

## The Truth That Is Always There

If someone wants to become a *sannyāsī*, a *swāmī*, they go through certain rituals that signify the death of the old person and the birth of, or renewal into, the Spirit. Finally, after all the other ceremonies have been completed, the *guru* will declare to the disciple: “That thou art.” The disciple is meant to have an immediate recognition of the truth and responds: “I am Brahman!” That that actually seldom happens in practice is, of course, the truth, but there is no denying the truth that the disciple, in fact, is Brahman and that that recognition can be the most natural thing in the world.

What is it that blocks the recognition? The scriptures declare that mind is the cause of both bondage and liberation in the human being. If, in fact, the disciple was extremely well prepared for *sannyās*—the mind had been well purified, either by spiritual practices in this birth or previous births—then the simple declaration by the *guru* would be enough to give the disciple the recognition of the truth, because of the fact that each and everyone of us are already what we are seeking.

However, in our mind’s eye we don’t see the immediacy of the truth that there is nothing separating us from God. Why is this? Because we continuously project an image of who we are. If that image of who we are was that we are divine—we are That here and now—then perhaps the declaration by the *guru* would be all that was required for us to have, so to speak, our eyes opened and the truth become obvious to us.

Unfortunately, for most of us the mind is totally invested in an image of who we think we are—male, female, Indian, American, married, single, a seeker, a professional, a business person, a family person, having so much wealth or being poor. There is a complex total image of who we are added on to the purity that we actually are. Therefore, the purpose of all our spiritual practices is not to attain something new, some crown for the life of the ego called God-realization. Rather realization means make real, and God becomes real in our consciousness, in our mind, when the mind has been purified of all its wrong ideas.

Therefore, the purpose of our spiritual practices is not to attain something new, but rather to bit by bit clean and scrub and polish the mind

to rid it of its wrong ideas, until it enters a state of relaxation and peace that is able to recognize the truth that has always been there.