
- i) “Your task... is to grow in love, expand that love, practice love, strengthen love and finally become Love and merge in the Illimitable Love, which is God.” 9.30 p158
 - ii) “... you must recognize this love as but as reflection of the Premaswarupa... of the God who is residing in your heart. Without that spring of Love that bubbles in your heart, you will not be prompted to love at all. Recognize that spring, rely on it more and more, develop its possibilities, try to irrigate the whole world with it, discard any touch of self from it, do not seek anything in return for it from those to whom you extend it.” 5.17 p96-97
 - iii) “See with the eyes of Love; hear with the ears of Love; work with the hands of Love; think thoughts of Love; feel Love in every nerve.” 11.31 p187
 - iv) “By means of Sadhana, it is possible to produce Love and export it to millions and millions of people, in need of it.” 11.1 p4-5
 - v) “You must so act that the heart of the Guru melts at your devotion.” 4.32 p192
- e) Santhi (“By unselfish Service... and dedication to the cause of Peace, you are promoting the welfare... of all humanity”)
- i) “You have formed a study circle, so study the best means of bringing peace, and apply those means in a few villages to prove their validity.” 14.47 p270
 - ii) “In devotion of peace, the aspirant practices equanimity and considers all that happens to him as a gift of the grace of God. Therefore, he is unaffected by success or failure; he is ever grateful for whatever God grants him.” 14.5 p29
 - iii) “It is only when you are blessed with the Grace of the Lord, which is earned by Dharma, that you can have Santhi.” 2.31 p190-191

- iv) “Every one must be immersed in Santhi, derived from dedicated work, detached work, work offered as worship, work done with no desire or attachment for the benefit therefrom.” 5.19 p107
 - v) “By unselfish Service, strict adherence to Duty, and dedication to the cause of Peace, you are promoting the welfare of India and of all humanity.” 12.1 p1
- f) (“... if you but stick to Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, you are close to Me, and I am close to you”)
- i) “Dharma is the practical application in real life of the ideal of Truth. Santhi is the result of Dharma and Prema is the effulgence of Santhi.” 12.5 p17
 - ii) “Prema is the manner of speaking; Truth is the substance; Dharma is the language; Santhi, the result aimed at.” 3.34 p199
 - iii) “I have allowed this college to rise, because it will install in the minds of the students the ancient ideals of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, ideals that are delineated in the Vedas, described in Sastras, illustrated in the Epics, practiced by countless generations of the men and women of this land and confirmed as best suited for individual and social progress by its saints and sages, law-givers and leaders, for centuries.” 8.26 p139-140
 - iv) “Nearness to Me is not acquired by physical nearness. You may be by My side, yet, far; you may be far, far away; yet, very near and dear. However far you are, if you but stick to Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, you are close to Me and I am close to you.” 7.14 p71-72
 - v) “Let Me ask you, what is the one thing that you crave for most? Grace, is it not?... So long as your words and deeds are in conformity with Sathya and Dharma, so long as your words and deeds are sweetened by Prema and lightened by Santhi, you need have no worry; you have the Grace in ample measure.” 7.14 p70-71
- 6) (“Have... no other aim than knowing His command... [and] translating that command into action”)
- a) “Do namasmarana; taste the sweetness that is in the heart of every one; dwell on His Glory, His Compassion, which those names summarize. Then, it will be easier for you to visualize Him in all, and to love Him in all, to adore Him in all.” 7.27 p149
 - b) “Have no other thought than God, no other aim than knowing His command, no other activity than translating that command into action. That is what is meant by surrender. Render your self unto Him.” 11.12 p74

- c) “Love all; revere all; help all to the best of your ability. Endeavour to be as beneficial, as sweet, as soft as possible. Then, the spot on which you stand becomes as sacred as Kasi; the words that you utter will be as holy as scripture. This Sadhana will lead you to Realization.” 4.44 p256
- d) “If you are right on the path laid down by Him, then you can march boldly on, regardless of praise or blame. Do not doubt this.” 4.49 p284

7) (“Your thoughts, words and deeds must be saturated with the message”)

- a) “... become sweet in word and deed and thought so that you can dedicate yourself to the service of God’s Plan.” 2.29 p156
- b) “The steadiness, the faith, the love that you cultivate in the heart and express through your words, deeds and thoughts (are) the essential requisites for earning the Grace of God.” 12.5 p19
- c) “The highest discipline is to bring about a unity in one’s thoughts, words, and deeds.” 14.46 p262
- d) “I know you have the enthusiasm to carry My message among the people of this country and other countries. Let Me remind you that the best and the only successful way in which you can do it is to translate the message into your own lives. Your thoughts, words and deeds must be saturated with the message.” 8.19 p87
- e) “... shape your own lives, so that you are fit to stand before Sai with folded hands.” 2.27 p145

D. Vows (“A disciplined life is the best offering you can make... to the Divine in you”)

1) (“Thapas means all acts undertaken with higher motives....”)

- a) “What is needed today to save oneself from anxiety and fear, here and hereafter, is Dedication, diverting the mind towards God. If that is done, the pains of the physical body and pangs of the senses will not affect the mind.” 11.45 p266
- b) “Turn your mind towards God; dedicate yourselves to God; then you will find life one continuous stream of Ananda.” 10.30 p183
- c) “Thapas means all acts undertaken with higher motives, all acts indicating yearning for the spirit, repenting for past blunders, staunch determination to adhere to virtue, self control, unyielding adherence to equanimity in the face of success or failure. Thapas means heat, burning, intensity, earnestness of endeavour.” 5.55 p299
- d) “... leaving all initiation of activity to His Prompting, all execution to His Direction and all consequences thereof to His Plan.” 7.12 p63

- 2) (“... dedicate all activities to God... leaving the consequences to Him....”)
- a) “A disciplined life is the best offering you can make to the country or to the Divine in you.” 13.36 p210
 - b) “Joy and peace have to be restored in this village through truth, goodness, justice and love. Each one can best perform the duty that has fallen to his lot only when he develops in himself an attitude of dedication to these ideals.” 11.43 p254
 - c) “... dedicate all activities to God and engage in them in a spirit of worship, leaving the consequences to Him and ceasing to attach yourselves to them. Look upon everyone as the embodiment of the Divine and worship each, as such, by offering Love, Understanding, and Service.” 13.8 p35

- 3) (“... resolve to translate My message into acts of service....”)

- a) “Kankana is the word for dedicatory armlet, worn when a person resolves on a vow.” 5.4 p25
- b) “I consider the day when Divinity blossoms in your heart as My birthday in you. Therefore, each of you should individually celebrate such a day as My birthday. The day when you resolve to practice My advice, to follow My directives, to translate My message into acts of service, and to engage in spiritual discipline-- that day is My birthday for you.” 13.19 p102

E. Faith (“Those who have faith in this, My Truth, will not hesitate to dedicate themselves to it”)

- 1) (“Have faith in the wisdom of the ancients....”)

- a) “Have faith in the wisdom of the ancients; do not pitch your tiny little brain against the intuitions of the saints and their discoveries.” 5.33 p183
- b) “Dedicate yourself to God. Sudama was asked by the Lord, ‘Tell Me what you need!’ He replied, ‘I need you and you alone’, for, that includes all!.... If only he wins the love of the father, he has no need even to think of the items that he requires. The father will anticipate his needs and provide the articles.” 9.29 p156
- c) “Faith in God is the secure foundation on which hope has to be built. The faith has to be stable and strong. The feeling that God will come to our rescue has to be vivid and vital, motivating and activating all that we do or speak or think. Service rendered to others in this spirit will be a great source of joy to you as well as to the recipient.” 10.10 p60

- d) “Therefore, cultivate faith and surrender; then Grace will flow through you into every act of yours; for they are no longer your acts, they are His and you have no concern about the consequences thereof. All acts and words and thoughts will thereafter be pure, saturated with love, conducive to peace.”
6.9 p45
- e) “To get this attitude of surrender, of dedication, you must have Faith in God.”
5.19 p105

2) (“That faith becomes steady through Sadhana”)

- a) “The correct discipline to acquire the nishkaama attitude is dedication; and, dedication is possible, only when you have intense faith in God. That faith becomes steady through Sadhana.”
3.25 p150
- b) “Divine miracles like those of Rama (He who pleases and delights) and Krishna (He who attracts) are for drawing people to the Divine presence for the purpose of correcting or cleansing them, or for confirming their faith and then leading them on to the discipline of service....”
14.1 p4
- c) “Love your religion, so that you may practice it with greater faith; and, when each one practices his religion with faith, there can be no hatred in the world, for all religions are built on universal love.”
5.44 p246
- d) “Even if the entire world opposes unitedly, nothing can affect Me. My mission is essentially Mine. I am engaged in doing good. My heart is ever full of benediction. I have no ego. I do not own any thing. This is My Truth. Those who have faith in this, My Truth, will not hesitate to dedicate themselves to it.”
15.33 p183

F. Offerings (“Every act has to be... pure, just, virtuous, and saturated with love....”)

1) (“... sanctify every item of work by dedicating it to some Divine end”)

- a) “Sanctify every word and deed by filling it with Prema for Krishna or whatever Name and Form you give to the Lord you love.”
3.21 p126
- b) “... see in every one the Lord Himself moving in that Form.... Dedicate all your physical possessions and mental skills and intellectual attainments to the service of the Lord and to the Lord’s manifold manifestations.”
4.22 p125
- c) “An act dedicated as an offering to the God resident in all becomes as sacred as the highest service.”
13.29 p173
- d) “Try to sanctify every item of work by dedicating it to some Divine end.”
11.46 p274
- e) “Every act that you dedicate to Me reaches Me.”
10.30 p188
- f) “The impulses will be rendered pure and the intentions will be raised to the higher level, if man but decides to dedicate all his deeds, words and thoughts to the Lord.”
6.9 p45

- 2) (“Render every thought into a flower, worthy to be held in His Fingers....”)
- a) “Install the Lord in your heart and offer Him the fruits of your actions and the flowers of your inner thoughts and feelings. That is the worship I like most, the devotion I appreciate most.” 1.1 p2
 - b) “Render every thought into a flower, worthy to be held in His Fingers; render every deed into a fruit, full of the sweet juice of love, fit to be placed in His Hand; render every tear holy and pure, fit to wash His Lotus Feet.” 10.4 p20
 - c) “The third sign is that the true aspirant will have a reverent attitude to the duty he is bound with. He will carry out every task assigned to him as if it is an act of worship by which the Lord will be pleased, through which he can approach the Pedestal of God.” 10.4 p20
 - d) “Every act has to be dedicated to the Lord; that is to say, it has to be pure, just, virtuous and saturated with love, and it has to be done as an adoration of the Source of Truth, Justice, Virtue and Love....” 6.42 p209

3) “... she had a single myrobalan fruit....”

(... with tears flowing in her wrinkled cheeks, she dropped it into the bowl”)

“Sankaracharya stood before a house with his begging bowl. The old lady who lived there was struck by the effulgence on his face that betokened a realized soul; but she had nothing which she could drop in that bowl. She wrung her hands in despair; she cursed herself; she wondered why the distinguished mendicant had come to her door, instead of going to the doors of the affluent. Then she remembered she had a single myrobalan fruit, the last of a handful she had plucked from a tree in the jungle a few days before. When she felt thirsty, she used to eat a fruit. She brought it out and, with tears flowing in her wrinkled cheeks, she dropped it into the bowl. Sankaracharya was touched by her contribution; the Lord willed; a shower of golden myrobalans fell in the yard in front of her hut. She was placed above want, even without her asking for it. That is the way Grace works.” 7.33 p173-174

4) (“Any act done for the glorification of God is thereby rendered pure and potent”)

- a) “Dedication is to be carried out in various ways. Take the food that we consume. Offer it to God, before you partake of it. Then it is rendered pure and potent. Any act done for the glorification of God is thereby rendered pure and potent. It is incapable of harming the doer, the beneficiary, or society, for, it is saturated with Love, which is God.” 9.23 p122

- b) “Another Hindu belief is that food, when it is offered to God and then taken as consecrated by His acceptance, is activated by Divine energy, and is freed from all evil influences that might adhere to it. This helps the attitude of dedication, and encourages the conviction of the constant Presence of God as an inseparable guide and guardian wherever you may be.” 7.37 p189-190
- c) “You have to eat in a prayerful mode, in profound gratitude. The Gita says that the fire which cooked the meal is God, the meal is God, the eater is God, the purpose of eating is to carry on the work entrusted by God or pleasing to God, and that the fruit of that work is, progress towards God.” 11.47 p278
- d) “The cow transforms grass and gruel into sweet strength-giving milk and gives it away in plenty to its master. Develop that quality, that power to transform the food you consume into sweet thoughts, words and deeds of sympathy for all.” 8.1 p4

5) (“Yajna means ‘any activity dedicated to the glory of God’....”)

- a) “Do not divide your activities as, ‘These are for my sake’ and ‘These are for the sake of God’.... If you offer all activities at the feet of the Lord and free them from any trace of egoistic attachment, the consequence will not bind you....” 7.18 p103
- b) “Do not think that the Yajna is only this Ceremony performed in this enclosure, marked out as specially holy, attended by readings and recitals from sacred texts and the chanting of Vedic hymns, and nothing other than this. No. 11.47 p276
- c) “Yajna means ‘any activity dedicated to the glory of God’, not merely, this activity prescribed in the ancient scriptures. Activity dedicated to the glory of God is being done, and can be done in all climes, in all realms, by all races. The ‘dedication’ ensures success.” 11.47 p275
- d) “Yajna is a continuous process; every one who lives in the constant presence of God, and does all acts as dedicated to God is engaged in Yajna.” 11.47 p276
- e) “People here are aware of God in everything-- the truck driver folds his palms before the steering wheel and utters a prayer, the potter bows his head before the wheel, the poet worships the pen, the musician invokes the deity in the harmonium before he starts playing on it. No one enters upon a task without prayer and making a sign of submission. This means that the spiritual attitude precedes the secular attitude of self-praise.” 14.50 p284-285
- f) “Bring ‘Bhakthi’ and lay it here and take from here ‘Sakthi’ instead! Bring what you have, namely, your sorrows and griefs, worries and anxieties, and take from Me joy and peace, courage and confidence.” 1.2 p15

- 6) (“Dedicate all your skills, talents... to the living embodiments of Divinity that are all around you”)
- a) “... do not count on returns; do not plan for the consequence; do, since you have to do, since it is your duty. That is real Puja. Dedicate the deed as well as the consequence to Him.” 5.27 0147
 - b) “Engage yourselves in your duties as intelligently and as devotedly as you can; but, carry out your duties as if they are acts of worship offered to God leaving the fruit of those acts to His Will, His Grace, His Compassion. Do not be affected when the results you anticipate are not produced; do not anticipate at all, but, leave it to Him.” 12.9 p34
 - c) “You need not offer Me anything; I only want that you should realize the goal of life by playing your role in the activities that help and cure....” 12.53 p293
 - d) “The easiest and the most fruitful expression of Dharma today consists in Seva, service as worship of the Divine around you. Dedicate all your skill, talents, wealth and scholarship to the living embodiments of Divinity that are around you.” 11.28 p156
 - e) “Mukhyabhakthi is the stage where the Seva of the Lord alone matters and it is its own reward; the devotee does not seek anything more than just the service of the highest, done to the utmost of his capacity.” 1.8 p46
 - f) “The act must be its own reward; or, rather, the act must be according to the prompting of the God within, so that its consequence is left to Him. Practice this attitude consistently and you will find great Peace welling within you and around you.” 5.17 p97

