

The Connection Between Surrender and Common Sense

It might not be unreasonable to say that there is nothing more important in the spiritual life than surrender. The path of selfless service means surrendering our concern about the results. In the path of devotion, surrender is central. If we want something else to take over our mind in meditation and show us new things, we have to let go, let it happen.

Even in the path of *jñāna*, we have to surrender our ideas and be open to the truths of the scriptures. Indeed, Pūjya Swāmī Krishnānandajī, our late revered general secretary, used to say, “Bring your mind up against the truth of the scriptures. Otherwise you will always keep running around in your own head.” And in the path of enquiry into who we are, surrendering the gross and identifying with the ever more subtle parts of ourself is the key.

Finally when we have surrendered everything else about ourselves, we have to surrender the surrenderer. When we have, the ego is gone, but we’re still there. And that understanding that we exist without the ego is meant to be brought into our daily life. We are meant to see that pure existence everywhere. Thus the key to surrender, as Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī said in his book, *Ponder These Truths*, is that we surrender the ego, we surrender the idea that I, the body and mind, am doing, and recognize that what is doing is an I that is beyond understanding, but is what we are.

Therefore, while we surrender the ego, we don’t surrender part of the manifestation of that I, which is our reasoning. In some way we could say that our reasoning is the highest manifestation of that I, of the state of surrender. Surrendering doesn’t mean letting go of our common sense and being governed by some idea that just happens to come into our mind. Those ideas, no matter how inspirational, must meet the test of common sense, but not an ego-driven common sense which is just our old wisdom, but the common sense that is rooted in the emptiness we found when we surrendered the surrenderer.

Indeed, if there is anything close to God Himself in our experience, we could say that it is our common sense. When we let go of all our fancy ideas of what we should do or not do, what is left is the silence from which

rises our common sense. Our common sense is our intuition speaking to us and our intimate connection with the Divine.