

Norwalk Sai Center – Study Circle Research

Daasyam (Path of Dedication, Humility, Servitude)



Keyword: Humility

THROUGH right action one achieves purity of heart which leads to the acquisition of jnaana (the higher spiritual knowledge). When right action is coupled with Jnaana, there is true service. To feel that one should be the sole enjoyer of the results of one's actions is a sign of selfishness. It is naive to think that one alone is the doer of one's actions. All the things in the world are not intended for the exclusive enjoyment of any single person. They are to be shared by all. It is only when attachment to the fruits of one's actions is discarded that the action becomes yoga (Divine communion). Members of the Seva Dhal should overcome the sense of 'mine' and 'thine.' When they embark on service activities, they should regard it as a privilege to serve others and look upon it as a form of worship of the Divine. They should look upon service to society as the means of finding self-fulfilment in life. They should face whatever problems may arise with faith and courage and carry on their service activities without fanfare in a spirit of humility and dedication.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume17/sss17-27.pdf>

Seva will develop the quality of humility. These little acts of seva can confer on you great spiritual benefit. Firstly, it will destroy your egoism. Pride will transform friends into enemies; it will keep even kinsmen afar; it will defeat all good schemes. Seva will develop in you the quality of humility. Humility will enable you to work in happy unison with others. We have in our organisation, State Presidents, District Presidents, State Convenors, etc., but these positions should not be used for enthroning oneself and exercising authority. They are allotted to people so that they can be examples, through their own lives, of seva saadhana. But some State Presidents are too proud to share in seva activities! Leaders must lead; they should not push you from behind. State Presidents must lead others, giving them instruction and inspiration. If they cannot or do not, they have no right to hold office.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume15/sss15-32.pdf>

Educational institutions must adopt this royal road towards the good life. Education is losing its worth day by day because institutions seek distorted and devious roads and students are not loyal to the ideals of justice and rectitude. **Vidhya must confer Vinaya**---education must promote humility. Humility is totally absent today among students. Lessons on humility are found in the text books, but they are not reflected in behaviour, as precepts put into practice. In the past, emotions and feelings were trained and directed towards the achievement of humility. Why are personages like Shankaraacharya, Raamaanujaacharya, Madhwaacharya, Buddha, 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

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume15/sss15-30.pdf>

Humility Is The Hallmark Of Education: You have joined this institution to pursue your education. First, make efforts to understand the true meaning of education. Humility and character are the mark of education. But today students do not develop humility. They are interested only in acquiring degrees. But our educational institute is an exception in this regard. Few students come here with the sole objective of acquiring degrees. Most of them come here with the single aim of pleasing Swami by striving to follow Swami's ideals and attain exalted position in life. They give happiness to their parents by their good conduct.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume38/sss38-06.pdf>

Spirituality is the only way to purity. There is nothing wrong in studying the scriptures. But you have to put into practice the teachings which you value. Continuous study merely clutters up the brain with lumber. Confusion results from studying the views of different authors. The first requisite is to strengthen faith in one's self. Hold fast to one belief and adhere to one path. If you persevere in this manner, divinity will manifest itself spontaneously in due course. Students have to cultivate along with education, humility and observance of Samskaras (right conduct). It is only when the heart is purified through Samskaras that education will also get saturated with purity. Spirituality is the only way to purity.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-14.pdf>

Get rid of ego; cultivate humility. Countless such illustrious women were born in this sacred land of Bharat. It is unfortunate that people born in this sacred land are going to such a low state. Ego and attachment are the cause for this state of affairs. Whatever I say is for your good and not for My sake. Many of you do not realise this. Arrogance of one's own level of knowledge is the main cause for this state of ignorance. Educated people should have humility. Education confers humility, humility confers deservedness, deserving one obtains wealth, and when wealth is used to practice dharma, one attains true happiness. You can thus attain the goal of your life here and hereafter through true education.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume32/sss32p2-07.pdf>

Humility is an attitude of mind free from egoism

"Vidhya dhadhaathi Vinayam" (Education confers humility). Humility does not mean mere bending of the head. Only an attitude of mind free from egoism, ostentation and attachment can be called humility. Today neither teachers nor parents are able to teach such humility to the children because they themselves have not cultivated that attitude. The water you can draw from a tap depends on the nature of the water in the tank. Today teachers and parents have not filled their minds with sacred divine feelings. How can they be expected to infuse the children with such feelings?

