

Not Knowing but Trusting

Both the scriptures and our teachers tell us that as seekers we are seeking the subtlest of the subtle, something that the mind cannot grasp—from which the mind and speech turn away baffled. Once when our revered late Vedānta teacher Swāmī Brahmānandajī was asked, “How then can we understand it? What is the use of words or using our mind?,” he simply answered that we have no other way than to use words and our mind. However, being a very wise teacher, he would lead us along a certain path and then just when we thought we had understood what he was saying, he would say something opposite that would turn us all on our heads. Thus he would never let us rest in a position of thinking that we understood the goal.

This lack of being able to grasp the subtlety of the final goal also applies to the subtle means of approaching the goal, especially such a thing as surrender. We have an idea of what surrender means. It means giving away something or giving up, and so we have an image in our mind of giving up credit for what we are doing, giving up responsibility, letting God take charge. “Let go, let God” is an expression that has been used for many years in the West.

However, Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī, in his book *Ponder These Truths*, has a very illuminating chapter on the subject of surrender. He points out that surrender is not what we think it is. It is not giving up responsibility. It is not giving up activity and action. Rather, it is giving up the idea that I am doing it; it is giving up the ego sense. But then, how can we give up this ego sense and still feel responsible? Who is left to feel responsible?

The ego doesn’t like this. It wants to be able to grasp everything, to understand it. Why? Because we don’t like to give up control. We always want to hang on to control of our life. We want to worship God, we want to know God, we want to serve God, but we don’t want to give up control of our lives. And as long as we’re not prepared to give up control, we block ourselves from the subtlest of the subtle or even understanding the way to the subtlest of the subtle.

Jesus said, “I am the way,” and He further warned us that no one goes to Father except through Me. Lord Kṛṣṇa said that no one crosses this

ocean of *samsāra* unless they take refuge in Me alone. This is telling us plainly that we cannot go to the Father, we cannot cross this ocean of *samsāra* and at the same time insist upon retaining control of our own lives. Whether we like it or not, if we want our spiritual life to come alive, to be truly progressive, we have to walk out into the darkness and put our hand in the hand of God. Actually it is the safest way, the surest way. But we must do it. We must venture forth every day, innocent as a child—not knowing, but trusting.