G. He is the Doer (“God is shining, announcing Himself through you”)

- 1) (“... every look, every speech, every act is His”)
- a) “But, just think for a while: Who granted you the chance, the intelligence, the success? The Lord. You are helpless without Him. He chose, He prompted, He executed, It was done. Be humble....” 9.32 p167-168
- b) “All work is His; He inspires, He helps, He executes, He enjoys, He is pleased, He reaps, He sowed.” 10.14 p94
- c) “All hands are His, all feet, all eyes and all faces and mouths are His; He works through all hands, He walks through all feet, He sees through each eye, He eats and speaks through every mouth. Everything is He. Every step is His, every look, every speech, every act is His.” 11.22 p115-116

- 2) (“... He wills every little movement everywhere”)
- a) “He gave you the time, the space, the cause, the material, the idea, the skill, the chance, the fortune...” 12.9 p34
 - b) “Every atom is surcharged with His Power, His Might, His Glory. Every being is surcharged with His Bliss, His Beauty, His Goodness.” 11.28 p158
 - c) “So, why should you feel as if you are the doer?” 12.9 p34
 - d) “You say one moment, ‘Baba does everything, I am but the instrument’, and the next moment the same tongue talks ‘I did this; I did that. Swami did not do this for me.’ If you never slip into wrong, you can be ever certain of His Grace.” 1.29 p182
 - e) “Do not claim that you are using some skill or force specially yours; it has come out of His Grace, His Compassion.” 11.28 p158
 - f) “... you are but the instrument... and He wills every little movement everywhere.” 4.33 p199
- 3) (“He is expressing Himself through every thought, word, and deed that emanates from you”)
- a) “The Atma, it is, that sees through the eyes, hears through the ear, handles through the fingers, moves through the feet. That is the basic ‘you!’” 4.9 p50
 - b) “All work is His; He inspires, He helps, He executes, He enjoys, He is pleased, He reaps, He sowed. He alone exists, for, all this manifoldness is but He...” 10.14 p94
 - c) “... He is the prompter, the executor, the giver of the required strength and skill, the enjoyer of the fruit thereof.” 4.34 p203
 - d) “Who moved you to revere the picture in this form? Who was it that placed the lamp, lit it and bowed before the picture? It is all God, God, God. There is none else...” 11.29 p170
 - e) “God is shining, announcing Himself through you. He is expressing Himself through every thought, word, and deed that emanates from you.” 13.12 p56
 - f) “Let not the bulb think that it is shining through its own will; let it be humble, that it is but an instrument, used by the current, to shed light.” 7.38 p195
- 4) (“... what can you prepare for? It is all His Will, His Plan”)
- a) “Dedication is different from service; in service, there is the element of ego. ‘I serve, He is the master, He requires my service, I am necessary for Him.’ But, in dedication, the I is wiped out. There is no desire for the fruit; the joy consists in the act being done.” 4.48 p277
 - b) “... you have to give up the egoism that you are the ‘doer’, be confirmed in the faith that He is the ‘doer’ of every deed. That is the genuine ‘giving up.’” 9.14 p74

- c) “Know that you are but an instrument; what can you prepare for? It is all His Will, His Plan.” 11.29 p174
 - d) “A time comes when you look back on your achievement and sigh at the futility of it all. Entrust to the Lord, before it is too late, your mind, and let Him shape it as he likes.” 4.1 p6
 - e) “Then Krishna told him that in the Gita it says: ‘He who is devoid of the ‘I’ and ‘mine’ tendencies and the delusion that ‘these are mine,’ ‘these are not mine,’ ‘this is I’, and ‘this is not I’, he alone can attain the higher peace.’” 14.12 p79
 - f) “... when the last vestige of the delusion of ‘I’ is wiped off; even the feeling ‘I know’ is gone; then you are the Atma, pure and whole, entire and enduring....” 2.19 p95
- 5) (“... deal with everyone in a humble revered manner”)
- a) “God is there as Love and you are only drawing on Him, when you are sharing Love with others.” 11.7 p42
 - b) “Believe that all hearts are motivated by the One and Only God; that all faiths Glorify the One and Only God, that all Names in all languages and all Forms man can conceive, denote the One and only God....” 8.22 p118
 - c) “The consciousness-- that God is the Indweller, who prompts and executes all that we feel, think and do, that gives the inspiration to surrender, the strength to dedicate, the urge to be but an instrument in His Hands for His purposes-- is Jnana.” 8.37 p202
 - d) “When you know that the Lord is the cause, the source of all, you deal with everyone in a humble revered manner. That is the path which will lead you quick to the Goal.” 6.5 p28

H. “The nine steps in the pilgrimage of man towards God....”
 (“... along the path of dedication and surrender are....”)

“The nine steps in the pilgrimage of man towards God along the path of dedication and surrender are:

- 1) Developing a desire to listen to the glory and grandeur of the handiwork of God, and of the various awe-inspiring manifestations of Divinity. This is the starting point. It is by hearing about the Lord again and again, that we can transform ourselves into divinity
- 2) Singing to oneself about the Lord, in praise of His magnificence and manifold exploits

- 3) Dwelling on the Lord in the mind, reveling in the contemplation of His Beauty, Majesty and Compassion
- 4) Entering upon the worship of the Lord, by concentrating on honouring the feet or foot-prints
- 5) This develops into a total propitiation of the Lord, and systematic ritualistic worship, in which the aspirant gets inner satisfaction and inspiration
- 6) The aspirant begins to see the favourite Form of God, which he likes to worship, in all beings and all objects, wherever he turns, and so, he develops an attitude of Vandana, or reverence towards nature and all life
- 7) Established in this bent of mind, he becomes the devoted servant of all, with no sense of superiority or inferiority. This is a vital step, which presages great spiritual success
- 8) This takes the seeker so near the Lord that he feels himself to be the confidant and comrade, the companion and friend, the sharer of God's power and pity, of God's triumphs and achievement, His Sahkaa, in fact, as Arjuna had become
- 9) As can be inferred, this is the prelude to the final step of total surrender, or Atma-nivedanam, yielding fully to the Will of the Lord which the seeker knows through his own purified intuition." 10.4 p17-18

I. Surrender (“... the mission of crucifying the ego on the cross of compassion”)

- 1) (“... give up the egoism that you are the ‘doer’.... That is the genuine ‘giving up’”)
 - a) “... the very basis of spiritual progress is the denial of the I, and the joyful acceptance of the We, which is but the merging of the I in He. Sacrifice, service, sharing in the exaltation of others, compassion when others suffer grief-- these are virtues that purify and prepare the individual to the arduous task of reaching the Goal.” 9.32 p165
 - b) “... you have to give up the egoism that you are the ‘doer’, be confirmed in the faith that he is the ‘doer’ of every deed. That is the genuine ‘giving up.’” 9.14 p74
 - c) “Knowledge can never ripen into wisdom so long as the ego persists in craving for results which can satisfy desire.” 15.22 p122
 - d) “This birth has been undertaken by you for this very mission: the mission of crucifying the ego on the cross of compassion.” 11.5 p29
 - e) “I call upon you to adhere to a new rite, Seva, a new Yagna, Sacrifice of the Ego, a new ritual of worship, Saranagathi, dedication of all thoughts, words and deeds at the Lotus Feet of the Lord and acceptance of all that happens as Gifts of Grace from Him.” 12.12 p51

- 2) (“... when you dwell on... His Grace... one’s own capacities get eclipsed in the Divine”)
- a) “The feeling that activity is ‘mine’ and that it is for the sake of some benefit, that must accrue to ‘me’-- it is this that causes ill-feeling, sorrow, and illnesses. The ego exults or bewails; it laughs and weeps; it competes and mopes; it swings like a pendulum between joy and grief. It gives man no moment of rest, of equanimity. It is agitated when the fruit of the activity is less than expected, or even when it is more, or different, or distorted. That is why the Saints prescribe that all activity be dedicated to God who knows best what benefit ‘each’ deserves and who doles out the fruit in the manner He wills.” 10.37 p247
 - b) “Let the petty wishes for which you now approach God be realized or not; let the plans for promotion and progress which you place before God, be fulfilled or not; they are not so important after all. The primary aim should be to become Masters of yourselves, to hold intimate and constant communion with the Divine that is in you as well as in the Universe of which you are a part.” 10.8 p43-44
 - c) “Moksha is not a distinct and different Sadhana. It is only giving up unnecessary desires.” 14.54 p302-303
 - d) “The taints of ‘I’ and ‘Mine’ have to be removed by rigorous Sadhana; chief among the disciplines being Namasmarana, because when you dwell on the names of the Lord, His Majesty, His Grace, His Potence, His Pervasiveness, these get fixed in the consciousness and one’s own capacities and capabilities get eclipsed in the Divine. So, humility increases and surrender is possible....” 7.12 p63-64
 - e) “Pray, ‘Lord! Let me fall at Thy Lotus Feet!’ and the Feet will present themselves before you. They are at all places, at all times. Your call compels the manifestation, that is all.” 11.22 p116
- 3) (“Detachment... means our giving up the feeling that things are permanent, and capable of yielding supreme joy”)
- a) “The last stage is God-realization. The Vedas proclaim that immortality (the stage when one is merged in the birthless, deathless, universal entity) is feasible through renunciation and detachment only....” 13.25 p146
 - b) “Sacrifice is an exercise in renunciation; it should not emerge on and off and then be submerged. The spirit of renunciation must be evident in every single act throughout one’s life.” 13.37 p215
 - c) “Giving up the little ‘I’ is what renunciation or Thyaga means. Thyaga does not mean running away from hearth and home into the jungle. It means sublimating every thought, word and deed into an offering to God, saturating all acts with Divine intent.” 15.15 p82
 - d) “Vairagyam or Detachment does not imply renunciation of family ties and fleeing into the loneliness of the jungle. It means our giving up the feeling that things are permanent, and capable of yielding supreme joy.” 13.11 p50

- 4) (“Attach yourself to Him; then your attachment for these temporary objects will fall off...”)
- a) “Life is a continuous series of sacrifices of the lower for the sake of the higher, of the tiny in favor of the vast.” 13.34 p199
 - b) “... the Jiva, so long as it is involved with the physical case, the senses, the mind and the instruments of consciousness, it does not merge in God.” 15.35 p192
 - c) “The attachment to the senses and to the sensory world must be transmuted into attachment to the Atma, to the Lord, so that it may confer on you the Sweetness of Bliss.” 10.35 p228
 - d) “Attach yourself to Him; then your attachment for these temporary objects will fall off...” 1.14 p81
 - e) “Make it (the mind) cling to God, let it do all things for God and leave the success or failure of the thing done to God, the loss and the profit, the elation or the dejection. Then, you have the secret of Santhi, and contentment.” 5.19 p105
 - f) “Ask and get what will save you, not what will bind you. You ask from Me a thousand things of the world, but rarely do you ask for ‘Me.’” 3.3 p26
 - g) “Have no ego, discard desire, you are liberated!” 11.28 p159
 - h) “When the fascination for the body goes, the Light of the God within will shine and illumine your thoughts, words and deeds.” 9.29 p155
- 5) (“Render your self unto Him”)
- a) “Renunciation, detachment, sacrifice, giving up-- this alone can ensure the highest Realization, Eternal Bliss.” 11.38 p225
 - b) “To pour the nectar of Grace, the vessel must be cleansed.” 3.5 p40
 - c) “Your love has to be as pure, as free from the taint of ego as Mine, so that it can merge in Me.” 11.15 p89
 - d) “Have no other thought than God, no other aim than knowing His command, no other activity than translating that command into action.” 11.12 p74
 - e) “... every act should be done sincerely, with love, with no yearning for acquiring personal profit, fame or benefit.” 12.42 p228-229
 - f) “That is what is meant by surrender. Render your self unto Him.” 11.12 p74
 - g) “... do not worry about the consequences; leave it to God who prompted the act and made it possible.” 6.39 p194
- 6) (“The religious offering in the sanctified flame is a symbol of this consummation”)
- a) “To fill the material body with felicity or bliss, the vital, mental, and intellectual sheaths need to be sublimated. All the sheaths have finally to merge in the beautiful illumination of wisdom. The religious offering in the sanctified flame is a symbol of this consummation.” 14.32 p178

- b) “I want that you should all, when the Poornahuthi is offered into the fire, stand up and reverentially offer into the same fire, every one of the Durgunas that you have: the faults, the failings, the temptations, the transgressions... search for these today, unearth them from their hidden places, bring them with you here tomorrow, nicely packed, and with one final heave of mental exertion, throw them in when the flames of Poornahuthi rise aloft.” 2.46 p263
- c) “The vibhuti which you smear on your forehead is intended to convey this basic spiritual lesson: that every thing will be reduced to ashes, including the brow that wears it.” 6.33 p167
- 7) (“... the Grace of the Lord can burn that burden in a flash....”)
- a) “You may say that the burden of past acts and their inevitable consequences have to be borne; but, the Grace of the Lord can burn that burden in a flash; the revelation of reality will, in a flash, save you from that burden.” 5.26 p143-144
- b) “The flame of Jnana can reduce to cinders the impulses inherited through many births and many experiences. In the heat of that crucible, dross is burnt and precious metal is isolated.” 3.5 p37
- c) “Even objective desires will be transmuted into higher spheres of purity when one approaches the Lord. Nothing against Dharma can stand the Presence of the Lord. That fire will consume all impurities....” 3.21 p124-125
- d) “If you win the Grace of the Lord, even the decrees of Destiny can be overcome.” 2.14 p65
- e) “And what is the goal? The blossoming of the Lotus of the Heart and the emanation of Jnana-jyothi from it, consuming all delusion and making the Individual Splendour merge in the Universal Splendour.” 5.8 p52
- 8) (“Come out of the well of ego into the sea of the Universal Spirit....”)
- a) “Renounce the idea of your being separate; see in all beings, yourself; and yourself, in all beings. That is the highest renunciation, the renunciation of the sense of ego....” 10.27 p162
- b) “... tune the little will to the Infinite Will of God, so that it becomes merged in His Glory.” 6.43 p218
- c) “... when the ‘I’ disappears, we become fit to know the non-‘I’.” 15.4 p18
- d) “The disappearance of the wave form and the wave-name is called Moksha; that is, the merging of the wave in the ocean from which it seemed to differ. De-individualization is, in other words, Moksha.” 1.27 p167
- e) “Come out of the well of ego into the sea of the Universal Spirit, of which you are a part.” 6.11 p60

- 9) (“His grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles”)
- a) “Accept Him as your Master; surrender all activities to Him; dedicate your words and deeds and thoughts to Him, as flowers at His Feet...” 5.36 p204
 - b) “He had the humility to... fall at the Feet of Krishna, when he could no longer see how he should proceed.” 3.22 p130
 - c) “Feel that you are a hundred per cent dependent on God...” 9.21 p110
 - d) “Recognize that God is the person at the wheel. He will take you happily to the destination. Have faith in Him.... Surrender to Him. His grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles.” 15.24 p133
 - e) “Offer your entire self, your entire life, to Him; then your adoration will transform and transmute you so fast and completely, that you and He can be merged into One.” 8.45 p244
 - f) “Give your heart over to the Lord and move in society as a dedicated being; then, no harm can come to you.” 4.40 p237
 - g) “Faith and surrender are the manifestations of Bhakthi. They can ensure peace and joy for you and all mankind.” 15.24 p133
 - h) “Whoever surrenders, Rama accepts, on the spot, without reservations.” 10.24 p152
 - i) “The Ramayana is the great text for all who yearn to surrender to God and win Him. From beginning to end, it illustrates the various steps leading to it and the blessedness acquired when one accomplishes it.” 6.18 p92
- 10) (“... love because your very nature is Love....”)
- a) “Through work filled with Dharma you progress towards worship that is filled with the consciousness of Divinity in all, and through that worship you attain wisdom when you experience the Divinity that fills all this. Work, Worship, Wisdom-- fruitling, mature fruit, juice-filled fruit; this is the order of spiritual progress of each individual. When the fruit is saturated with sweetness, it drops. That is the consummation.” 8.27 p148-149
 - b) “Once you decide that the orchard in your mind is His, all fruits will be sweet; that saranagathi will render all fruits acceptable to the Lord...” 3.6 p44
 - c) “In fact, you need not surrender anything at all. Love all beings-- that is enough. Love with no expectation of return; love for the sake of love; love because your very nature is Love...” 12.4 p15-16
 - d) “When you are God yourself, to whom are you to surrender what? Think over this deeply and attain to that realization.” 11.12 p75

11) “O Lucky Murali!”

