

Choosing Both Being and Doing

In his book, *A Call to Liberation*, Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī has more talks on the subject of choice than on any other. Of all the things he wants us to recognize about ourselves, of all the things he calls us to be responsible for, the number one seems to be our ability and responsibility to choose. What are we to choose? Lord Yama says that man chooses between the good and the pleasant. The good leads to our highest welfare, the pleasant to our destruction.

In the beginning we choose to live a life of morality, a life of self-control rather than a life of pure selfishness and self-indulgence. Ultimately we choose spiritual practices, listening to the word of God, surrendering to God, seeking God's guidance in our daily life, seeking to know who we are. This becomes the good rather than following rules and regulations which we have become accustomed to. These spiritual practices ultimately lead to the ground of our being or *nirvikalpa samādhi*.

However, the scriptures tell us we can be in *nirvikalpa samādhi* a thousand years and when we come back we are still the same person we were when we entered into *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Therefore, Gurudev didn't name his society the God-Realization Society or the Mokṣa Society or any other term that suggested extinction or going back to the Source. Rather, he called his society, The Divine Life Society.

What is divine life? It is living according to the truth that Brahman alone is without a second. It is living according to the truth—that derives from this primary truth—that we are that Brahman alone, because Brahman has no second. In other words, the purpose of lifting ourselves up from sense pleasures to living a good life according to God's law and then lifting ourselves up from that life to a life of understanding the inner oneness of all things is to bring that goodness, to bring that oneness into our daily life. It is to express that oneness, because we can live a good life, we can even understand and experience the oneness, but the real test is to live a life not just of goodness, but of oneness in this world. It is to express the oneness in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

As Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī said, Ever higher levels of being and doing. Ever higher levels means expressing that goodness and that oneness

that choosing the good over the pleasant has demonstrated to us, has shown to us, has helped us to realize.

It is in being and doing that our spiritual life reaches its true expression. This is what was seen in Gurudev. This is what we saw in Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī—higher and higher levels of being and doing.