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume27/sss27-20.pdf>

Knowledge with humility makes one blossom

It would be wrong to call it education if it merely teaches the meanings of words. The basic aim of education is to make men of character and virtue. Many people think that knowledge is power. It is not so. In fact, character is power. Education should confer humility Education without humility, action without discrimination, scholarship without wisdom, words without truth, friendship without gratitude, music without melody, politics without morality and integrity can never shine in society. One's personality blossoms only when one has humility along with knowledge.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume27/sss27-30.pdf>

Humility promotes charity and purity

Emphasise the importance of physical cleanliness, simple Saathwik (pure) food and group activities involving mutual help. Service is Divine. Be examples of humility so that the children may learn its value and validity. Humility promotes charity and purity. Also, exert yourselves to implant in the children self-reliance by encouraging them to believe in themselves. Let them not develop a desire for imitating the vanity of others. Appreciate good thoughts, sweet speech and selfless deeds, and denounce bad thoughts, words and deeds as soon as they emerge.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume17/sss17-31.pdf>

Education must teach what is life's goal

It is foolish to believe that you have to be 'educated,' since it leads to jobs. At present education is oriented to jobs, to secure a living, not to lead a life. Education must teach a person what life is, and what its goal. It must purify the heart and clarify the vision. It must prevent pollution of the hand, heart and head by habits injurious to the individual, society and the nation. It must promote virtues and raise the moral and spiritual standards of the educated. In times gone by, universities were referred to as "homes of humility" since humility was the characteristic of an educated person. Pride is the root of aggressiveness; it is the nature of wild animals. But the mark of man is humility in the presence of elders, teachers and parents. There is an ancient axiom which says, "Education imparts humility; humility ensures credibility; credibility brings wealth; wealth induces charity; charity confers peace and joy, here and hereafter." Nowadays, all educational institutions emphasise the need for riches. "Become wealthy through the easiest and quickest methods;" that is the slogan. No effort is spent to inculcate humility and reverence, for they are won through discipline alone. Without discipline and self-control man reduces himself to the level of the beast. The stomach is not the central core of man

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume14/sss14-28.pdf>

Vidya dhadhaathi Vinayam (Education confers humility)

Humility does not mean merely an external show of respect. The true meaning of humility is the absence of a feeling of Ahamkaara and Mamakaara (egoism and the pride of possession). Education should aim at inculcating such an attitude among students. Every man should cultivate such feelings of egolessness and detachment and lead his life on this basis.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume25/sss25-14.pdf>

Humility is the insignia of true education

It may be natural for warm-blooded youth to be filled with egoistic pride. Students! Regard humility and discipline as the insignia of true education. There is a well known Telugu saying: "Education confers humility. Through humility one acquires competence. Competence gives the capacity to earn wealth. Through wealth God will be realised." You can see how humility leads you to God. If out of egoistic pride, you are indifferent to the Divine and Dharma, you will not have these sacred thoughts. Make the best use of the body, the time and the opportunities given to you. Study well and make use of your knowledge for the benefit of society. There is no value in the mere acquisition of degrees. Only arrogance grows with the increase in academic knowledge. There is a corresponding decline in your spiritual potential. If spirituality grows, egoism will decline. It is because men have forgotten their Divine heritage that they behave worse than wild beasts.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume23/sss23-23.pdf>

Yadavas thought, "Krishna is our relative, our friend." They related to Krishna with attachment based on pride. This wrong kind of attachment fed their ego constantly, bringing about their destruction many years later. But the gopikas were different. Instead of telling Krishna, "You are ours," they said, "We are Yours." This surrender earned them security and divine Love all their lives **Humility and obedience** poured out of the gopikas and gopikas. Humility and obedience are very essential for everyone, especially for students. Education teaches humility. Humility grants deservedness. Deservedness bestows wealth. Wealth facilitates acts of dharma. Dharma Grants Fulfillment Here and Hereafter.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1995/ss1995-11.pdf>