(“... no feeling of ego left to obstruct the flow of his Prema....”)

“One day Krishna pretended to be fast asleep, with the Flute carelessly aside by His side. Radha approached the fortunate Flute and asked it in plaintive terms, ‘O Lucky Murali! tell me, how you earned this great good fortune. What was the vow you observed, the vigil you kept, the pilgrimage you accomplished? What was the manthra you recited, the idol you worshipped?’ The Flute got tongue through His Grace; ‘I rid myself of all sensual desire, of envy, greed, of ego, that is all. I had no feeling of ego left to obstruct the flow of His Prema through Me to all creation.’”

4.30 p174-175

12) (“Let the will of the Lord prevail....”)

- a) “The greatest joy springs from the utmost sacrifice.” 11.28 p158
- b) “Give Me the reins; trust in me and be directed by Me. I shall take full responsibility. Only, you must accept without demur whatever comes as Prasadam or Grace!” 2.33 p183
- c) “Whatever happens, accept it gladly as His Handiwork, a sign of His Compassion.... His Glory, His Compassion, His Grace-- these are inscrutable; they shape themselves in manifold forms, as He wills.” 8.28 p159
- d) “Let the will of the Lord prevail; one’s duty is but to connect oneself with the current of His Grace.” 1.3 p18-19

IV. Mergence

(“... there is no separate story for you to relate or live”)

A. Introduction (“I am present everywhere at all times....”)

- 1) “The harvest which is the reward of all this spiritual discipline is Wisdom.” 13.1 p2
- 2) “And what is that Wisdom? Every individual is a spark of the effulgence of God; God is dancing in every cell of every being. Do not doubt this, or ignore this, or dispute this. This is the Truth; this is the entire Truth; this is the only Truth.”
12.12 p53
- 3) “Every atom and cell is a bundle of energy, expressing the Divine will.” 7.7 p42
- 4) “... the entire Creation is Cosmic Leela of God...” 15.41 p232
- 5) “The Universe is the Field where God sports. Be aware of this fact, every moment of consciousness, and there is nothing more you need for a happy existence-- for, you will then contact God in every thing through every thought at every place and at every moment. His Leela is evident in the smallest flower and the most distant star. The joy that you can derive from the contemplation of these proofs of providence is indescribable.”
13.16 p80-81
- 6) “I am present everywhere at all times; My Will must prevail over every obstacle; I am aware of the past, present and future, of your innermost thoughts and carefully guarded secrets.” 10.30 p184
- 7) “... inside and outside, all that is, is saturated with God.” 14.13 p85
- 8) “When love takes in more and more within its fold, more and more entities are rendered as One.” 11.15 p89

B. The Call of the Divine (“The Call of the Divine echoes in every heart....”)

- 1) (“The deepest yearning of man is to experience the One....”)
 - a) “... the Call is for the Particular to merge with the Infinite, the Universal.”
1.29 p178
 - b) “The Call of the Divine echoes in every heart; it provokes the reaction of awe, reverence, affection, love and sacrifice-- all ingredients of Bhakthi. It translates itself into acts of worship, of praise, of adoration and of rituals symbolizing the majesty of God. Thus, the mind gets saturated with Divine thoughts, it is recast in the Divine Mould, until the flow of Ananda is unabated.” 10.25 p153
 - c) “... every living being has some day or other to tread the right path and get merged in the Grace of God.” 2.9 p40
 - d) “Every being is a pilgrim destined to reach Madhava and merge in Him; but, most people have forgotten the road; they wander as lost children....” 3.1 p4

- e) “Man forgets that his innermost desire, which he should cherish, is the desire for good and for God.” 14.18 p105
- f) “The deepest yearning of man is to experience the One...” 14.59 p343
- 2) (“... that has been the call, down the corridors of Time”)
- a) “The fulfillment of man’s life on earth consists in filling oneself with Love of God and transmuting that Love into acts of Service, Service of man who is the embodiment of God.” 10.34 p211
- b) “To know Him, to cling to Him, to merge in His immeasurable splendour-- that is the highest goal of man.” 4.50 p293
- c) “Transmuting ‘man’ into ‘God’ and experiencing that Ananda or Bliss is the one and only achievement for which life is to be devoted.” 7.18 p93
- d) “The ascent to manhood has been made possible for you all; but this high status among the animals is to be deserved by merging at last in the Divine... that is the goal which the pilgrimage of evolution has in view, since life began on earth as the amoeba on the waters.” 10.25 p153
- e) “Expand the limited awareness of the individual into the limitless realm of Divine Glory-- that has been the call, down the corridors of Time.” 9.32 p165-166
- 3) (“Make full use of Me, that is all that I ask of you”)
- a) “No Avathara has done like this before, going among the people, the masses, the millions and counseling them, guiding them, consoling them, uplifting them, directing them along the path of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema.” 5.42 p233
- b) “For during no previous Age did man have this unique chance. No organization of this nature was established, no Conference of this character was held in the Presence and no opportunity was given then to derive Ananda through such close association, through conversation and singing together. Undoubtedly, you are all singularly fortunate.” 10.35 p238
- c) “Make full use of Me, that is all that I ask of you.” 6.20 p108
- d) “‘Yad bhaavam thad bhavathi’ ... you become that which you feel. You can get the feeling for the Divine only if you have a taste of the Prema of the Divine. That is why the Avathar has come: to give you a taste of that Prema, so that the yearning for the Lord will be planted in your heart.” 2.26 p139
- e) “Your task... is to grow in love, expand that love, practice love, strengthen love, and finally become Love and merge in the Illimitable Love, which is God. All your life, you must be Love, with Love, for Love. That is to say, love expressed through service to those that draw that love from you, and by drawing, help to increase it and deepen it.” 9.30 p158
- f) “Once people know how great is the Love that God gives, they will not desire any thing else.” 9.9 p46

C. Divine Vision (“There is only one God; He is omnipresent”)

- 1) (“When the bell sounds Om... you will be aware of His Presence”)
 - a) “By utilizing the mysterious alchemy of the mind, man can attain Jnana and visualize the Truth that satisfies and illumines.” 7.40 p203
 - b) “... some experience of the roar of the Vedas in the Mahavakyas (Divine Axioms, which ring through the Sacred Texts) wakes man into the Higher Awareness.” 10.34 p213
 - c) “When these depth-stirring declarations reverberate in the heart, men awaken to the vision of Truth.” 10.34 p213
 - d) “The realization that you are the Atman, and that there is nothing except the Atman anywhere at any time-- this is Self-realization....” 10.34 p213
 - e) “... ‘I am He’-- ‘He’ meaning the eternal universal Absolute, the Brahman, the Boundless, Beginningless, Endless entity. When that axiom is meditated upon and made one’s own deepest experience, man has the highest Bliss, the Bliss of merging into the Atman from which he felt long he had been displaced.” 11.25 p135
 - f) “Mergence in the Cosmic Consciousness (Brahman), of which each one is an expression, is not a novel achievement gained by effort. It is only the awareness, in a flash, of an existing fact.” 15.51 p294
 - g) “The bell in the temple is intended to convey the Om as the symbol of the Omnipresent God. When the bell sounds Om, the Godhead within you will awaken and you will be aware of His Presence. That is the meaning of the bell which hangs in front of the inner shrine in the temple.” 1.9 p555-56

- 2) (“Once you attain this Jnana, the waking experience of fifty years will appear as of five seconds only....”)
 - a) “The vision-experience of the world is but a projection of our mind and the reflection of our own inner thoughts. As the thought, so the vision.” 15.8 p40
 - b) “My Grace is ever with you; it is not something that is given or taken; it is given always and accepted by the Consciousness that is aware of its significance.” 11.14 p86
 - c) “That is why the Avathar has come: to give you a taste of that Prema, so that the yearning for the Lord will be planted in your heart.” 2.26 p139
 - d) “The Grace of God descends upon the eager Sadhaka, who listens attentively to the Story of that Grace.” 4.21 p118
 - e) “When one’s inner reactions and agitations are transmuted into Divine, all that one experiences through the senses, the mind and the intellect take on the Divine lustre, reveal their Divine core, and man is shaped in the mould of Love.” 9.27 p145

- f) “You are the Infinite Universal Absolute. You have to get yourselves established firmly, unshakably in this awareness.” 12.30 p165
- g) “Once you attain this Jnana, the waking experience of fifty years will appear as of five seconds only....” 6.20 p107
- 3) (“It is the same substance poured into different moulds”)
- a) “All men are lamps lit from the same flame which is God.” 7.3 p16
- b) “It is the same substance poured into different moulds.” 2.2 p5
- c) “In spite of a multiplicity of containers, the contained is the same. That is the principle of Sath, Chith and Ananda (Existence, Knowledge, Bliss).” 9.1 p4
- d) “When space is enclosed in a pot, it appears limited and small. But once released from the container, it again merges with the infinite sky. The sky is not reduced or transformed in shape or quality by being held in the container. So, too, the One Universal Soul that is pervading the bodies and lives of billions of beings is not affected by the container (body) to which it adheres for some time.” 14.27 p144
- e) “... *Vasudevassarvamidam* (All this is God)....” 12.23 p122
- f) “So, do not limit Me to the boundaries of any one Name and Form. Your aim should be... to be conscious of His Presence as the Inner Motivator of every living being, in every particle of matter.” 8.19 p96
- 4) (“Recognize... the fountain of Love in your heart and in the hearts of all....”)
- a) “Do not be sad that you have been posted on some duty that keeps you far from Me.” 13.18 p93
- b) “Even if you are posted to the Canteen or the Hospital, do not get downhearted, that you cannot get Darsan, all (the) time. I have no such handicaps; you can have my Darsan, wherever you are.” 11.10 p59
- c) “God is omnipresent. So do not act differently when you are away from My Presence. Be always and everywhere conscious of the Presence.” 14.59 p343
- d) “Be convinced that God can and will appear in any form and so all forms are His. Don’t refuse to recognize Divinity in the form you dislike or did not expect! He can appear as a fox, as a dog, as a beggar, any Form. When you call on God, whatever form appears, treat it as God.” 11.29 p175
- e) “God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for.” 14.59 p343
- f) “The Lord takes the Form that the seekers crave for; He is above all Name and Form.” 8.30 p168

- g) “God appears before you as a blind beggar, an idiot, a leper, a child, a decrepit old man, a criminal, or a madman. You must look behind those veils for the Divine embodiment of love, power, and wisdom-- the Sai-- and worship Him through selfless service to humanity.” 13.8 p38
- h) “Recognize the Sai resident in every heart and all will be smoothness, softness and sweetness for you. Sai will be the fountain of Love in your heart and in the hearts of all with whom you come in contact.” 13.13 p66
- 5) (“... the clear vision can experience Him everywhere at all times”)
- a) “God is immanent in every particle in the Universe; the clear vision can experience Him everywhere at all times.” 12.50 p272-273
- b) “Learn to see in every living vital active person, the embodiment of all energy, all beauty, all beneficence, namely, God. God is subtler than ether, filling the smallest crevice with His Majesty. Know this, and serve His manifestations, wherever you meet them.” 10.30 p183
- c) “The Divine is the core, the essence of your being. God is everywhere; when He is recognized and adored as the Indweller of your body, it becomes a Temple, and it is no more a burden. God is shining, announcing Himself through you; He is expressing Himself through every thought, word and deed that emanates from you.” 13.12 p56
- d) “The Divine is what integrates and unites all this diversity into one single essence.” 12.40 p218
- 6) (“... conduct yourselves in accordance with that sovereign status....”)
- a) “You must realize by constant contemplation that the world is the Body of God. And, you are a cell, in that Body.” 12.8 p29
- b) “You are all ‘living cells’ in the Body of God, each performing its individual function to promote His Will.” 13.8 p35
- c) “Believe that you are Divine; conduct yourselves in accordance with that sovereign status; then you will be blessed with the Anubhuti, the experience, the vision, the Realization, the Awareness, the Bliss. And, as a result, you are merged in that everlasting Ananda.” 11.47 p277
- 7) (“When the totally Divine is taken from the totally Divine, the total Divine remains”)
- a) “All are limbs on one body, nourished by the self-same life-blood, motivated by the same Will, the Will of God; bound by the same Divine Law. That is the Viswarupa, Cosmic Vision, that one must see and experience; God is all, God everywhere. That endows you with everlasting Ananda.” 7.46 p232
- b) “Paraseva (Service of others) is the negative pole; Atma-seva (Service to one-self) is the positive pole; and when they meet, the Flash of Ananda (Bliss) emanates.” 11.23 p126

- c) "... all this is you!" 4.45 p260
 d) "There is no other!" 12.42 p228

e) "The Vedas declare:

‘Poornam adah Poornam Idam
 Poornaath Poornam udachyathe
 Poornasya Poornam Aadaaya
 Poornam eva avasishyathe.’

‘That is wholly Divine. This is wholly Divine. From the totally Divine
 arose the totally Divine. When the totally Divine is taken from the totally
 Divine, the total Divine remains.’” 15.53 p304

- f) "Realize the God in you first; then, if you involve yourself with the material
 world, no harm can come to you, for you will recognize the objective world
 as but the Body of God." 12.4 p13

8) ("All the 1000 names of thousand-faced society connote only the One God....")

