

Listening to the *Guru* Within

Throughout the ages human beings have asked the fundamental question, What is the purpose of life? Many answers have been suggested, but Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī has given a very simple answer to us as seekers: It is to express ever higher levels of being and doing.

This is a satisfactory answer for those of us in the 21st century who are familiar with the scientific conclusions of the last 150 years, which strongly suggest to us that a fundamental of life as we know it is evolution. But how do we as seekers evolve? We have the guidance of the scriptures, the example of the saints, as well as the laws and regulations given to us by great ones. Thus we are able to know what we should do and what we should not do.

However, no matter how hard we strive to follow outer guidance, there always seems to be the possibility of confusion that can enter into our decisions. Therefore, ultimately we have to rely upon something higher than our own intellectual discrimination, and that is the *guru* within. Indeed Lord Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna to abandon all *dharma*-s and take refuge in Him alone. We have to finally not know the right way for ourselves, but know that God knows the right way for us.

To do that we still need to discriminate between what is right and what is wrong. But now comes the absolutely key element that will either prevent us from hearing the *guru* within or make it possible for us to hear the *guru* within. While we must discriminate between what is right and wrong, or we could say what is good and what is evil, we must not judge. Judgment belongs to the intellect. Discrimination that is not judgmental belongs to our intuition, belongs to our inner *guru*.

We have to get our judgment out of the way in order to listen to God. In the Vedic tradition they say that the wheel of *samsāra* has only two spokes, like and dislike. In other words, what keeps us bound to this earth is the emotion we put into it—like and dislike, judging things good and evil. If we want to evolve, it means that we have to come into tune with the Divine, we have to listen to the *guru* within.

That includes discrimination between right and wrong, but it requires the renunciation of judgment. We allow our intuition, we allow the Lord, to lead us into ever higher levels of being and doing.