Humility, heroism and noble character of Lakshmana

Between Raama and Lakshmana there was never any trace of envy or suspicion. Lakshmana was supremely indifferent to what was happening around him if it did not affect Raama. His greatness is immeasurable. He served Seetha 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 Seetha had thrown along the way while being abducted by Raavana was retrieved by the *vaanaras* at Rishyamuka Hill, they handed it over to Sugreeva. Sugreeva brought it before Raama and Lakshmana for identification. When Raama asked Lakshmana whether he could identify any of the jewels as belonging to Seetha, Lakshmana said that he could vouchsafe for the genuineness of only one jewel---that which Seetha wore on her ankles. He saw it every day when he fell at the feet of Seetha and so could recognise it as unmistakably hers. Such was the noble character of Raama's brother. When Lakshmana fainted during the battle with Indhrajith, the latter wanted to lift his unconscious body and carry him into Lanka as a hostage. But since Lakshmana was the incarnation of the cosmic serpent, Sesa, he was tremendously heavy and could not be moved. So Indhrajith gave up the idea and went away. Meanwhile Hanumaan arrived there, and on his uttering the name of Raama, Lakshmana's weight was reduced to that of a feather, so responsive was he to *Raamanaama* even in his unconsciousness. This is a measure of the humility and the heroism of this great-brother of Raama

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume13/sss13-32.pdf>

Humility And Character Are The Hallmarks Of True Education

He alone is truly educated who is engaged in the service of all beings, who is the master of all forms of knowledge and who is the paragon of all virtues. (Sanskrit Sloka)

Embodiments of Love! EDUCATION which is not used for the welfare of society is no education at all. You can be called truly educated only when your education benefits people at large and you become recipient of their love. It is not enough if you merely acquire bookish knowledge. You should attain supreme wisdom and cultivate virtues. True education is that which bestows on man the wealth of morality, spirituality and character. The purpose of education is not merely to sustain the body; it should broaden man's mind and make him an ideal virtuous person.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume34/sss34-22.pdf>

Humility is the hallmark of a student

All students of our Institute should live like brothers and sisters and treat everybody with love. You should develop such broad-mindedness. This is what our students should learn today. They should not give room to ego and ostentation. Develop love and idealism —this is how students can come up in life. There are many examples in history where ordinary people rose to exalted positions by dint of their virtues and hard work. There was a person who used to sell newspapers and there was another person who used to polish shoes. After polishing the shoes of his customers, he used to say to them, "God bless you." There was yet another person who used to write addresses on envelopes and earn his livelihood. Even such a person could rise to an exalted position of Prime Minister of England, because he was endowed with humility and sacred feelings. See how much a person with humility and love can rise in life! Education is not that important. After all, what is there in modern education? Education confers humility, humility confers deservedness, Which in turn gives you wealth. Wealth will bring you material and spiritual satisfaction When you utilise it to perform charity and righteous deeds. (Telugu Poem)

Humility is the hallmark of a student. In fact, it is the crest jewel of education. If you come across such humble students, help them in every possible way so that they forget all their worries and experience happiness. How happy was this boy when I materialised a chain for him and put it around his neck! He does not even feel the loss of his parents. You should also help others like this. Whatever I do is only to demonstrate an ideal to you. There is always perfect harmony between My thoughts, words, and deeds. That is why I have got the right to tell you all this. The proper study of mankind is man. All of you should live like human beings and not like animals and demons. Don't become stone-hearted. Develop a soft heart that melts with compassion at the suffering of others.

Thanks.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/d960715.pdf>

Characteristic of true education is humility

The students are innocent. It is the parents and teachers who should lead them in the correct path. Unfortunately, teachers are not doing their part. They have their own "Unions" and indulge in undesirable activities, which are followed by the students, in their turn! The characteristic of true *Vidya* (education) is *Vinayam* (humility). Humility helps to make one a *paatratha* (one deserving respect). Deservedness leads to *Dhanam* (wealth) and *Dhanam* leads to *Dharma* (righteousness). *Dharma* is the means to *Mukti* (liberation). We are now giving importance only to intellectual cleverness. This is wrong. Importance has to be given only to character. Education is of no value at all without character. What is the use of having ten acres of waste land? If you have a small plot of fertile land that is more valuable.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume19/sss19-02.pdf>