- a) "God is not to be spoken of as coming down or going up, since He is every
 where, available for your becoming aware of Him, through beauty, truth,
 goodness, strength, love or any one of the divine attributes." 8.3 p13
- b) "Yes, the lesson is: recognize His Footprints in every thing of beauty, every act
 of goodness, every tear of gratitude, every sigh of compassion, and discover
 Him in the bower of your own heart, filled with the fragrance of Love and
 Light of Virtue." 9.17 p89
- c) "We too can discover the Lord through His Footprints, which can be discovered
 everywhere, provided sincere search is made with trained eyes. You can find
 the footprints wherever there is beauty, virtue, humility, justice, truth, love
 and peace." 6.37 p185
- d) "When you clarify and sanctify your Vision and look at them through the Atmic
 eye, the eye that penetrates behind the physical (with all its attributes and
 appurtenances), then, you will see others as Waves on the Ocean of the
 Absolute, as the 'thousand heads, the thousand eyes, thousand feet' of the
 Supreme Sovereign person or 'Purusha' sung in the Rgveda." 13.8 p38
- e) "All the 1000 names of thousand-faced society connote only the One God that
 plays in those 1000 roles. The One appears as if it is enshrined in the 1000
 bodies. This is the truth you have to realize and cherish as the most precious
 in life." 11.47 p278

- 9) (“Everything is He. Every step is His, every look, every speech, every act is His”)
- a) “The Divine alone persists unchanged from the past, through the present into the future. When this flower blossoms in your heart it will reward you with eternal fragrance.” 15.25 p137
 - b) “God has a million names, Sages and Saints have seen Him in a million Forms; they have seen Him with eyes closed and eyes open. They have extolled Him in all the languages and dialects of man; but yet, His Glory is not exhausted.” 8.22 p119
 - c) “All hands are His, all feet, all eyes and all faces and mouths are His; He works through all hands, He walks through all feet, He sees through each eye, He eats and speaks through every mouth. Everything is He. Every step is His, every look, every speech, every act is His.” 11.22 p115-116
 - d) “When it is known and appreciated that the One manifested Itself as the many and that the One is known by many names, there is really no scope for hatred or irreverence.” 13.39 p226
 - e) “When merged, the ego is dissolved; all symbols and signs of the particular like name, form, caste, colour, creed, nationality, church, sect and the rights and duties consequent thereon, will fade.” 7.48 p240
- 10) (“When that One is known, the many can be known easily and clearly”)
- a) “There is only one God; He is omnipresent.” 11.54 p312
 - b) “All beings are images of the Universal Atma, in the names and forms they have apparently assumed.” 11.54 p306
 - c) “To conceive of the Divine as the inner core and the outer shell of every atom and planet, every speck of dust and every system of nebulae, as well as of oneself is an exercise that overwhelms individuality...” 10.2 p10
 - d) “From the master-servant relationship with God, he must advance to the body-limb relationship and reach the stage of merging in the All-Inclusive One...” 15.25 p134
 - e) “The essence of all religions and faiths then, is this: the merging in this Unity. The goal of all spiritual endeavour is this: the merging in this Unity. The object of all inquiry is this: to cognize this Unity.” 11.54 p307
 - f) “... do not interpose the formalities of the Guru-Sishya relationship, or even the altitudinal distinctions of the God-Devotee relationship, between you and me. I am neither Guru nor God; I am You; You are I; that is the Truth. There is no distinction. That which appears so is the delusion. You are waves; I am the Ocean. Know this, and be free, be Divine.” 10.16 p102
 - g) “... confidence that you are the pure unlimited self, is the great reinforcement that religion can endow you with. When you establish this in your hearts, you can be entrusted with any type of responsibility, and any type of work.” 12.41 p223
 - h) “When that One is known, the many can be known easily and clearly.” 12.44 p240

D. “Becoming” Divine (“If he has these virtues... ‘he is I, I am he’”)

1) (“... recognize your kinship with Him”)

- a) “The Avathara-purusha... has come solely to save mankind, and so, He is Aware of the pilgrim, the path and the goal. He is the Master of Creation and he is fully conscious of his power. He knows the past, the present and future of all. He leads and liberates.” 11.15 p88
- b) “The Lord is Love Itself. He comes in human form so that you can talk to Him, move with Him, serve Him, adore Him, and achieve Him, so that you can recognize your kinship with Him.” 4.45 p262
- c) “Do not spend your time trying to understand Me; do not waste your time in the attempt.... It is beyond any one’s capacity to understand Me.” 12.53 p290-291
- d) “No one can understand My Mystery. The best you can do is to get immersed in it.” 1.11 p67

2) (“Merge into the Divine which you really are....”)

- a) “Yes. You too can become Divine; I have nothing that you too do not possess. It is latent in you, it is patent and potent here; that is the only difference!” 7.6 p35
- b) “If you are devoted to God, how should you manifest that devotion? Let Me tell you how. By manifesting divine qualities, divine virtues, divine love, divine strength. Become Sai, be Sai.” 11.46 p273
- c) “When we speak of the yard of cloth, the litre of honey, the foot or yard, these are first fixed and then the measure or length is interpreted in terms of the already determined standard, isn’t it? So too, the I is Sath (Immortal Existence), Chith (Universal Knowledge) and Ananda (Absolute Bliss). Individuals are measured and weighed according to the approximation of each to the standard of the universal I.” 10.24 p147-148
- d) “The See-er and the Seen have to merge and become One and (be) experienced as One Only, without a Second.... Merge into the Divine which you really are; that is the consummation.” 13.11 p54
- e) “If he has these virtues...

- 1) full of devotion
- 2) prepared to enjoy suffering
- 3) eager to serve the Lord
- 4) free from the attachment to the transitory
- 5) of correct conduct
- 6) charitable
- 7) having an unsullied reputation
- 8) with no blemish on his character
- 9) fully content

- 10) endowed with all the virtues
- 11) equipped with the fruits of learning
- 12) ripe with wisdom
- 13) self-controlled
- 14) adorned with commendable social traits
- 15) moved by humility
- 16) fully dedicated to God

... 'rade nenoudu, nene vadoudu,' 'he is I, I am he.'"

1.27 p168

E. Realized Souls ("Themselves having crossed... they help others to do likewise....")

1) ("... they are Aware....")

- a) "The Atma illumines all objects; it needs no other source of illumination to shine. It is the seer of the Universe." 15.35 p192
- b) "For the Atma, the entire Cosmos is an object that is seen...." 15.35 p192
- c) "You have been born because you did not pass in certain subjects; there is some balance of experience which you must acquire to complete the course. If you get convinced that your true nature is the Atma, then you have finished the course and 'passed.'" 1.28 p174
- d) "What, then, is the special feature of Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Christ? Why do you celebrate their Birthdays with such reverential enthusiasm? The specialty is this: they are Aware-- you are unaware-- of the Atma which is the Truth. Awareness confers Grace, Glory, Majesty, Might, Splendour. Awareness confers Liberation from bounds, from time, space and causation.... Avataras are ever alert, aware...." 11.50 p292
- e) "The wise are those who know the Atma." 11.53 p300

2) ("They experience God in and through all things at all times")

- a) "The God-men are described in the Bhagavad Gita as 'Sathatham Yoginah'-- 'Always associated with God'. They are never apart from God. They experience God in and through all things at all times. Whatever they see or do, they believe it is in God and for God." 15.15 p82
- b) "Brahmachari means, 'He who moves in Brahman (God).' Hanuman had no other thought than Rama (who is Brahman) and so was ever moving in Brahman, living in Brahman. Your thoughts, feelings, desires, and activities must all move in Brahman, the Universal Absolute. That is to say, whatever is spoken, whatever is seen, must be cognized as Brahman. That is the real Brahmacharya stage, not merely observing certain disciplines to control the senses and the mind." 14.46 p265
- c) "His very breath is God; his every act is by God, for God; his thoughts are of God; his words are uttered by God, about God." 7.42 p217

- 3) (“Such transformed persons will spontaneously engage themselves in the task of promoting human welfare”)
- a) “The lives of such Personalities are lived out, in order to establish the welfare of humanity, the prosperity and peace of the world, and individual liberation from bondage, to sensual desires and passions.” 11.54 p309
 - b) “Such transformed persons will spontaneously engage themselves in the task of promoting human welfare.” 13.25 p146
 - c) “Realised souls, says the Gita, act so that the world may be saved.” 9.33 p172
 - d) “For such individuals, who have liberated themselves from the narrowness of individuality, the only task is the uplift of humanity, the welfare of the world and the showering of love. Even if they are quiet, the state of Bliss in which they are, will shower bliss on the world.” 7.48 p240
 - e) “Immersed in Sath-chith-ananda themselves, they must communicate that joy and that wisdom to others.” 11.53 p302
 - f) “‘Swyam theernah, paraan tharayathi.’ ‘Themselves having crossed... they help others to do likewise....’” 11.48 p283

F. Be Love, Share Love (“That is the way to cooperate and share in the task of the Lord”)

- 1) (“Keep in line with the Divine, by means of Love, Truth and Goodness”)
- a) “The main purpose of life is the acquisition of Ananda, and the sharing of that Ananda with others.” 11.27 p146
 - b) “Bring your hearts to Me and win My Heart.... When that melts and this melts, the two can merge.” 2.15 p71
 - c) “God is Love; so, you must become Love, in order to merge in Him.” 11.29 p173
 - d) “Do not be different from your ideal; approach it as close as you can. You must be as golden as the gold you idealize, though you may be a tiny jewel and He, a vast treasure.” 4.40 p235
 - e) “The Divine is the energy that animates, the urge that circulates the blood in your veins, that transmits knowledge and experience through the nerves, that correlates and collects for storage the impressions your senses gather, the conclusions your intelligence garners! Keep in line with the Divine, by means of Love, Truth and Goodness.” 9.12 p64
 - f) “There is sugar in the cup, but the water is insipid, for you have not stirred it well. There is God in the world, and by stirring the Divine well into every drop or atom thereof, you can make the world a sweet thing to live by. Intelligence is the spoon; Sadhana is the process of stirring. Saturate every moment of life with God; it becomes sweet thereby.” 10.39 p258

- 2) (“When you become the all-embracing infinite Love, the Divine will manifest in and through you”)
- a) “When the Buddhi is centered and anchored in Atman, it receives the Atmic light and brilliance and it gains its strength in fulfilling its role efficiently and fruitfully.” 15.8 p44
 - b) “When you become the all-embracing infinite Love, the Divine will manifest in and through you.” 14.45 p256
 - c) “The realization of God instills Ananda, which has no form, but only a man-made name. It springs and wells up in the heart, pervades the entire body, and expresses itself in the face. The face is the index of inner bliss.” 12.54 p296
 - d) “When man is aware that the same Divine consciousness that motivates him is equally motivating all others, then love drives the ego into the background and takes charge of man’s activities, words, and thoughts.” 14.12 p75
 - e) “... that awareness must re-shape every thought, word, and deed, and make you wish good, speak good, and do good.” 11.19 p104
 - f) “When this is experienced, Love floods the heart and flows towards all.” 11.46 p269
- 3) (“Gather it, garner it, develop it and irrigate parched hearts with it, while you can”)
- a) “Your task... is to grow in love, expand that love, practice love, strengthen love and finally become Love and merge in the Illimitable Love, which is God.” 9.30 p158
 - b) “Know it; delve into it; draw sustenance from it; see it in all; serve it in all.” 5.58 p315
 - c) “Gather it, garner it, develop it and irrigate parched hearts with it, while you can.” 6.5 p20
 - d) “See with the eyes of Love; hear with the ears of Love; work with the hands of Love; think thoughts of Love; feel Love in every nerve.” 11.31 p187
 - e) “... love because your very nature is Love....” 12.4 p16
 - f) “Without that spring of Love that bubbles in your heart, you will not be prompted to love at all. Recognize that spring, rely on it more and more, develop its possibilities, try to irrigate the whole world with it, discard all touch of self from it, do not seek anything in return for it from those to whom you extend it.” 5.17 p96-97
 - g) “I shall be happy, when each one of you becomes a Lamp of Love, shedding Virtue and Purity all around you.” 8.24 p133

- 4) (“Wherever there is a vacuum, in any heart, Love flows into it and is glad that it can fill the emptiness”)
- a) “Love for all should spontaneously flow from your heart, and sweeten all your words.” 12.10 p41
 - b) “Love should not be rationed, on the basis of caste, creed or economic status, or intellectual attainment of the recipient. It should flow full and free, regardless of consequence, for, it is one’s nature to love, to seek out the dry dreary wastes which love can water and make fertile.” 11.12 p70
 - c) “Wherever there is a vacuum, in any heart, Love flows into it and is glad that it can fill the emptiness.” 11.12 p70
 - d) “Your heart should be like glass, with the spiritual light inside illuminating the world outside; the world outside reacting on the inner urges and making them lean towards service, sympathy and mutual help.” 1.28 p173
 - e) “Love all as embodiments of the same Divine principle.” 13.39 p229
 - f) “Love is God, God is Love. Where there is Love, there, God is certainly evident. Love more and more people, love them more and more intensely; transform the love into service, transform the service into worship; that is the highest Sadhana.” 5.17 p96
 - g) “... ‘You must love all whom I love, remember.’” 2.51 p284
 - h) “When the real Guru reveals, the Many merge in the One; when there is but One, how can fear enter? What is there to desire and acquire?” 11.28 p152
- 5) (“Whatever... man has gained... he should share with others in an unselfish manner”)
- a) “... man should be engaged in spreading Ananda around him.” 6.18 p96
 - b) “Mutual respect can be built on the faith that all are children of God and all are Divine. Then on that basis, there can be co-operation, and enthusiasm for work. Each will then do his best, knowing his duty and his responsibility.” 13.1 p5
 - c) “Whatever information, instruction, or inspiration man has gained, or whatever wealth, riches or material possessions he has earned, he should share them with others in an unselfish manner. This is his primary duty.” 14.39 p216-217
 - d) “If each one does his duty, in the spirit of dedication, the Light can illumine all....” 11.54 p310
- 6) (“... every individual has a responsibility to love others, have faith in them, and revere them as sparks of the Divine”)
- a) “The sustenance given by Divine Grace circulates in every part of the Body, helping it to function in unison. The sustenance of Love, endowed by Divine Grace, has to circulate in every State and community to make the World live in Peace and Joy. If this truth is realized, there will arise no idea of difference.” 11.54 p305

- b) “The Peace of the World depends on peace and amity between nations; the peace of nations depends upon the peace between the concomitant units, the villages, the families, and finally, the individuals of each family. So, every individual has a responsibility to love others, have faith in them, and revere them as sparks of the Divine.” 11.38 p227
- c) “That is the way to co-operate and share in the task of the Lord.” 6.18 p96
- d) “When the individual is strong and steady, the family prospers; when the family prospers, the village is happy; when the village is happy, the country is secure and strong; when countries are strong and secure, the world is full of humility and reverence, charity and peace.” 8.24 p129

7) (“Let Me assure you....”)

- a) “Many hesitate to believe that things will improve, that life for all will be happy and full of joy, that the Golden Age will ever recur. Let Me assure you that this Dharmaswarupa has not come in vain; It will succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon Humanity.” 5.11 p70
- b) “Embodiments of the Divine Atma: you may not be able to see it, but it is clear before My eyes. As days pass, even those who are not now able to recognize the truth of Swami will have to approach with tears of repentance and experience Me. Very soon, this will be worldwide. Swami is now restraining this development. When once it is allowed to manifest, the whole world will be transformed into Prashanti Nilayam.” (from November 23, 1982 discourse) 15.55 p318
- c) “The day will surely come, when the Hospital will be superfluous, since all will be healthy and free from illness, accepting the Sadhana way, the Ananda way, to peace and happiness.” 5.38 p218

G. The Fruit Tree Metaphor (“The tree bears thousands of fruits in each of which there is the seed of the tree”)

- 1) “God is the Seed, which has expressed Itself as all this.” 12.27 p141
- 2) “‘Isaavaasyamidam Sarvam’, says the Upanishad. The Universe is permeated by the divine.” 14.58 p334
- 3) “We plant a small seed, which grows into a big tree. The tree bears thousands of fruits in each of which there is the seed of the tree. Even so, when the seed of divinity is planted in this vast universe, the tree of humanity bears fruits in which the seed of divinity is to be found. Just as the fruits of a tree contain the seed from which it grew, this universe carries the seed of its Creator.” 14.58 p334
- 4) “He is the Seed, He is the Tree, He is the Fruit. Love is the Seed, Love is the Tree, Love is the Fruit.” 10.24 p150
- 5) “Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom.” 7.47 p236
- 6) “You are all ‘living cells’ in the Body of God, each performing its individual function to promote His Will.” 13.8 p35

- 7) "... all this is you!" 4.45 p260
- 8) "There is no other!" 12.42 p228
- 9) "So too, when one man suffers, your eyes must shed tears and you must be urged to alleviate it. This will happen if you know that you and he are limbs of the self-same Divine Body." 5.38 p212

H. The Ocean Metaphor ("Become water, so that you can merge with water....")

- 1) ("... transcend the name-form of the drop")
 - a) "All waves are on the same Sea, from the same Sea, merge in the same Sea. Seva teaches you to be firm in this knowledge." 10.16 p99-100
 - b) "... 'I am Brahman'. It is as true as the drop of sea water saying, 'I am the sea.'" 12.40 p220
 - c) "When the Yogi is able to concentrate on that spot... he can become aware of the Sea and transcend the name-form of the drop." 12.40 p221
 - d) "... there is no becoming God; one is God.... You are but a wave on the breast of the Ocean, namely God. Know this, experience this-- that is the consummation, the Goal. Know that all are waves...." 10.38 p252
 - e) "... you are a wave of that Ocean of Bliss; you will get peace only when you again merge in Him." 6.30 p154

