



Of a spiritual nation

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During my travels in the Himalayas with my Master, Maheshwarnath Babaji, there were many instances when the poorest of the poor shared their food with me. I write with great pain about the glaring disparity in our country - between the rich and the poor. Only a change in heart can help bridge this gap between the have and have-nots.

Our country now places great importance on its advancement as an economic power, but unless we also put emphasis on our growth as a spiritual power, we will never be able to achieve true greatness as a nation. A nation that takes care of its bereft, its poorest, its disadvantaged, its homeless, its orphans and its widows who can lay claim to a moral leadership worthy of mention. For many centuries, foreigners from far and wide have flocked to our country to gain wisdom. So far as these foreigners are concerned, they seemed to have realised the futility of living life the 'western way' and are coming here. Though there is a lot to learn from the

West, especially their advancements in science and technology, we need to create the right change within us so that India can emerge once again as the world's spiritual teacher. The rest of the world will stand to gain from this development.

India is a splendid example to showcase this crucial concept as we have, over the last two millennia, consistently told all our visitors to come sit with us, to live with us happily. 'Manav Ekta' is a concept of oneness to share with people all over the world. This is a completely Indian thought and this truth has not totally disappeared from our country but is only lying submerged.

With such wisdom existing within our country, why is it that we are not listening to this simple truth and following it? Such wisdom can help us erase disparities arising from a misunderstanding of our diverse culture and religions, thus uniting the humanity of India through a spiritual approach, proving people can live together despite all differences.

All the religions, which have come to India from abroad, not only flourished, but also experienced a renaissance of their wisdom traditions. There are more examples of India's hospitality to religious and spiritual wisdom in com-

parison to anywhere else in the world. However, in order to become the cradle of spiritual thought for the whole world, we must first change ourselves individually, then initiate change at home and then try to make a difference in our neighbourhood. Only then will the whole world change for the better.

It is important that we bring about change in our own small world, both in thought and deed, thus igniting the formation of an inclusive and participative society where opportunity is given to all, where talent and effort are rewarded regardless of caste, religion, language, region or gender. The responsibility is ours to restore the innate spirituality of the nation - rekindling true faith and rejuvenating the spirit of hope, love, peace, harmony and oneness.



Sri M -
spiritual
guide and social
reformer - is
leading the Walk
of Hope, a pa-

dayatra for peace, from Kanyakumari to Kashmir. The padayatra will be in Bengaluru from April 1 to 5. Details: www.walkofhope.in