Science today has given up treading the paths that are likely to yield results useful to people. On the other hand, scientists are taking to paths which will be harmful to people. They have also been taking to paths that create some difficulties and conflicts in the people. Because they have abandoned useful paths and have taken to harmful and dangerous paths, it has also resulted in their forgetting the presence of God. In whatever field it may be, if an individual is working so that ego gets hold of him, then it will not only land him into a dangerous position but will also create considerable difficulties for him. Ego works on the stature of a man as the rays of the morning sun work on his shadow. In the morning, on account of the rays of the sun, our shadow will be a very long one. As the sun goes higher in the sky, the length of the shadow caused by the sun's rays will become smaller and smaller. In the same way, the stature of an egoist is something that has to go down and down as time goes on. Humility, on the other hand, works on your stature in a manner that can be compared to the effect of the midday sun's rays on your shadow. The shadow in the afternoon will be small. As the sun goes down and down, as the evening comes on, the shadow that was quite small in the beginning, becomes larger and larger. Therefore, humility is good and indicates the path that is good for one's life. Humility and obedience, although they look as if they are tiny things that do not confer on you any large powers, will really give you enriched and increased pleasure and happiness as time goes on. Young people should learn to be obedient to elders. You should also learn to have faith in good things. You should also learn to have humility. I wish you all to acquire these three qualities, obedience, faith and humility.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/summershowers/ss1972/ss1972-04.pdf>

Humility is the hall-mark of true education

Modern education is creating for the nation a deplorable malady. Originally, the British instituted a system of education in India primarily to prepare men for administrative jobs. To-day, education has been expanded and we have to create more jobs, and with greater emoluments. The result is the Government has to spend more and more on salaries and face increasing demands from public servants. There are strikes for higher wages and when wages are increased, taxes have to be increased. The result is increase in prices and increasing discontent. Prices can come down only when the people's desires are limited and the demand for goods is reduced. Many people feel proud about the enormous expansion of education in the country. But, is there any reason for feeling pleased with this situation? An unhealthy expansion of education is as undesirable as an unhealthy bloating of the body. Acquiring degrees at great cost and developing contempt for one's parents out of intellectual pride is not a sign of proper education. Humility is the hall-mark of true education. Arrogance, envy and ostentation should have no place in a properly educated person. Men crave for peace and happiness but they do things which can only bring unhappiness and worry. Having been born as human beings, you should try to rise above the level of animals. You are all essentially sparks from the Divine, but like sparks coming from a furnace which after a time turn into ash, you are forgetting your divine origin. While pursuing your education for worldly purposes, you should also pursue the spiritual discipline, which will lead you to the Divine.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume15/sss15-02.pdf>

Keyword: Dedication

Dedication should be free from ego and envy. Dedication means offering. As soon as Swami arrived, teachers and students made offerings of flowers and offered their salutations. The flower symbolises the heart. When you offer the flower of your heart to the Lord, it should be free from the pest of desire, hatred, envy, greed and the like. Only flowers are offered to the Lord or those whom you revere. The flower of the heart is subject to infestation by two evil creatures: One is ahamkara (self-conceit); the other is asooya (envy). Self-conceit is based on eight different factors' wealth, physical prowess, birth, scholarship, beauty, power and penance. Of these, the arrogance born of wealth is to be despised most. As long as this ahamkara (self-conceit) is predominant, it is impossible to recognise the Divine or one's spiritual reality. Self-conceit is a great barrier between the individual and God. It has to be utterly demolished.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-05.pdf>

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. To cultivate that attitude of dedication, everyone must think of God, remember the Name of God and deepen faith in God. University degrees will not give, riches cannot buy, kinsmen cannot hand over and teachers cannot confer the pre-requisites for Shaanthe---Faith and Devotion

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume04/sss04-48.pdf>

Do everything with a spirit of dedication. Begin with the cultivation of Prema. I have found that the people of Karnataka have great faith and devotion; they are simple in their habits and thoughts. Do not allow these to decline; cultivate them with care. The Chief Minister said that all are children of the Lord. It is better to say that all are actors in the drama designed by Him; dolls dancing and acting as He pulls the strings. The role you have might be that of an officer, a soldier, a ryot, a beggar or a clerk. Act well your part so that the drama might be a success. Do everything in a spirit of dedication, as if in each moment you act, speak and even feel in response to a command received. To get that mood of dedication, the Bhakthi Suuthras (aphorisms on devotion) prescribe nine paths but the easiest and the most practicable is Smarana---a life lived in the constant remembrance of the Lord.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume02/sss02-14.pdf>

The chief source of anandha is dedication to God; nothing else can give that genuine and lasting joy. Become conscious of your kinship with the Lord. That kinship is not a mere fancy or a faked theory. It has come down since ages, from the beginning of Time itself. It will persist till the very end of Time, or, in other words, till the end of Time so far as you are concerned. The Godhaavari is carrying all the waters of all the tributary streams relentlessly to the sea.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/saiwords/english/sss//volume01/sss01-13.pdf>

To get the attitude of surrender, of dedication, you must have Faith in God. This world is His play; it is not an empty dream; it has purpose and use. It is the means by which one can discover God; see Him

in the beauty, the grandeur, the order, the majesty of Nature. These are but shadows of His Glory and His Splendour. Upaasana (adoration of God), leads to the knowledge that He is all; when you experience that there is no Second, that is Jnaana (Spiritual Wisdom)!