- 2) ("... engage yourself in sacred tasks, dedicate all your thoughts and actions to the Divine")
 - a) "All human bubbles are born in Narayana, grow in Narayana, and merge in Him ultimately." 14.58 p336
 - b) "The bubble rises from the water, floats on water, and finally bursts, finally merging with the water itself. The bubble is a temporary phase of water, with a temporary name and a temporary form." 14.4 p20
 - c) "Why rejoice over the birth of the bubble or mourn its disappearance?... as long as you have a body, engage yourself in sacred tasks, dedicate all your thoughts and action to the Divine." 14.58 p336

- 3) ("When a drop of water falls into the ocean, it gets the name, form, and nature of the sea")
 - a) "When a drop of water falls into the ocean, it loses its narrow individualities, its name and form, and assumes the form, name, and taste of the ocean itself." 13.27 p154

- b) “When a rain drop falls into the sea, it gets the name, form, and nature of the sea. So, too, when the individual merges in the vast concourse of humanity and feels one with all, he is endowed with the name, form, and nature of divinity.”
13.18 p94
- c) “As the rivers carry the waters of the sea back into the sea itself, happy to lose the limitations of their names, their size, etc. in that consummation, so the individual merges into the Universal.”
13.33 p193
- d) “Again, the individual born in the lake of Society must swim and float in the calm waters, and joining the river of Progress, merge in the Ocean of Grace.”
12.10 p40
- e) “When the salt doll is dropped in the sea, it reaches the bottom floor and is dissolved. The same happens to the seeker of the Atma. He is dissolved. He becomes one with that which he sought to know. He cannot return and describe the experience.”
15.4 p20

4) (“The goal of life is the final merging in the sea, God”)

- a) “The goal of life is the final merging in the sea, God.”
3.21 p122
- b) “The goal is mergence, as the rivers know and strive for...”
13.23 p127
- c) “Merging in the source from which one took form is the ultimate destiny. The river has the passion of overwhelming love which leads it down the slopes until it reaches the Loved One.”
13.23 p127-128
- d) “A bubble is born on water, from water and merges in water! Man is born in God and merges in God! This is the lesson India has been teaching her children as well as all men anywhere for centuries.”
11.48 p280
- e) “Become water, so that you can merge with water...”
12.24 p128

I. The Electric Current Metaphor (“... the One is shining in and through the many...”)

- 1) “The One has lit the many; the One is shining in and through the many; the One is the many.... the One decided to be many, to enjoy its own manifoldness.... That is the Truth.”
12.44 p240
- 2) “The Divine principle that is in every one is like the electric current that illuminates the bulbs, before Me here, of different colours and different candle powers. The same God shines in and through every one, whatever be the creed, colour, tribe, or territory. The current animates and activates all bulbs; the Divine animates and activates all.”
8.22 p115
- 3) “You must realize that the divine current that flows and functions in every living being is the One Universal Entity.”
13.27 p157
- 4) “The difference is due to the degree of manifestation of illumination, to the difference in the power of the bulbs.”
8.30 p169
- 5) “... whatever the voltage, the current that flows through them is the same.”
13.10 p47

- 6) “Let not the bulb think that it is shining through its own will; let it be humble, that it is but an instrument, used by the current, to shed light.” 7.38 p195
- 7) “Let the will of the Lord prevail; one’s duty is but to connect oneself with the current of His Grace.” 1.3 p18-19

J. Concluding Comments-- Mergence (“Love is My highest miracle”)

- 1) (“As days pass, even those who are not now able to recognize the truth of Swami will have to approach with tears of repentance and experience Me”)
- a) “Light spreads; it mingles with the light from other sources of light; it has no boundaries, no prejudices, no favourites.” 10.31 p190-191
- b) “... every name is but a facet, a part, a ray, of the Supreme. The spiritual discipline consists in recognizing and becoming aware of the One that supports and sustains the many. That is the precious gem of wisdom that one must secure and treasure.” 13.24 p136
- c) “Embodiments of the Divine Atma: you may not be able to see it, but it is clear before My eyes. As days pass, even those who are not now able to recognize the truth of Swami will have to approach with tears of repentance and experience Me. Very soon, this will be worldwide. Swami is now restraining this development. When once it is allowed to manifest, the whole world will be transformed into Prashanti Nilayam.” (from November 23, 1982 discourse) 15.55 p318
- d) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p164
- 2) (“Hold His Hand....”)
- a) “Like a child who has lost his way, you can have joy only when you rejoin your mother.” 6.30 p154
- b) “Hold His Hand and He will pull you on to hard ground.” 3.21 p124
- c) “Once people know how great is the Love that God gives, they will not desire any thing else.” 9.9 p46
- 3) (“... there is no separate story for you to relate or live”)
- a) “Love is My highest miracle.” 13.21 p116
- b) “When love takes in more and more within its fold, more and more entities are rendered as One.” 11.15 p89
- c) “When you listen to My story, you forget the story of the world and live only in My story, until there is no separate story for you to relate or live. Well, to make you story-less is the scheme of My story.” 2.17 p87

Prayers and Blessings

I. Prayer

(“Let the will of the Lord prevail....”)

A. Introduction (“When a man falls into a well....”)

- 1) (“He must shout full-throated... with the extreme desire to be saved....”)
 - a) “Prayer is the yearning one experiences to awaken the divinity latent in the heart.”
15.15 p85
 - b) “... prayer is not the pronouncing of words....”
15.15 p85
 - c) “It has to begin with a great yearning for the Light, an unbearable agony to escape from the Darkness, as in the prayer, ‘Thamso maa jyothir gamaya.’ (Lead me from the darkness to the light.) The yearning itself will draw down the light.”
1.34 p214
 - d) “When a man falls into a well, of what use is it if he controls his voice and his emotions and whispers quietly, ‘I have fallen into this well, I have fallen into this well. I am in great danger. Please save me?’ No one will be able to hear or save him. He must shout full-throated, with all the anguish he is experiencing and with the extreme desire to be saved, ‘I HAVE FALLEN INTO THE WELL! SAVE ME! SAVE ME SOMEONE!’ Only then can he hope to get succor.”
13.24 p134-135
 - e) “You may say that progress is possible only through My Grace; but, though My Heart is soft as butter, it melts only when there is some warmth in your prayer. Unless you make some disciplined effort, some Sadhana, Grace cannot descend on you.”
9.1 p3
- 2) (“Through genuine prayer, mountains of evil can be pulverized and destroyed”)
 - a) “To cleanse the mind, prayer is the water and repentance is the soap. Mere water or Vim cannot do the job; repentance must be followed by resolute determination not to repeat the wrong.”
5.4 p28
 - b) “... when you have injured another, pray for pardon; repent and resolve never to do it again. Through genuine prayer, mountains of evil can be pulverized and destroyed. From now on decide that your words shall be soft and sweet, your acts beneficial to others, and your thoughts always about how to serve others who are weaker and less prosperous.”
13.26 p149-150
 - c) “Think of God, and the gratitude you owe to Him for the human life He has gifted you, and the various material, moral and intellectual talents He has endowed you with; do this before you commence any task or piece of work. You will certainly experience great benefit, and you will have peace, joy and success in your endeavours through Divine Grace.”
12.5 p19

- 3) (“Alas! How much is the suffering they undergo! Lord, relieve it soon.”)
- a) “All are limbs of one body, nourished by the self-same life-blood, motivated by the same Will, the Will of God; bound by the same Divine Law. That is the Viswarupa, Cosmic Vision, that one must see and experience; God is all, God everywhere.” 7.46 p232
 - b) “When you know that the Lord is the cause, the source of all, you deal with everyone in a humble revered manner. That is the path which will lead you quick to the Goal.” 6.5 p28
 - c) “Embodiments of the Divine Atma: you may not be able to see it, but it is clear before My eyes. As days pass, even those who are not now able to recognize the truth of Swami will have to approach with tears of repentance and experience Me. Very soon, this will be worldwide. Swami is now restraining this development. When once it is allowed to manifest, the whole world will be transformed into Prashanti Nilayam.” (from November 23, 1982 discourse) 15.55 p318
 - d) “‘Alas! How much is the suffering they undergo! Lord, relieve it soon.’ Pray thus will all your heart.” 7.31 p165
- 4) (“Remember... there is no prayer more fruitful than service”)

- a) “Remember, there is no morality higher than truth; there is no prayer more fruitful than service.” 13.29 p172

B. Sincerity and Humility (“... the spiritual attitude precedes the secular attitude of self-praise”)

- 1) (“... when the child writes to the mother, she reads and appreciates the letters with tears of joy”)
- a) “Prayers must emanate from the heart, where God resides, and not from the head, where doctrines clash.” 9.14 p79
 - b) “I wish to emphasize that purity of the heart, the mind, and the consciousness is more important for progress than even meditation and prayer. Purity alone can convince you of the Divine within you....” 14.35 p198

- c) “When the child in the cradle starts wailing....”
 (“It is the feeling in the heart that is the crucial test....”)

“When the child in the cradle starts weeping and wailing, the mother who is on the terrace of the house will run down the steps to fondle it and feed it. She will not stop to discover whether the wail was in the correct key or on the proper note! So also, the Supreme Mother of the Universe will come down from her Sovereign

Throne to fondle, caress and console Her child, provided the yearning comes spontaneously from a full heart, a pure heart. She will not investigate the correctness or otherwise of the pronunciation of the Manthra or the perfection of the picture formed in the Mind of the Divine Ideal yearned for. It is the feeling in the heart that is the crucial test-- not the length of time devoted or the amount of money spent.”

10.34 p218

d) When the child writes to the mother

(“She values feeling, not external display”)

“The envelope might cost a naya paisa only; inside it, the bit of paper might be shoddy and soiled. The scribbling on it might be full of blotches; the letters might be higgledy piggledy, but, when the child writes to the mother, she reads and appreciates the letters with tears of joy. The envelope might be a Deluxe one costing five rupees, the letters may be of gold, printed in choice antique type in an aristocratic press; but, she will not be interested even to look at it.

“The mother seeks love, craves for gratitude, thirsts after sympathy. She values feeling, not external display. The Divine Mother too is moved by the same feeling. She does not appreciate demonstrative trappings like matted hair, rosaries, marks on forehead or sacerdotal robes. She values sincerity, yearning, virtue, compassion, love.”

11.52 p297-298

e) The Simple Sincere ‘Postage Stamp’

(“... Bhakthi is what makes the prayer reach the destination, God...”)

“A letter on some scrap scribbled over in illegible style carrying some absurd bit of information will be carried by mail and will be delivered at the address with care and exactitude, provided it has the exact stamp fixed on it! A letter on costly note-paper carrying exquisite calligraphy and florid with a weighty message, worth its weight in gold, will lie neglected and condemned, if it has not affixed on it the stamp, which the postal regulation requires! The stamp of Bhakthi is what makes the prayer reach the destination, God; not the festoons, the fanfare, the heap of flowers or the festive nature of the feast-offerings. The simple sincere heart is the stamp, which makes the prayer travel fast.”

10.14 p91-92

f) “... remember, I have My own special Postal and Telephone systems. They operate from the heart straight to the heart. There are rules and regulations for the operation of that system, which the Sastras declare. You can find them there.”

4.21 p120

2) (“Install the Lord in your heart and offer Him the fruits of your actions and the flowers of your inner thoughts and feelings”)

- a) “It is impossible to escape from the consequences of one’s actions. The ancient teachings require you, therefore, to ‘prostrate before every activity that you do,’ praying that it may not bring harm to any one or to yourself.”
13.39 p227
- b) “People here are aware of God in everything-- the truck driver folds his palms before the steering wheel and utters a prayer, the potter bows his head before the wheel, the poet worships the pen, the musician invokes the deity in the harmonium before he starts playing on it. No one enters upon a task without prayer and making a sign of submission. This means that the spiritual attitude precedes the secular attitude of self-praise.”
14.50 p284-285
- c) “Pray, ‘Lord! Let me fall at Thy Lotus Feet!’ and the Feet will present themselves before you. They are at all places, at all times. Your call compels the manifestation, that is all.”
11.22 p116
- d) “Prayer makes you a supplicant at the Feet of God...”
7.3 p13
- e) “Install the Lord in your heart and offer Him the fruits of your actions and the flowers of your inner thoughts and feelings. That is the worship I like most, the devotion I appreciate most.”
1.1 p2

C. Daily Practice (“... direct me, guide me, this day....”)

1) (“Everyday... pray to God a few minutes at least....”)

- a) “Everyday, before you begin work, pray to God a few minutes at least; and, at the end of the day, when the work is over, gather in some consecrated spot, a temple or mandir, and offer grateful thanks to the Lord, singing his name and meditating on his majesty”
12.31 p171
- b) “Pray to God and recite His Name or meditate on His Glory for some fixed period of time every day; you will find it amply rewarding. Don’t say, ‘Let me have a taste of the reward and then, I shall start the Sadhana.’ Practice, and the experience will follow, must follow.”
3.24 p145
- c) “You may say, O, the hands have so much else to do! But, though they may be used for a variety of operations, the chief purpose for which man has been endowed with them is to pray, to do puja, (and) to hold the Feet of the Lord.”
11.9 p53

d) "Regular prayers twice a day...."

("... offer thankful homage to Him for guiding and guarding you....")

"Regular prayers twice a day will give strength and courage which can withstand illness. The Grace of God will confer mental peace and so, good sleep and rest for the mind. Feel that you are a hundred per cent dependent on God; He will look after you and save you from harm and injury. When you go to bed, offer thankful homage to Him for guiding and guarding you throughout the day. When... some one gives you a glass of water, you say immediately, 'Thank you'; how much more gratitude should you evince to God who watches you and wards off all harm threatening to overwhelm you."

9.21 p110

e) Morning and Evening Prayers

("Adopt these as your daily prayers")

"On waking, pray every morning of your life, 'Oh Lord, I am born now from the womb of sleep. I am determined to carry out all tasks this day as offerings to Thee, with Thee ever present before my mind's eye. Make my words, thoughts, and deeds sacred and pure; let me not inflict pain on any one; let no one inflict pain on me; direct me, guide me, this day.'

"And when you enter the portals of sleep at night, pray, 'Oh Lord, the tasks of this day, whose burden I placed on you this morning, are over. It was You who made me walk and talk and think and act; I therefore place at Thy Feet all my words, thoughts and deeds. My task is done. Receive me, I am coming back to You.'

"Adopt these as your daily prayers."

2.14 p63-64

2) ("Teach the children the habit of daily prayer... Do so yourself.")

a) The Parents as Example

("... they should not be seen... as if they have no God to lean upon....")

"Of course, to instill in the minds of the young the value of prayer and of humility and loving service to others, the homes where they grow have to be the first schools. The parents have to be imbued with faith in the basic truths of this Universal Religion. They must be seen worshipping at the family altar, meditating in silence, forgiving the lapses of others, sympathizing with pain and grief; they should not be seen by the children as worried, helpless, discontented and distressed, as if they have no God to lean upon, no inner reserves of strength and courage to fall back upon."

7.15 p78

- b) “The centre of every home must be the shrine room; the fragrance of flower and incense emanating from there must pervade the home and purify it. The mother must set the example in making the shrine the heart of the household. She must enforce discipline over the children in personal cleanliness, in humility and hospitality, in good manners and acts of service. She must persuade the children by example and precept to revere elders and to allot some time both in the morning and evening for prayer, and for silent meditation.” 9.13 p68-69
- c) “The parents of these children have to be congratulated, for they have realized the value of school education for their children and put them here, in spite of various difficulties, economic, social, etc. I know how many of them are depriving themselves of a full meal every day so that their children may get the benefit of education. Children must be grateful to them for all this and for the love they bear for them. They daily pray for (their children’s) health; they pray that no harm may befall (them); they pray that (they) will earn a good name in school. I know all this, for they pray to Me.” 6.12 p64
- d) “Teach the children the habit of daily prayer, when they rise from bed and when they lie down to sleep after the day is over. Do so yourself. You will find that it adds calm and content.” 7.8 p33 (1st U.S. Edition)
- e) “They have to be taught sensible habits of personal cleanliness and more important than all, the habit of prayer at regular hours.... The time to lay the foundation for the habit is now.” 1.16 p98

3) (“At school too....”)

