

## Feeling the Need of God and *Guru*

The fundamental teaching of all the great religions is that One alone is and that that One alone is absolutely unknowable to the mind. But yet, at the same time, everything that is known is also That alone. Thus we are living in an ocean full of radiant Divinity. Above all, we too are one hundred per cent that radiant Divinity.

Why then is that not our experience? The scriptures tell us that it is because we are ignorant of the fact. We are blind to the truth, because we have identified with a single body and mind. We have identified with the body through desire, believing that our satisfaction and our happiness is from having things—instead of recognizing that when we want nothing we are full of bliss, perfectly happy.

How do we return to this state of bliss, give up our ignorance and know the truth intimately? Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Be devoted to God, meditate on Him, and finally, recognizing that the fundamental problem is wrong identification, enquire into who you are, affirm the truth. In other words: Serve, Love, Meditate, Realize.

However, even if we do all these things to the very best of our ability, there is still a fundamental problem. It is ignorance or the ego trying to find enlightenment, trying to find something that is totally unknown to it and beyond it. Therefore, we need a guide, someone who is There, who knows all the wrong paths and, above all, the true one. Thus, the importance of a *guru*. But here comes another problem. The ego, in fact, doesn't want to give up its conviction that it knows best. Therefore, it doesn't want to give up control of its *sādhana*. It feels it has studied hard, understood a lot, and in the final analysis that it knows best.

Of course, ordinarily it will obey a *guru*, but when Gurudev said, "Obedience is better than reverence," he was talking about a very subtle obedience, an obedience based upon the knowledge that we truly don't know, but that the *guru* does know. Thus, we must be prepared to leave our own wisdom behind, to venture out in the darkness, putting our hand in the hand of God, trusting God rather than ourselves, trusting the *guru* rather than ourselves.

Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī once said, “All God wants is for us to feel the need of Him.” If we don’t feel that absolute need, the need of moment-by-moment guidance, then we are the losers. God wants us to feel the need of Him so that He can show us the way and bless us.