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume08/sss08-14.pdf>

Dedication must come naturally

The sages declare that they become sad when worldly people call them happy or find them happy. Chaithanya felt happy when people reviled him for wasting his time in keerthan and when they broke his mridang and tal. He said, "These people are foolish; they think a tree can be saved if the leaves are watered; the root of joy has to be watered so that joy may grow in you. The root is Krishna, the Krishna in your heart." Water the root with tears, tears of joy that get the chance to sing His name, to praise His glory; not tears of sorrow, for such tears are a sacrilege; they should not contaminate the Lotus Feet of the Lord. It is dedication to the Lord that sanctifies all activities. He is the raison d'etre for activity. He is the prompter, the executer, the giver of the required strength and skill, the enjoyer of the fruit thereof. So, dedication must come naturally to you, for, all is His and nothing yours! Your duty is to believe He is the impeller of your activities, and draw strength from that belief. Until the wound heals and the new skin hardens, the bandage must protect the place. So too, until Reality is realised, the balm of faith, of holy company, and holy thoughts must be applied to the ego-affected mind.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume04/sss04-34.pdf>

Devotees who worked with a spirit of dedication

Members of the Sai Organisation and those who adhere to the Universal path to Sai should not be carried away by ideas of inferiority or superiority based on differences of religion, caste or creed. They should honour Faith, Steadfastness, Sincerity, Purity, wherever found. There are some people who ascribe all the ills of Society to the prevalence of religion and the importance given to social divisions. They say all the unrest and turmoil prevalent today are the direct results of this system. This is not true. Diversity of religion and faith is conducive to the welfare of mankind. Division of labour is a genuinely beneficial social need. Life can be sanctified and elevated to a worshipful pilgrimage if only everyone clings to his way and sees it in its proper perspective. Idle brains exaggerate matters and cynics cause great social damage. Gulfs are widened by thoughtless criticism. If only all of you remember the twin principles of cohesion, the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, mankind will soon become a mighty family full of peace and joy. I must mention one instance of good work done by people who are actuated by sense of duty. This spacious shed, these lines of three storeyed flats, this addition and artistic alterations which are made in the Prashaanthi Mandhir are all examples of work done in the spirit of worship. Swaami confers blessings on the engineers whom He has called up to sit on the dais--- for they have done signal service to provide more facilities for the streams of devotees who long to stay in Swaami's Presence. We have here the 82-year old engineer B. Sathyanaraayana of Aandhra Pradesh, who has held positions of great responsibility and high usefulness in the past. He has worked with full fervor and enthusiasm using all skills for the works allotted to him. Joga Rao has shouldered the

responsibilities laid on him as an Engineer by Swaami admirably well. He has worked night and day in a spirit of dedication. I bless them and their families. May they enjoy peace, health and happiness.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-48.pdf>

The correct discipline to acquire the nishkaama (without selfish desire) attitude is dedication; and dedication is possible only when you have intense faith in God. That faith becomes steady through saadhana. Now, saadhana (spiritual effort) is like the snacks one eats; the main dishes are all of the world, from the world. The spiritual must be the major portion of the food.

source : <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume03/sss03-25.pdf>

Dedication transforms work into worship

Pippalada told the disciple: "The Prana (Life-Principle) is the most important factor. You have to merge yourselves in the mind. Merge the mind in the Atma. Whatever you do, do it in a spirit of dedication to the Atma (the Divine). You can carry on your respective avocations. When you practise it in a spirit of dedication, work will be transformed into worship. When life is led in such manner, there is no rebirth." The dedication to the Lord should not be merely verbal, but must emanate from the heart. When an offering is made in words, the response is also in words. When somebody tells me: "Swami! Why don't you come to our house?" I tell him: "Yes, I shall come to your house." For the invitation in mere words, the response also is in words only. When the invitation is whole-hearted, I come with all my heart. "Yadbhaavam tadbhavati." (As is the thought, so is the result). Your thoughts are in tune with your desires. According to your thoughts, the results follow. Therefore, whatever you do, do it with all your heart. All the myriad nerves in man pervade the heart and the entire body. Hence, when the heart is filled with good thoughts, the entire body is filled with them. Everything stems from the heart. It is not the physical heart that is meant here. It is the spiritual heart. When your heart is filled with loving thoughts, you will realise freedom from rebirth.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume24/sss24-13.pdf>