- a) “At school too, the day’s work should start with prayer for five minutes which should be taken seriously by one and all...” 1.16 p98
- b) “I wish that in these classes, not only the syllabus and the curriculum prescribed for the various examinations for which students are coached are taught; teach also some great scriptural texts, so that they may not miss this precious treasure. I suggest (also) that you should have prayer as an important item in the time-table of the classes; for, through prayer you can draw down unto yourselves the Grace of God.” 10.9 p56

c) “At the Public Examinations....
 (“... a minute of silent prayer!....”)

“I shall tell you one incident that happened at the Sathya Sai College, so that you can picture the kind of change I welcome. At the Public Examinations held at the College, which is one of the Centres, the moment the candidates got the question papers, all the examinees stood up together. The Invigilators were surprised and some of them were struck with fear, that perhaps, they were trying to create a scene and protest against the paper and the setter! But, they stood up, only for a minute of silent prayer!... a very ennobling and purifying habit.” 10.5 p26

d) “Teachers too must be examples of sincerity, simplicity, and mutual co-operation and love; they too must evince interest in prayers, and other items of spiritual importance.” 13.17 p90

4) (“... prayer in any language, addressed to any name, reaches the same God”)

a) “God may be referred to as Allah, prayer may be called namaz, priests may be known as kajis, scholars may be hailed as mullahs, the Bible may be in the form of the Holy Koran. But the undercurrent of energizing power in all cases is love, love of all beings towards all beings.” 13.23 p126

b) “When your neighbor prays to God, do you not feel kinship with him? Is he not asking in anguish for the same gifts, from the same Giver? He may be asking in another language; in another style; in the formalities of another creed. But, his hunger and thirst are the same as yours. His Ananda and grief are the same as yours. Share that Ananda; sharing heightens it for both. Share that grief; sharing lowers it, and robs it of its bite. Let your Love flow into the hearts of others.” 8.24 p132-133

c) “Let the children realize that prayer is universal and that prayer in any language, addressed to any name, reaches the same God.” 14.3 p15

D. Relating to Sadhana (“Ask Me about the Sadhana you should adopt....”)

1) “... begin the first lessons of silence, prayer, and chanting the Name of the Lord.” 1.24 p150

2) “Purify the heart by being good and kind to all. Do not attempt to find fault with others. Look upon all with love, with respect.... Repent for the errors that you commit and decide never to repeat them; pray for strength to carry out your resolutions.” 4.34 p205

3) “You must pray for help in Sadhana, through Grace.” 5.4 p28

4) “Do not delay any more; take hold of this unique chance, even while you can. Ask Me about the Sadhana you should adopt for your liberation; begin practicing from this day.” 8.28 p157

5) “Ask Me about steps in spiritual discipline, not petty, trivial, binding desires.” 8.1 p5

6) “... pray thus”
 (“Guide me along the correct path....”)

“... each member and office-bearer must take an oath, from the very depths of the heart, before engaging themselves in the activities. ‘Swami, Save me from any act of commission or omission which will affect adversely the three qualifications You have laid down. Bless me with the skill, intelligence and enthusiasm, necessary for the

task I am dedicating myself to carry out for my own uplift. Guide me along the correct path; shower on me Your Grace... guard me from temptation and wrong steps.' When you rise from bed at dawn, pray thus.

“At night, when you go to bed, ponder over your activities during the day, examining them, whether you went against any of the conditions of membership, and if any wrong had been committed, unconsciously, pray that they may not happen again. Decide to dedicate yourself in this manner, with these ideals for the work ahead.”

7.18 p98-99

E. Relating to Difficulties (“Ask, as the child asks the father; feel that God is nearest and dearest”)

1) (“... the Bhaktha will communicate his troubles and problems only to his Lord...”)

a) “The first step to prayer is a touch of agony. Agony is more potent than awe, in leading you Godwards. Grieve for lost chances, lost time; move on, every day, forward to the Goal. Amidst all these absurd loves and hates, the meaningless game of having and hoarding, losing and lamenting, building and demolishing castles in the air, you have no moment of real calm. Peace of mind will not descend on you because your room is air-conditioned or your sofa, soft-cushioned. It does not depend on your bank-balance; or on the diplomas you have collected. It can come only when you deny the Danava in you all chances of moving you, when you encourage the Divine in you to manifest Himself.”

3.2 p15-16

b) “Many of you have come with problems of health or mental worry of some sort or other. They are mere baits by which you have been brought here, so that you may contact the Grace, and strengthen your faith in the Divine.”

5.11 p70

c) “You have to encounter various contrary gusts of passion, emotion, impulse, and intellectual doubt. Nevertheless, bear them bravely and overcome them through prayer and meditation.”

14.13 p80

d) “Ask the Lord for the removal of your earthly troubles; there is no mistake in that. It is much better than asking other men....”

4.21 p120

e) “When in difficulty, pray for guidance before jumping in any direction. Men will give you advice only as far as their cleverness can reach; but the Lord who illumines dullness into intelligence will reveal to you the way out of the dilemma. Ask the Lord and He will answer.”

2.34 p199-200

f) “... the Bhaktha will communicate his troubles and problems only to his Lord; he will not humiliate himself by talking about them to all and sundry, for what can a man, who is as helpless as himself, do to relieve him?”

1.35 p224

2) (“Faith can work wonders....”)

a) “Act....”
 (“... then call on Me....”)

“I do not like people wasting the precious moments of their limited years of life in idle talk or vain pursuits. Nor do I like cowardly hesitation. Act; act with all your might and with all your mind; make full use of the skill, capacity, courage and confidence that you are endowed with. Then God will bless you.

“You will have heard of a Ramabhaktha who sat on the roadside by his upturned cart, wailing his bad luck and calling on Rama to fit the cart into position. Rama did not appear to raise the cart and fix the wheel. He therefore began chiding his faith itself and to doubt the experience of the sages who describe Him as the Ocean of Mercy. Rama came into his presence then; but only to tell him, ‘You fool, I have entrusted you with some intelligence and strength. Use them. Put your shoulder to the task now before you. When you have done your best and that best is found not enough, then call on Me; I am ever ready to re-inforce your exertions with My Grace.’”

2.27 p145

- b) “When you get, in spite of best efforts, ugly harmful ideas of hatred or anger, or animalism, you must infer that they are due to faults in food habits, or in the company you keep, either with friends or books or films or other forms of entertainment. Keep away from such and pray to God, your Guardian to save you from the Fall, towards which you are heading.” 10.23 p141
- c) “Don’t go about with extended hand, and humiliate yourselves. Ask Me, when you need any help. Extend your hand only for Grace from God. Ask Grace as of right, not in a groveling style. Ask, as the child asks the father; feel that God is nearest and dearest.” 11.24 p133
- d) “You must pray more intensely when danger threatens. There is nothing wrong in that. It is better than doing some stupid thing or other. Namasmara is the best means. Only, you do not really believe that it can cure you or save you, that is the tragedy.” 2.34 p191
- e) “Faith can work wonders, it can compel the Lord to manifest Himself and give you what you believe He will give.” 2.43 p248

F. To Receive a Guru (“... pray to the Lord Himself to show you the way...”)

1) (“He is the Atma...”)

- a) “The Guru is the person who discovers that you have fallen into a wrong road that leads into further and further darkness. For, he knows the right road and he is full of love for all who strive to escape the travails of the night, without lamps to light their steps.” 5.34 p189
- b) “The Guru... is the sage who has transcended Name and Form and is beyond the effect of the three gunas or attributes; he is neither good nor bad; neither passionate nor dull; neither enthusiastic nor uninterested. He is unaffected, calm, content. He is the Atma, having realized that the Atma is the One and Only. He... renders you fit for the vision of the eternal absolute Truth.” 9.14 p76

2) (“He can be concretized anywhere by sincere prayer”)

- a) “... if you do not get a Guru from outside yourself, if you pray, the Narayana inside you will Himself reveal the road and lead you on.” 5.34 p189-190
- b) “If you do not get such a Guru, pray to the Lord Himself to show you the way... and He will surely come to your rescue.” 1.3 p22
- c) “If you do not come across such preceptors, do not get down-hearted; pray for guidance and from your own heart you will receive the Gita that you need from the Charioteer who is there.” 9.14 p76
- d) “You need not rely on another for success in Dhyana and Japa and await contact with some sage in order to get from him a manthra for recitation. Pray to the God within you and you will receive the needed guidance.” 10.30 p183
- e) “Pray to God to illumine your mind, awaken your intelligence, and be your guru. He will surely guide you aright, from the altar of your own heart.” 4.52 p300
- f) “He can be concretized anywhere by sincere prayer.” 10.19 p116

G. To Attain Realization (“... crave for Me, and you will be rewarded”)

1) (“He prayed here that the screen hiding the Light that was inside him might be moved aside by the Lord’s Grace”)

- a) “So, I would ask you to pray to God to grant you the capacity to think straight and right, and to stick to the correct decision once decided on, without being affected by egoism, greed or hatred.” 12.6 p20
- b) “Ascertain clearly whether the train is the right one and then board it. There are quacks and cranks and even crooks who claim to know the road; but the best course is to pray to the God within for illumination and guidance.” 6.42 p212

- c) “Have a special prayer today: Ask God to develop your sense of detachment; ask Him to put you on the road which leads to self-realization; ask Him to endow you with light and reason to know and experience the Highest Bliss.”
10.19 p118-119
- d) “Man has to pay attention to three basic duties in his quest for happiness.
1) He should forget what he has to forget, namely, the world around him and its tantalizing pleasures. 2) He has to reach where he has to reach, namely, the goal of the Divine, the Presence of the Almighty and 3) He has to give up what he has to give up, namely, material desires and pursuits. The Vedic prayer ‘Asatho maa sad gamaya, Thamaso maa jyothir gamaya, Mrthyor maa amrtham gamaya’ (Lead me from untruth to truth, lead me from darkness to light, lead me from death to immortality) summarizes these aspirations very nicely.” 12.6 p21
- e) “He prayed here that the screen hiding the Light that was inside him might be moved aside by the Lord’s Grace.” 1.22 p135
- 2) (“... when you go to... the Wish-fulfilling Tree, ask for the Highest Bliss....”)
- a) “Now, take the prayer that is the deepest and the most significant-- ‘Naaku Santhi Kaavaali’, ‘I require Santhi’. Unwrap it of the ‘I’ (the Ego) and of the ‘require’ (Desire); get hold of Santhi, in the core of the packet. When you are burdened with egoism and desire, how can you attain Santhi?” 12.12 p51-52
- b) “Give the world only secondary importance; the primary place should be reserved for loosening its coils. The Jagadjanani (Mother of the Universe) will hurry towards you and caress you only when you cast off the dolls and cry.”
- c) “... a day will come when you will throw away all these play-things and toys and cry, ‘Lord! grant me unruffled peace.’” 1.5 p32
- d) “When you dive into the sea, you must seek pearls; when you go to the Kalpavriksha, the Wish-fulfilling Tree, ask for the Highest Bliss. Do not crave for the smaller when the vaster is available....” 6.5 p22-23
- 3) (“The genuine seeker will pray for nothing else than God”)
- a) “The genuine seeker will pray for nothing else than God. This longing must fill all the various act of his-- Puja, Bhajan, Dhyan, etc.” 14.59 p343
- b) “Ask and get what will save you, not what will bind you. You ask from Me a thousand things of the world, but rarely do you ask for ‘Me.’” 3.3 p26
- c) “When you go to a temple and stand before the Image of God, you pray with closed eyes, don’t you? Why? Because you feel that the Inner Eye of Wisdom alone can reveal Him to you. Therefore, do not crave from Me trivial material objects; but, crave for *Me*, and you (will) be rewarded.” 12.38 p212

H. The Gayatri Mantra (“...‘Illumine me... so that I may walk aright’”)

- 1) (“The Gayatri Mantra is a universal eternal call....”)
 - a) “The Gayatri Mantra is a universal eternal call from the heart of man to the embodiment of Love and Light.” 13.14 p70
 - b) “The manthram is a universal prayer that can be used by men of all climes and creeds, for, it calls upon the Glorious Power that pervades the Sun and the three worlds to arouse, awaken and strengthen the Intelligence, so that it may lead to intense Sadhana and Sadhana may lead to success.” 4.18 p98

- 2) (“It is addressed to the Immanent and Transcendent Divine....”)
 - a) “The Gayatri is the universal prayer enshrined in the Vedas, the most ancient scriptures of man. It is addressed to the Immanent and Transcendent Divine which has been given the name ‘Savitha’, meaning ‘that from which all this is born’.” 13.34 p198
 - b) “The Gayatri may be considered as having three parts: i) praise, (ii) meditation, (and) (iii) prayer. First the Divine is praised, then It is meditated upon in reverence, and finally an appeal is made to the Divine to awaken and strengthen the intellect, the discriminating faculty of man.” 13.34 p198

- 3) (“... its consequence will be... the seeking of kindred souls”)
 - a) “The Gayathri is the Vedic Manthra whispered formally in the ear during the ceremony of initiation into spiritual life.” 5.39 p222
 - b) “This Gayathri has the subtle power of removing evil tendencies and implanting virtuous habits....” 5.7 p46
 - c) “The Gayathri mantra develops the Dhee sakthi or power of discrimination and, so its consequence will be the giving up of evil company, and the seeking of kindred souls.” 5.30 p167
 - d) “... the Gayathri hymn: ‘Illumine me, prompt my intelligence, so that I may walk aright.’” 11.50 p291
 - e) “Gayathri means ‘that which saves, when repeated!’” 5.7 p47

- 4) (“... the correct recital... can produce experienceable and authentic illumination....”)
 - a) “While praying and using mantras, formulae or such expressions, one must know the real meaning and significance of the words and their deep implications.” 13.1 p5

- b) “Leadbeater has declared that the correct recital of the Gayatri Mantra (with the orthodox Udaata, Anudaatta and Swarith, modulation of the voice and the syllabic accents) can produce experienceable and authentic illumination, whereas incorrect pronunciation and wrong accent result in thickening the darkness! Therefore, instead of scoffing at the disciplines of recitals, meditations, prayers, formulary worship and mantra-utterances, their values have to be accepted and their results tested and confirmed by practice and exercise.” 8.18 p83
- c) “Westerners have investigated the vibrations produced by this mantra and have found that when it is recited with the correct accent as laid down in the Vedas, the atmosphere around becomes visibly illumined. So the effulgence of Brahma will descend on you and illumine your intellect and light your path when this mantra is chanted.” 13.34 p200

I. For the Benefit of All (“... pray for the peace, prosperity and happiness of all humanity...”)

- 1) (“Alas! How much is the suffering they undergo! Lord, relieve it soon....”)
- a) “I want you to pray for the welfare and prosperity of all mankind.” 10.39 p264
- b) “Alas! How much is the suffering they undergo! Lord, relieve it soon’, pray thus with all your heart.” 7.31 p165
- c) “... your duty is to pray for the welfare of the world and to work for it as far as lies in your power.” 2.28 p151
- d) “Prahlada knew the truth, ‘Sarvam vishnu mayam jagath’; ‘This world is all filled with the immanent God’. He knew it by study and by experience; he knew it as an ever-present fact. So, when he was asked to frame a boon to be granted by the Lord who concretized before him, he asked neither for the revival of his father, or the restoration of his kingdom, or long life or wealth or fame; he asked for the chance of assuaging the pain and sorrow of all beings! God, he knew, was manifest as those beings and the best form of serving God was to serve those manifestations and give them relief and joy.” 6.5 p25
- e) “... I call upon you to give up praying for your own advancement; pray for the peace, prosperity and happiness of all humanity, irrespective of clime or colour. Pray intensely and with faith. Then, Grace will be showered on you.” 10.26 p160
- f) “O God! Enter my heart also, fill it with Love, so that I may love all your children, in all lands.” 9.9 p46

