

## A Purified Heart

The scriptures declare that Brahman alone is without a second. Our late revered Vedānta teacher, Swāmī Brahmānandajī, used to say that the problem is that you just can't believe that this world—just as it is—is Brahman. Why do we not believe that this world, just as it is, is Brahman? Because we see a world outside of ourselves. We feel that we are the center of the universe, the subject, and that everything else, including God, is an object.

Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.” God is undivided. Blessed are the pure in heart, therefore, who see everything as undivided, as One. To see everything as One, we have to sacrifice our position of being center of the universe and become part of the universe, inseparable from it.

What are the impurities that prevent us from having this vision? Desires is what the scriptures declare. Why do desires prevent us from having this vision? Because when we want something, it puts it outside ourselves as something that isn't part of ourselves. Therefore, it creates a subject for which that desire becomes an object.

What else are impurities? Gurudev says, “Free us from egoism, lust, greed, anger, hatred and jealousy.” These are all vices of the heart; they are impurities of the heart. When we see all things as One, undivided, we don't really see from our eyes, we see from our whole being or from our heart we might say. As long as our heart is impure, filled with egoism, lust, greed, hatred, anger and jealousy, we cannot see clearly; we cannot see the true undivided truth.

But what about experiences we have of things being undivided, being one? Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī used to say, “You cannot sustain them unless the heart has been purified.” So God gives us these experiences to encourage us, to show us the way, but it is only a purified heart that can sustain that vision. Therefore, Gurudev said, “Do *sādhana* my dear children. Do *sādhana*.”

Above all we are meant to take refuge, to depend upon the Lord. We cannot find our way on our own. Jesus said, “Follow me.” We have to take the inner guidance, live each day believing the truth and listening to the

inner guru. He knows what needs to be purified and will bring us experiences each day that will give us the opportunity to move another step forward towards the goal of purification—where our oneness becomes obvious.