THERE are five requisites for developing true devotion. **The first is Dedication** (offering everything to God). Egoism is the bar to developing the spirit of dedication. It manifests itself in various forms of pride - pride of physical strength, intellectual pride, the arrogance of wealth and the like. But as all these are impermanent and may be lost at any time, it is unwise to make the body, the mind or property the basis for one's conceit. Hence egoism should be renounced as the first offering to God.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume22/sss22-04.pdf>

Pothana's dedication to God

The life of Pothana, the immortal author of the Telugu Bhagavatham, shows the difference

between the God-oriented poet and a poet who seeks the favours of rulers and wealthy patrons. Once, Pothana's brother-in-law, the poet Shreenaatha, told Pothana that if, instead of relying on Shree Rama, he dedicated his Bhagavatham to a local chieftain, the latter would offer him gifts of land and properties which would relieve his poverty. Pothana declared: "Brother-in-law! You are making a serious mistake. Our real protector is Rama and not any Raja (ruler). How many have been helped by these rulers and for how long?. I revere my mother Earth. My life will be redeemed by my trust in mother Earth and by my faith in Shree Raama." (Bhagavan recited a poem of Pothana in which the poet firmly declared that he would prefer to live on what he got from the soil rather than offer his sacred work to unrighteous rulers for the sake of a mess of pottage). Pothana told Shreenaatha, "My poem is the very embodiment of the Goddess of Wisdom, Sarasvathi. Such a work should be offered to Brahma and none else. How can I offer such a sacred work to wicked rulers?" Shreenaatha was displeased with Pothana's attitude. He conveyed Pothana's sentiments to the local ruler, who also felt slighted. In his bitterness, he sent his minions to set fire to Pothana's house. The entire house was burnt down except the shrine where Pothana worshipped Raaa and kept his Bhagavatham. While the flames were burning, Pothana prayed to Raama as the Lord of everything. When a person believes whole-heartedly, in God, he will not come to grief. With their interests primarily in worldly benefits and material gains, men pray to God with their lips and not their hearts. Rather than pray with lips, it is better to serve with the hands. This was the lesson which Hanuman taught to Vibheeshana, when the latter was disappointed that he had no vision of Rama. Men are engaged in the pursuit of wealth and position, but not in the quest of the Divine. They forget that lasting happiness and peace cannot be got by wealth, scholarship or position. Only good qualities can confer happiness because a good man finds a place in the Lord's heart.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume29/sss29-19.pdf>

Dedication should be free from ego and envy

Dedication means offering. As soon as Swami arrived, teachers and students made offerings of flowers and offered their salutations. The flower symbolises the heart. When you offer the flower of your heart to the Lord, it should be free from the pest of desire, hatred, envy, greed and the like. Only flowers are offered to the Lord or those whom you revere. The flower of the heart is subject to infestation by two evil creatures: One is *ahamkara* (self-conceit); the other is *asooya* (envy). Self-conceit is based on eight different factors' wealth, physical prowess, birth, scholarship, beauty, power and penance. Of these, the arrogance born of wealth is to be despised most. As long as this *ahamkara* (self-conceit) is predominant, it is impossible to recognise the Divine or one's spiritual reality. Self-conceit is a great barrier between the individual and God. It has to be utterly demolished. Pride of wealth is another human failing, which causes the downfall of man. All forms of pride, based on birth, wealth, power or scholarship have to be given up totally. Only when egoistic pride is offered as a sacrifice at the altar of the Divine can man discover his true nature. This is the Dedication that is called for as the first step in the spiritual journey. Next comes Devotion. This is the highest form of love. "Service to Hrishikesa is known as *Bhakti*," says the *Sutra*. Devotion means constant contemplation of God. The term *Bhakti* is derived from the root *Bhaj* (to worship). Devotion means loving contemplation of God, repetition of His name, worshipping Him and doing penance for

