

Be Who You Are

Sometime ago someone wrote a book entitled *Be Who You Are*. As far as I know, neither Gurudev nor Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī ever used this exact expression, but in some ways it could summarize their teachings. Gurudev was always addressing us as Radiant Immortal Ātman. Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī kept telling us “You are Divine.”

That truth was not necessarily an easy realization for Pūjya Swāmījī. One time he said, “It took me years to recognize that it is the Self realizing the Self.” In other words, it took him years to know that he should be who he was. This is something that is likely to also take us years to realize. The reason is that we are fixated on the idea that we are something other than what we actually are. What we are seeking is to recognize what we have always been.

We are convinced that the Self is something other than what we are. We are so lost in the image we have created of ourselves that our true Self, which is the closest thing to us, the most obvious, is a mystery to us. It is the strangest paradox. Therefore, what we actually have to do is to learn how to change places from who we think we are.

We are convinced that we are the center of the universe. We are told that we are the Self. We have an image of who the Self is. The truth is that we are the Self right now that has created an image of being the center of the universe.

However, explanations are only of limited help to us. We want to know how to rest in our own Self. And the word rest is the key. It means letting go of the false image that we are the center of the universe and just being who we are. There is nothing else to do. All our spiritual practices are to teach us how to let go and just be. Lord Kṛṣṇa says that what is required is dispassion and practice. Dispassion for this troublemaker that thinks it is the center of the universe and practice of just resting.

When Lord Kṛṣṇa tells us to abandon all *dharma*-s and to take refuge in Him alone, He is telling us about abandoning all ideas we have of being a separate individual and just rest. Just realize that we are already what we are seeking. As we rest, we will feel our oneness with all things. We’re told to see God in nature outside. We don’t see God as an object, Nature

becomes one with us. It is a different movement altogether. But at all levels the secret is surrender and being. It is the way to be who we are.