

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The 21st Century has witnessed us in a constant state of progression. We are working, we are growing and we are conceiving miracles, almost on a daily basis. The pace of our growth and the changes it heralds often outruns our own imagination in the modern times. Interestingly, in the midst of this growth, we today find ourselves at crossroads whereby the debris of our traditional values is lying under the weight of modern structures that we have created. More than 65 years ago Winston Churchill had remarked in one of his speeches, *“A love of tradition has never weakened a nation, indeed it has strengthened nations in their hour of peril; but the new view must come, the world must roll forward.”*

However, we have reached a situation where it is time to pause and reflect. We need to analyze should all traditional values be considered hackneyed scripts from the past in this quest to embrace *diktas* of the modern times or an alternative path which includes cautious sifting of dogmas from values that can help us progress further is required?

In my opinion this alternative approach is quite essential to our continued existence as a nation and as individuals. After all our traditions have given us priceless values of truth, non-violence and the concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (whole world is one single family) that defines who we are and what we stand for.

I believe traditions are like roots. They give us strength to grow and shape our lives. Take for instance the Chinese Bamboo. We see the bamboo tree that grows to 80 feet in just six weeks and marvel at the height it achieves. But, the real mystery of its growth lies in the roots. Once planted, the bamboo tree does not show any growth above the ground for almost four years. And then it grows to its astonishing height. In these four years, it develops a strong root system that supports its growth and helps it to weather even the most severe of storms. But if the roots are compromised, existence of the same bamboo becomes susceptible to the vagaries of nature.

Our traditions help us to establish an identity and give us fortitude to weather the storms that hit our life. Without them our young generation would be in danger of losing its identity and drifting like a ship without an anchor. As a school, it rests with us to nurture these values in our students that would prevent them from capitulating to that which is merely facile in life and help them to stay focused on meaningful goals.

While following traditions blindly is not advisable for a progressive nation, ignoring them thoughtlessly is also not the right approach. As JIRS celebrates another successful year, let us dedicate our energies to perfectly balance the traditional and modern, and provide our students a resilient foundation on which they can build their futures.

Dr. Chenraj Roychand
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