Him. Service to the Lord is the highest expression of devotion. There is nothing which is not attainable through loving service to the Divine. Devotion does not mean merely doing *bhajans* or performing *puja*. These forms of devotion at present are based on some kind of self-interest and self-seeking. True devotion should be free from selfishness of any kind. Devotion is not something to be proclaimed or demonstrated. Exhibitionistic devotion may result in disaster. True devotion should be an expression of love both internally and externally

Source : <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-05.pdf>

Path of devotion will cleanse the mind

All the religions emphasise the importance of devotion and dedication to the Supreme Sovereign. The means of reaching that stage may be different; the description of the ecstasy that one can experience in the final stage and all along the path may be different; for it is beyond **all** attempts at description. *Bhakthi maarga* (path of devotion to attain liberation), which is only another name for this devotion and dedication, will certainly cleanse the mind. And, the mind will be illumined into divinity.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume12/sss12-20.pdf>

Dedication detests publicity and pomp. It is a wedding of the spirit with its Master. It is a treasure that is counted in solitude. The sages knew how to conserve it and contemplate on it, in blissful loneliness, deep in the recesses of jungle hermitages. The soul was their sole companion and God the only counsellor. They wrestled with their inner foes, the temptations of the tawdry objective world; they put down doubts and diversions. Achieving the goal of perfect calm, people like Shankaraacharya came and taught how to pray, propitiate and pass into the boundless.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume09/sss09-32.pdf>

The *Pandiths* said that *Bhakthi*, **the path of dedication, is easy and can be adopted by all.** Well; it is not as easy as they depict. For, surrender of the little *i* to the greater *I* is a hard process. One has to overcome a series of obstacles, with alacrity and pleasure. When you yearn to come to Puttaparthi, you gladly bear all the obstacles; but, when the yearning is absent, you magnify the difficulty of alighting at Guntakal Junction, crossing platforms, boarding another train towards Dharmaavaram, transporting yourselves with luggage to the Bus Stand, and travelling by bus to Puttaparthi; perhaps, you give up the idea, as beyond you! First cultivate the yearning, foster it, then everything is easy.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/sss10-24.pdf>

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, revelling 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 *Vandhana* (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 mercy of God's triumphs and achievement, His *sakha*, in fact, as Arjuna had become. (9) As can be inferred, this is the prelude to the final step of total surrender, or *Aathmanivedhanam*, yielding fully to the Will of the Lord which the seeker knows through his own purified intuition.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume10/sss10-04.pdf>

Keyword: Servitude

In shaantha bhakthi (calm devotion), the aspirant practises 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 saakhya bhakthi (friendly devotion), 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 dhaasya bhakthi (servitude of devotion), 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 vaathsalya bhakthi (devotion of parental love), the aspirant loves the Lord as the mother loves her child---with tenderness, anxiety, compassion and vigilance. In anuraaga bhakthi (devotion of deep affection), 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.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume14/sss14-05.pdf>

The sum and substance of this story is that God is pleased when you serve your fellow-human-beings. The scriptures have prescribed nine paths of devotion, namely, sravanam (listening to the Lord's stories), kirthanam (singing His glories), vishnusmaranam (remembrance of the Lord's name), pada sevnam (service to the Lord's Lotus Feet), archanam (worship), vandanam (salutation), dasyam (servitude), sneham (friendship), atmanivedanam (offering oneself to the Lord) i.e., complete self-surrender. But the path of service is the greatest of all.

Source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume33/sss33-12.pdf>

Hanuman's devotion to Rama exemplifies Daasya Bhakti (service as a form of devotion).

Hanuman's only thought was to serve Rama always, be near to him and wait for his commands. Once Rama called Hanuman and asked him: "Hanuman! How do you love me?" Hanuman replied: "In terms of the physical, I look upon you as my Lord and regard myself as your servant. In terms of the mind, you are the object and I am only your image. Spiritually, You are I and I am You. I am experiencing you in these ways. As long as I have the body consciousness, you are the Lord and I am your servant." This is the attitude that prevails in Daasya Bhakti.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume21/sss21-09.pdf>

Daasyam (service): Hanuman is the great exemplar of this type of devotion. Concentrating on the name of Rama and rendering service to Rama were Hanuman's preoccupation all the time. He was no ordinary being. He was a master of the 64 sciences and arts. Rama described him as a hero of peace, who possessed immense strength and wisdom. In everything he handled, Hanuman would examine whether it had Rama's name on it. If it was not there, he would discard even a precious gem as a useless piece of stone. While building the bridge to Lanka, Hanuman hurled rocks into the sea uttering the name of Rama and they rose to the surface. The letters "Ra" and "Ma" were written on separate stones and when they were thrown into the sea they joined together on the surface and thus the bridge was formed.