2) (“O Lord, give every one, give all, goodness of mind”)

- a) “The ancient teachings require you, therefore, to ‘prostrate before every activity that you do,’ praying that it may not bring harm to any one or to yourself.”
13.39 p227
- b) “Gandhi used to go round the country praying ‘Sabko sanmanthi de Bhagavan’.
‘O Lord, give every one, give all, goodness of mind.’” 12.46 p256
- c) “The mean tactics of vicious pens that appear in the gutter papers serve to separate the husk from the grain.... Of course, there have been such traducers in all ages, for all who came down to help mankind. Rama, Krishna, Sankara. Do not develop hatred towards them, for, sooner or later, they are bound to repent and make good..... Pray for their transformation into Sathwic souls, for their blindness to be cured and for their becoming attached to Truth rather than to sheer untruth.... Love leads to mutual understanding and sympathy. Have love even for these misguided people; they will join the pilgrim path soon.” 6.35 p176-177
- d) “Prayer is a more powerful force than military re-inforcements; if made with a sincere heart it will be certainly answered. It will strengthen the hands of the people of this land, more than any other source of encouragement. It will join the hearts of the people more than lectures or pamphlets can do.”
3.40 p229
- e) “Through genuine prayer, mountains of evil can be pulverized and destroyed.”
13.26 p149-150

3) (“... May all the worlds be happy and prosperous”)

- a) (“My mission is... May all the worlds be happy and prosperous”)
 - i) “My mission is ‘Loka samastha sukhino bhavanthu’-- May all the worlds be happy and prosperous.” 14.14 p92
 - ii) “India has been teaching through the ages the message of the spirit.... The prayer that she has taught her people is: ‘Loka samastha sukhino bhavanthu’ (May all people everywhere be happy). This is the consummation of Hindu thought since time immemorial.” 13.23 p123
 - iii) “The prayer that rose from millions in this country, from all its temples, yajnasalas, theerthas, holy seafronts, shrines and altars for centuries, has been Sarve janaah sukhino bhavanthu-- Let all the peoples of the world be happy and prosperous; samastha lokaah sukhino bhavanthu-- May all the worlds have peace and prosperity. So, pray for all humanity, for the welfare and happiness, the peace and progress of Russia, China, Africa, Pakistan, all countries of the world, and all beings everywhere.” 12.15 p72

- b) (“Whatever I do... is intended for... the good of all...”)
- i) “Pray everyday for the welfare of all the worlds: ‘Lokaas samasthaas sukhino bhavanthu.’” 15.4 p25
 - ii) “See Him in all, serve Him in all. Revere Him in all. Pray, ‘Let the whole world prosper; let all mankind be happy.’” 12.42 p232
 - iii) “You must have noticed that the Pundits close each days Yajna with a prayer that calls for World Peace, Peace for all mankind, Peace and happiness, for there can be no Peace without happiness, and no happiness without peace. Lokaassamanstaas Sukhino Bhavanthu, they pray. May all the world have happiness, and peace.” 11.47 p279
 - iv) “Whatever I do, whatever paths I pursue, everything is intended for the happiness of all, for the good of all and for the improvement of all.... All My wishes are only to promote the welfare of the World. ‘Lokassamastaa Sukhino Bhavanthu’ is the only objective of Sai. (May all the world be happy).” 14.58 p332-333

J. Responses to Prayer (“... every step in this Avathara is due to My own Sankalpa, not due to the prayer or petition of devotees”)

- 1) (“... do not turn away sadly if God does not shower grace when you expect it”)
 - a) “I will take My Own Time to carry out My Plan so far as you are concerned.” 1.31 p198
 - b) “... do not turn away sadly if God does not shower Grace when you expect it.” 13.23 p130-131
 - c) “... every step in this Avathara is due to My own Sankalpa, not due to the prayer or petition of devotees. The devotees seldom know what is good for them.” 3.29 p170
 - d) “People do not understand the ways of God. How can they know why a particular event takes place at a particular time in a particular manner? He alone can know.” 7.7 p43
- 2) (“When there is no response, infer there is something wanting in the cry”)
 - a) “When the Lord does not approach the devotee, the fault lies in the heart of the devotee; it is not pure enough.” 4.34 p205
 - b) “When there is no response, infer that there is something wanting in the cry.” 9.26 p141

- c) “Perhaps the cry is hollow, insincere, mere play-acting, set to a pattern, addressed to some one alien to oneself, taken to be far away and distant, as a tyrant or taskmaster.” 9.26 p141
- d) “You may complain that God is hard and heartless, since He does not respond to prayer, give signs from His Pictures, speak from ‘nowhere’ in clear unambiguous terms, assuaging, assuring, advising-- but, let Me tell you, God is Love; Love is God.... When even the stony cliff echoes your voice and responds when you cry, will not the softest, sweetest, love-filled heart of God respond?” 9.26 p141
- e) “... they blame Me and not themselves for wanting things that are not conducive to their progress or for not deserving to get them from Me.” 5.2 p10
- f) “You might have heard people talk about the miracles; of My ‘making’ this and ‘giving’ that, of My fulfilling all your wants, of My curing your illnesses. But they are not so important as the Sathwaguna I appreciate, promote and instill. Of course, I confer on you these boons of health and prosperity but only so that you might, with greater enthusiasm and with less interruption, proceed with spiritual Sadhana.” 1.11 p62-63
- 3) (“... you come to Me weighted with... materialistic wishes....”)
- a) “When you come to Me weighted with wants, prayers for boons and materialistic wishes, you stand the risk of losing faith and losing your moorings; for, that faith is frail.” 11.29 p167
- b) “People come to Me and declare that they desire only the chance to serve Me but, in the very next breath, they pray that they may witness the wedding of their newly born granddaughter!” 10.28 p170
- c) “I am in every one of you and so, I become aware of your slightest wave of thought.” 9.19 p105
- d) “God is omnipresent. So do not act differently when you are away from My Presence. Be always and everywhere conscious of the Presence.” 14.59 p343
- e) “Note down all the things for which you have cried so far. You will find that you have craved only for paltry things, for momentary distinctions, for fleeting fame; you should cry only for God, for your own cleansing and consummation.” 8.13 p55
- f) “Uprooting the grass of desire is a long laborious job.” 10.28 p170
- g) “You should not pray to God for secular advantages. You should pray only for Grace. That one-pointed devotion can be got only by long practice of Sadhana, especially, the Sadhana of Namasmarana.” 7.21 p122-123

4) (“...’you are encrusted with... layers of mud; get rid of them....”)

a) “... advice to make the pilgrimage to God easier and faster”
 (“... squeeze the water from the wick....”)

“Among the Parsis, there is a story, about a Guru and a pupil. The pupil prayed that he may be given some advice to make the pilgrimage to God easier and faster. The Guru sat silent for a while and then, told him, ‘Go, Light that Lamp’. The pupil tried his best, but he could not light it. It was filled with water, not oil. So, the Guru asked him to pour the water out, squeeze the water from the wick, dry the wick, wipe the lamp clean, fill it with oil and then light it. The water is ‘desire’, the Sun that can dry the wick is ‘renunciation’, and the flame of the lamp is ‘Wisdom’. The Guru said, ‘This teaching is enough for you. You can go; may God bless you.’”

7.39 p201

b) “The iron weeps that the magnet does not draw it.... The magnet replies, ‘you are encrusted with rust, dust, and layers of mud; get rid of them and automatically, without any other ado, you can contact me and be with me forever.’”

12.14 p63-64

5) (“... those who adore Me, attain Me”)

a) “Prayers for worldly ends do not reach God. They will reach only those deities who deal with such restricted spheres.”

14.60 p349

b) “... those who adore the low Forces attain them; but, those who adore Me, attain Me.”

10.28 p171

c) “You extol the Lord as Love, Mercy, Grace; but do you yearn to earn them? Do you believe you can win them?”

3.4 p32

d) “... do not crave from Me trivial material objects; but, crave for *Me*, and you (will) be rewarded.”

12.38 p212

e) “Pray that you may have It for ever and be filled with the joy that It confers.”

12.22 p113-114

f) “Know that God is the One that is dearest and nearest to you, as dear and as near as your own heart, and pray to Him; surely, His answer will be vouchsafed immediately. A hundred such individuals will leaven the whole earth.”

9.26 p141

6) “Do the duty that He has allotted....”
 (“Speak, do and think as befits Him”)

“This meeting began with a Prayer. Good. But, prayer for some benefit or gain should not be addressed to God. For, it means that God waits until He is asked! Surrender to Him; He will deal with you as He feels best and it would be the best for you. God does not dole out Grace in proportion to the praise He receives! When you pray for a thing from God, you run the risk of condemning Him if for some reason the prayer is not answered the way you wanted it to be, or as quickly as you wanted it to be. This contingency arises because you feel that God is an outsider, staying in some heaven, or holy spot, far away from you. God is in you, God is in every word of yours, every deed and thought. Speak, do and think as befits Him. Do the duty that He has allotted to the best of your ability, and to the satisfaction of your conscience. That is the most rewarding Puja.”

12.14 p59-60

7) (“Win Him by obedience, loyalty, humility, and purity”)

- a) ”Dedicate yourself to God. Sudama was asked by the Lord, ‘Tell me what you need!’ He replied, ‘I need you and you alone’, for, that includes all!... If only he wins the love of the father, he has no need even to think of the items that he requires. The father will anticipate his needs and provide the articles.”
9.29 p156
- b) “Now, people pray to God to relieve them from pain, grief and loss, to confer on them health, strength and wealth; but if you develop an intimate attachment to Him and make Him yours, then He will manage to give you all that you need.”
6.35 p175
- c) “Placing God at a great distance from you and praising Him as omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent will not please Him. Develop nearness, proximity, kinship with God. Win Him by obedience, loyalty, humility, and purity.”
10.8 p42
- d) “People have specialized in the various methods of worshipping God; there is a host of rites, ceremonials, hymns, festivals, fasts, vows, pilgrimages; but, the best form of worship, the one that will bring the Grace of God in ample measure, is to obey the commands of God.”
10.8 p42
- e) “To earn the good-will of the Master, there is one recipe: obey His orders without murmur.... Grace is showered on all who obey instructions and follow orders.”
2.36 p211
- f) “When one is devoted to his duty, one is surrounded by such powerful protecting influences that no injurious force dare approach.”
11.23 p123

8) (“He is eager to satisfy the yearning of the genuine seeker”)

- a) “He is eager to satisfy the yearning of the genuine seeker.” 8.30 p168
- b) “When you call out in all sincerity, the response will certainly come.” 5.57 p310
- c) “The Lord always weighs only the feeling behind the prayer....” 3.11 p70
- d) “I answer to whatever Name you use; I respond to whatever request you make, with a pure heart and a sanctified motive.” 3.22 p133
- e) “When God is invoked by prayer that emanates from the heart, let it be but once, He responds immediately.” 13.24 p140
- f) “If you call on him as a little brother, He responds and becomes (a) rollicking playmate for you. Call on him as a Guru; He will instruct and inspire. He never fails those who call on Him sincerely and in faith.” 5.57 p312

9) (“Be pure, be simple, be sincere, and He will answer your agonizing call”)

- a) “I do not like your going about collecting funds, or raising donations. I assure you that funds will come, provided you sincerely pray, for every worthy cause. Have that faith; and watch the funds flow in. The sages of ancient times celebrated many yajnas, with no resources other than faith and sincerity.” 8.44 p236
- b) “His Glory, His Compassion, His Grace-- these are inscrutable; they shape themselves in manifold forms, as He wills.” 8.28 p159
- c) “Have sincere faith in God and surrender to Him, acting, speaking, and thinking in such a way that he is pleased. Be pure, be simple, be sincere, and He will answer your agonizing call. What can the Government do when the monsoon fails and the tanks are dry?” 6.20 p106
- d) “If only half the prayers addressed to Government are addressed to God, you can win His Grace and solve the Food Problem, for God alone can give the rains that fill the tanks and reservoirs to irrigate the fields where the crops are grown.” 6.20 p105-106

10) (“Love will be rewarded with love a thousand-fold”)

- a) “I am here ready to help you from the first lesson to the last.” 1.32 p206
- b) “If only you evince some genuine interest in your own real uplift, I am ready to stand by you and crown your efforts with success.” 3.17 p81 (1st U.S. Edition)
- c) “Bring ‘Bhakthi’ and lay it here and take from here ‘Sakthi’ instead! The more such business is done, the more pleased am I. Bring what you have, namely, your sorrows and griefs, worries and anxieties, and take from Me joy and peace, courage and confidence.” 1.2 p15
- d) “God is so merciful that He will come ten steps towards you, if you but take one step towards Him.” 10.24 p151
- e) “Come just one step forward, I shall take a hundred towards you.” 3.5 p39

- f) “If you make the slightest effort to progress along the path of liberation, the Lord will help you a hundred-fold.” 2.31 p172
- g) “Love will be rewarded with love a thousand-fold.” 14.8 p55
- h) “God is the embodiment of compassion. He watches for a grain of goodness or humility so that He can reward it with tons of Grace.” 12.16 p74

K. Nearness (“My Grace is ever with you....”)

1) (“... the clear vision can experience Him everywhere at all times”)

- a) “God is immanent in every particle in the Universe; the clear vision can experience Him everywhere at all times.” 12.50 p272-273
- b) “God is shining, announcing Himself through you. He is expressing Himself through every thought, word, and deed that emanates from you.” 13.12 p56
- c) “The Atma, it is, that sees through the eyes, hears through the ear, handles through the fingers, moves through the feet. That is the basic ‘you!’” 4.9 p50
- d) “When you clarify and sanctify your Vision and look at them through the atmic eye, the eye that penetrates behind the physical (with all its attributes and appurtenances), then, you will see others as Waves on the Ocean of the Absolute, as the ‘thousand heads, the thousand eyes, (and the) thousand feet’ of the Supreme Sovereign person....” 13.8 p38
- e) “All hands are His, all feet, all eyes and all faces and mouths are His; He works through all hands, He walks through all feet, He sees through each eye, He eats and speaks through every mouth. Everything is He. Every step is His, every look, every speech, every act is His.” 11.22 p115-116
- f) “... He wills every little movement everywhere.” 4.33 p199
- g) “Sai directs you to recognize the Atma as your closest kin, closer than the members of your family, your blood-relations and your dearest descendents. When this is done, you will never more stray from the path of Right, which alone can maintain that kinship.” 12.29 p158

2) (“The giver of the boon knows its use and its benefits”)

- a) “There is only one God; He is omnipresent.” 11.54 p312
- b) “The Masters arrive in answer to man’s prayer, ‘Thamso maa jyothir gamaya’ (Lead us from darkness unto Light!).” 11.54 p310
- c) “I came in response to the prayers of sages, saints and sadhakas for the restoration of Dharma.” 1.5 p27
- d) “The giver of the boon knows its use and its benefits. You are not to judge it, for, yours is the short term view. He knows the past, the present and the future.” 5.38 p213
- e) “Make full use of Me, that is all that I ask of you.” 6.20 p108

3) (“When you call on God, whatever Form appears, treat it as God”)

- a) “You must realize by constant contemplation that the world is the Body of God. And, you are a cell, in that Body.” 12.8 p29
- b) “Divine miracles like those of Rama (He who pleases and delights) and Krishna (He who attracts) are for drawing people to the Divine Presence for the purpose of correcting or cleansing them, or for confirming their faith and then leading them on to the discipline of service....” 14.1 p4
- c) “My Grace is ever with you; it is not something that is given or taken; it is given always and accepted by the Consciousness that is aware of its significance.” 11.14 p86
- d) “Be convinced that God can and will appear in any form and so all forms are His. Don’t refuse to recognize Divinity in the form you dislike or did not expect! He can appear as a fox, as a dog, as a beggar, any Form. When you call on God, whatever Form appears, treat it as God.” 11.29 p175
- e) “You think that I pay attention only to those who sit in front, but, I see all and I am with all, wherever they may be. Only those who have been blessed will know, not the rest.” 3.5 p39
- f) “Nearness to Me is not acquired by physical nearness. You may be by My side, yet, far; you may be far, far away; yet, very near and dear. However far you are, if you but stick to Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, you are close to Me and I am close to you.” 7.14 p71-72

L. His Will Alone (“... let His Will prevail; do not ask for this or that other thing”)

1) (“His prayer was to be a fit instrument for the purposes of the Master”)

- a) “The godly will take up activity as a means of worshiping God, and they leave the result to God. They know that they are but instruments in the hands of God.” 11.46 p273-274
- b) “The genuine seeker will pray for nothing else than God. This longing must fill all the various acts of his-- Puja, Bhajan, Dhyan, etc.” 14.59 p343
- c) “... I am like a shopkeeper whose shop is stocked with all things man needs.... Ask for Bhakthi and for Jnana and I shall be happy.” 1.8 p50
- d) “Ask for steadfastness in His service, in His adoration.” 8.3 p13
- e) “His prayer was to be a fit instrument for the purposes of the Master.” 8.19 p92
- f) “Ten years ago, a devotee prayed to Me in song, ‘My heart has gone dry, my lamp has gone out, my path is dark, my brain is confused. Lord, make me fit again for life’s arduous journey.’ The Lord will be waiting outside the door of the Puja room of the Bhaktha, anxious to fulfill his wish! Verily, he who has the Lord as His Servant, he is the real Prabhu!” 2.16 p77

2) (“Strive to arrive at the stage when His Wish alone will count....”)