Each hair of Hanuman was echoing the name of Rama. He was a devotee who remembered Rama at all times, whether in joy or sorrow. He had no sense of ego. He had given up all feeling of "mine" and "thine." When the rakshasas asked him in Lanka who he was, he firmly declared: "I am a dasa of the Lord of Kosala (Rama)." In all situations he described himself as a servant of Rama

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume19/sss19.pdf>

Role of Sai sevaks

You are the members of the Sathya Sai Seva Dal. As such you must strive to render service in keeping with your role. You are sevaks. Have the feeling that whomever you serve, you are serving God. Remember in what spirit Hanuman, the monkey, served Sri Rama. You should not imagine that because he was a monkey he lacked intelligence or other qualities. He has been described as "tranquil, virtuous and strong." Such a person, when he was on a tree in the Asokavana in Lanka, was questioned by the Rakshasas as to who he was and wherefrom he had come. Hanuman replied: "Daasoham Kausalendrasya" ("I am the servant of Sri Rama, the Lord of Kosala"). He did not boast about his valour or knowledge. He was content to describe himself as the humble and devoted servant of Rama. Bear in mind the maxim "Without being a kinkara (one who is ready to carry out the Lord's command), you cannot become a Sankara (the Divine)." You have to transform your life through service. You should give no room to arrogance or self-interest to the slightest extent in your service activities. Install in your heart the feeling that the service you render to anyone is service to God. Only then does service to man become service to Madhava (God)

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume22/sss22.pdf>

Krishna was the servant of even cows and calves!

Now, most people are nearest the temple; but, farthest from God. For, there is no genuineness in the manipulations of the limbs or emotions or impulses or activities during worship. You say, Krishnaarpan (dedication to Krishna); but, really, the dedication which the mind performs is to thirishna (desire)! Or it may be dedication to wife or children! It is seldom done to Krishna! God is everywhere at all times; he accomplishes everything. He accomplishes the minor feat of assuming the human form and growing up among men as one of themselves right in their midst, in order to win them over to the path of truth. He gives man the chance to savour His sweetness and glimpse His glory. He acts despite the absence of any compulsion, so that man may be led to do likewise.

The Sage Vyaasa happened to pass by when Krishna was washing the horses of Arjuna's chariot in the water of the Yamuna; he shed a tear, contemplating the duty that the Lord had imposed on Himself in order to guide man aright. Krishna played the role of servant to Arjuna, so that: man may know how to serve and thereby rise to sovereignty! Krishna was the servant of even cows and calves! When just a boy, His mother proposed to have shoes for His tiny feet, lest the hard thorny ground of the pasture might injure His lotus feet. Krishna would have none of it; He replied, "I go daily behind the cows and calves to the distant pasture, in order to tend them; I am their servant. How can the servant; go shod before his masters, when they are not shod, himself wearing shoes?"

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/sss11-31.pdf>

*One may be a master of all the Scriptures
And competent to teach the Vedanta;
One may be a great ruler
Living in a many-splendoured mansion;
One may be a valiant hero
Who has vanquished his enemies;
Or one may be a pitiable*

*Victim of poverty and privation.
If he has no devotion in him
His life is devoid of meaning.
A servant who is filled with love of the
Lord is more to be adored than the overlord of the world.*

"BHAKTI is service to *Hrishikesa*," it has been said. **Service to God has been described as *Bhakti*.** The heart of the devotee flows with love of the Lord through constant remembrance and recitation of His name. Out of this stream of love, devotion emerges. One who is nourished by the nectar of *Bhakti* will have no desire for anything else. To be unaffected by joy or sorrow, gain or loss, praise or blame, to remain steadfast and unwavering in faith, is the hall-mark of true devotion. Affection, attachment, desire are natural qualities in man. When these qualities are directed towards God and when one is continuously engaged in good deeds, these qualities acquire purity and sacredness. Then a man becomes not only a great soul but can become divine.

source: <http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume19/sss19-01.pdf>