- a) “Of course, rituals and prayers are necessary in the early stages. They are the kindergarten of spiritual education. One has to march on from this childhood into the adult journey towards the Atman.... sacrifice(s) and these rules and regulations regarding rites have to be transcended and sublimated into thoughts, words, and deeds which promote universal reverence, egolessness, and equanimity.” 14.35 p196-197
- b) “Strive to arrive at the stage when His Wish alone will count and you are an instrument in His Hands.” 5.34 p193
- c) “Ideally, when one prays, one should in complete resignation say, ‘Thy will be done’ and ought not to ask for this or that, for he has neither the wisdom nor the foresight to know what is best for him.” 14.9 p56-57
- d) “Be devoted to the Universal; be eager to become That. When you pray to God for a job, or a son, or a prize, you are devoted, not to God, but to the job, to the son, and to the prize. Pray to God for God; Love, because it is your nature to Love, because you know nothing else, because you cannot act otherwise than Love. Expand your self, take in all! Grow in Love. That is the new dress you have to wear and shine in, this day.” 11.18 p99
- e) “If you develop love for all beings, in the faith that God resides in all, you may be anywhere else, but, your prayers will reach Me and My Grace will reach you.” 5.50 p276-277
- f) “You must develop this attitude of ‘merging with the divine in all that you do’, this attitude of dedication, of surrender to His Will. This is the best means of realizing Him.” 5.26 p142
- g) “Let the mind dwell more firmly on the universal Atma, which is reflected equally in every being-- and, Love will automatically guide all activities along fruitful paths.” 9.31 p164

3) (“... then Grace will flow through you....”)

- a) “Therefore, cultivate faith and surrender; then Grace will flow through you into every act of yours; for they are no longer your acts, they are His and you have no concern about the consequences thereof. All acts and words and thoughts will thereafter be pure, saturated with love, conducive to peace.” 6.9 p45
- b) “Recognise that God is the person at the wheel. He will take you happily to the destination. Have faith in Him and be free from fear, anxiety and agitation. Surrender to Him, His grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles.” 15.24 p133
- c) “Engage yourselves in your duties as intelligently and as devotedly as you can; but, carry out your duties as if they are acts of worship offered to God, leaving the fruit of those acts to His Will, His Grace, His Compassion. Do not be affected when the results you anticipate are not produced; do not anticipate at all, but, leave it to Him.” 12.9 p34

- d) “Know that you are but an instrument; what can you prepare for? It is all His Will, His Plan.” 11.29 p174
- e) “Let not the bulb think that it is shining through its own will; let it be humble, that it is but an instrument, used by the current, to shed light.” 7.38 p195
- f) “Leave it to Him, let His Will prevail, do not ask for this or that other thing. He knows best.” 5.33 p185
- g) “What you have to do is to place all your burdens on God.... Then, when you take everything as the Leela of the Lord you love, you clap your hands in Ananda whatever may happen, for it is all His Leela and you are as happy as He is, when His Plans are going through!” 4.4 p21-22

M. Merge (“... sincerely... lovingly, offer all your skill... to the service of others....”)

1) (“... the most desirable form of wealth is the Grace of God”)

- a) “... the most desirable form of wealth is the Grace of God.” 4.45 p264
- b) “Once people know how great is the Love that God gives, they will not desire any thing else.” 9.9 p46

2) (“His Glory, His Compassion, His Grace-- these are inscrutable; they shape themselves in manifold forms, as He wills”)

- a) “When God is invoked by prayer that emanates from the heart, let it be but once, He responds immediately.” 13.24 p140
- b) “Bhakti will force the Lord to give you Himself as the Gift.” 3.13 p79
- c) “The Lord will manifest where and when you yearn for Him; if you yearn that he should come before you in flesh and blood, He will respond.” 2.34 p200
- d) “God will assume the form and answer to the Name for which you thirst!” 10.34 p218
- e) “The Lord takes the Form that the seekers crave for; He is above all Name and Form.” 8.30 p168
- f) “God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for.” 14.59 p343
- g) “His Glory, His Compassion, His Grace-- these are inscrutable; they shape themselves in manifold forms, as He wills.” 8.28 p159

3) (“Let the will of the Lord prevail....”)

- a) “... if you sincerely, unhesitatingly, constantly, gladly, lovingly, offer all your skill and strength to the service of others, God will melt and move and manifest Himself in you, before you, with spontaneous Grace.” 7.21 p122

- b) “All are limbs of one body, nourished by the self-same life-blood, motivated by the same Will, the Will of God; bound by the same Divine Law. That is the Viswarupa, Cosmic Vision, that one must see and experience; God in all, God everywhere.” 7.46 p232
- c) “When you know that the Lord is the cause, the source of all, you deal with everyone in a humble revered manner. That is the path which will lead you quick to the Goal.” 6.5 p28
- d) “Let the will of the Lord prevail; one’s duty is but to connect oneself to the current of His Grace.” 1.3 p18-19
- e) “When the One is known, there is no more asking.” 15.51 p298

II. Blessings

(“May every being in all the world be happy”)

A. Introduction (“I bless that you may grow more and more in devotion to the Lord....”)

- 1) “I bless you that the New Year may endow you with devotion and sweet spiritual experiences.” 8.16 p73
- 2) “The fact that you are alive this day is a blessing, for you can know of these ideals and the means by which you can realize them in your daily life.” 13.11 p53
- 3) “I bless you that you may grow more and more in devotion to the Lord, under whatever Name and Form, and earn His Grace to a larger extent.” 4.14 p82
- 4) “... Sravan (hearing from the Guru)... is the very first stage of spiritual progress.... Sravan leads ultimately to Atmanivedana, surrender of the individual to the Universal. I bless you that you may achieve that Goal.” 11.29 p178
- 5) “I bless you that you succeed in the great task you have imposed on yourself, and that you will be able to light the way for the children of this land into the glorious region of Everlasting Joy.” 12.22 p115

B. For Personal Sadhana (“I bless you that you... receive the benefits of discipline and devotion”)

- 1) (“... let your thoughts be guided by Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema”)
 - a) “... I bless that you too will overpower and destroy the wrong tendencies and attitudes and progress fast on the path of Sadhana.” 7.3 p19
 - b) “Be simple in your method of living, have sathwic food and sathwic recreations; let your mind be fixed on the ideals of service; let your thoughts be guided by Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema. That is the blessing I confer on you today.” 5.56 p308
 - c) “I bless you that you may progress in life with the help of the ideal and inspiration you have garnered during these days at Brindavan-- the discipline, the social conscience, the wisdom of the ages, the lessons of the past and of the future. Draw upon them whenever you are afflicted by doubt or despair.... meditate on them; reflect on their importance and significance.... Put them into daily practice....” 11.42 p251-252

- d) “These rules we are laying down might appear to some of you as knife-thrusts or hammer-strokes; but, they are meant to heal, and to weld. Bow to them and observe them in action sincerely-- your path will be soft and smooth, like a path strewn with floral petals. I bless you that you adhere to them and receive the benefits of the discipline and the devotion.” 11.35 p216
- e) “... I desire that you should contemplate on this and derive joy therefrom, so that you may be inspired to observe the disciplines laid down by Me and progress towards the Goal of Self-realization, the realization of the Sai that shines in your hearts.” 12.38 p213
- 2) (“I bless you that your attention and activity be always focused on the Atma....”)
- a) “I bless you that your attention and activity be always focused on the Atma within you....” 11.11 p65
- b) “Let all your activities be directed towards the purification of your hearts. You have My Blessings in this endeavour.” 4.6 p33
- c) “Let the sun of love help the lotus of your heart to blossom. May you be victorious in all your undertakings of service. That is My blessing for each one of you.” 13.8 p98
- d) “I give you blessings for all the Seva that you have undertaken and all the love you are sharing with others.” 13.2 p14
- e) “Resolve to live in the inspiration of the constant remembrance of God. Cultivate Love and share Love. I bless that you achieve success in this endeavour and derive great joy therefrom.” 8.22 p119
- 3) (“I bless that you may... persist in the Sadhana, till success is won”)
- a) “I bless you all that you get more and more success in the struggle.” 1.34 p219
- b) “I bless you that you may have success in your endeavours.” 11.42 p252
- c) “I bless you that you succeed in the sadhana in which you are engaged....” 9.8 p40
- d) “Developing good habits, avoiding bad ones, mixing in the company of the pious, being active in good deeds, serving those in distress-- these are all steps that will lead you into the Glorious Path of Self-knowledge. You can, even now, take to this discipline and save yourselves from grief and distress. I bless that you may get the will to do so and to persist in the Sadhana, till success is won.” 5.5 p35-36

C. Reaching the Goal (“I bless that... your minds will taste the sweetness of the Divine without intermission”)

- 1) “Embodiments of the Divine Spirit! I am happy to meet all of you. May the New Year grant you mental peace and may your life’s ideal of self-realization be fulfilled. May all comforts and full contentment be added unto you. That is My blessing.” 11.1 p7
- 2) “I bless you that you may attain the Bliss of that Realization.” 10.35 p238
- 3) “I bless that you may so shape your lives and activities that this supreme joy will be your lasting possession.” 8.23 p123
- 4) “If you become aware of the God in you and the God in all else, there is nothing to equal the Peace and Joy that you get. I bless you that you may attain that bliss.” 4.36 p219
- 5) “I bless that you will have the constant contemplation of the Lord, and that your minds will taste the sweetness of the Divine without intermission.” 11.31 p188
- 6) “I bless you that you earn the Vision of the Divine in this Life itself, with this Body itself.” 2.26 p141
- 7) “March on to that consummation, through Sadhana and Seva. That is my Blessing to each of you.” 11.23 p126

D. Peace and Joy for All (“I bless you that you have more and more... Love for more and more Beings”)

- 1) (“May you all... bring happiness to your parents....”)

a) “... the Kingdom of Mother Sai”

(“I bless them that they may offer seva in even greater measure....”)

“Old students of the Womens College at Anantapur have an Association working on (a) similar line. They have named it the Kingdom of Mother Sai. They too are taking on village after village as centres for their educational and health service activities. (Women) build walls, put up roofs and thatch houses in order to provide shelter for the homeless!.... They visit slums and, with the co-operation of the hutment-dwellers, clean the areas. They move into bazaars and markets and exhort the people to share with them the joy of cleansing the byelanes and drains. They are trying to provide electric lights to villages which are plunged in darkness when the sun sets.... The village folk are struck with admiration and amazement at the skill and enthusiasm the students evince.... By such seva they are giving great Ananda to Swami. I bless them that they may offer seva in even greater measure, so that Swami can give them greater Ananda.” 15.36 p204

- b) "I bless that this College will be an example of the triumph that Love and Reverence can win. Let it be an inspiration to workers in the field of Women's Welfare and National Progress, in every State. May the College educate generations of noble mothers who will live Dharma and raise heroes surcharged with devotion and dedication to God." 9.31 p164
- c) "May you all lead exemplary lives, bring happiness to your parents, render help to society, and bring credit to the College where you have studied for many years." 15.2 p11
- 2) ("... be examples and ideals for others")
- a) "I hope and bless that you will feel the sorrow of others as your own and strive to diminish it; I hope and bless that you will feel the happiness of others as your own and strive to share it and increase it." 5.51 p282
- b) "Cultivate the habit of holy study, develop humility and reverence, adore and serve your parents, and be examples and ideals for others. I bless that this goal may be realized by you." 14.57 p328
- c) "Be centres of love, compassion, service, mutual tolerance, and be happy-- very, very happy. This is the blessing I shower on you, this Guru Pournima." 11.28 p164
- d) "I bless you that you succeed in raising the standard of conduct and behaviour, the standard of morals and manners, the standard of social and individual discipline-- and instill (a) deep desire to discovering the inner Divinity." 4.43 p253
- e) "I bless you that through your faith and strength, devotion and dedication may increase in this land." 9.13 p70
- f) "... I bless that you succeed in leading men into that Bliss of fullness and Fulfillment." 11.53 p303
- 3) ("I bless all of you, and ask you to promote love, sympathy and compassion towards all beings")
- a) "I bless that you have long life, good health, Ananda, Peace and prosperity, and that you will devote your physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual strength and skills for the services of the country and of all mankind." 15.55 p319
- b) "Above all, develop Prema. Love all religions and all nations. Recognize and accept all religions as paths leading men to the same destination. All of them teach love and compassion, humility and forbearance. I bless all of you and ask you to promote love, sympathy and compassion towards all beings. God is present in everyone of them; and it is your duty to revere God in each of them." 11.40 p246
- c) "I bless you, that you may, by your efforts in your places, promote the spiritual progress of yourselves and the people of the world." 8.21 p113

- d) "I bless all efforts made by each of you to build Santhi, on this foundation of Atma-jnana of Atmic unity." 5.12 p74
- e) "Live together in love; live in peace; live in service. I bless that you succeed in this noble endeavour." 11.25 p141
- f) "I am Love; I shower Love; I share Love; I am pleased with Love; I bless that you have more and more... Love (for) more and more Beings." 12.36 p203

E. Divine Grace ("I bless that you all have lives of joy and happiness, of love and service, of the ceaseless shower of Divine Grace")

- 1) "My mission is 'Loka samastha sukhino bhavanthu'-- May all the worlds be happy and prosperous." 14.14 p92
- 2) "Whatever I do, whatever paths I pursue, everything is intended for the happiness of all, for the good of all and for the improvement of all.... All My wishes are only to promote the welfare of the World. 'Lokassamastaa Sukhino Bhavanthu' is the only objective of Sai. (May all the world be happy)." 14.58 p332-333
- 3) "I bless that all of you may have lives full of joy and peace...." 3.24 p147
- 4) "I bless that you all have lives of joy and happiness, of love and service, of the ceaseless shower of Divine Grace." 12.31 p171
- 5) "May every being in all the world be happy. That is My wish and blessing." 14.13 p85