

## An Authentic Life

As seekers what is it that we are seeking? Some say no rebirth, others, a better birth, others heaven; but a theme that continuously came through Swāmī Chidānandajī's teachings is that we are seeking to live an authentic life. "You are Divine," Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī used to say, "Know this truth and live to express it." We are now living a spurious life, an inauthentic life, a false life, imaging ourselves to be just a little individual, and that's what we express. Rather, we should recognize our divinity and express our divinity.

In order to be able to do this, Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī urged us to connect ourselves to God. In his book, *Ponder These Truths*, he says, "Do it by any means, but by any means do it." In other words, before we can become God, we must connect ourselves to God. God needs to become real to us.

Normally, to do this we follow one of the principal yogas—through our intellect or through our emotions. Gurudev urged us to combine yogas, so that we try to connect ourselves to God by moving in an integral way through head, heart and hand.

What is the essence of connecting ourselves with God? To connect ourselves with God means to realize the authentic in ourselves, to allow the authentic to manifest. In meditation we can do this by repeating God's name, and then at some point something seems to take over our meditation. We're only aware of it when our normal consciousness comes back; but God has been flowing through us, through our mind and thoughts, during that period. It can happen in worship where we forget ourselves and our mind is on God.

But then, it can also happen in other parts of our life. A great artist, for example, is great because they forget themselves and allow God to pour through them—whether they are expressing themselves through music, through sculpture, through painting or through writing. It can be any form of artistic performance where they have learned to do the best that they can and then let go and let their true nature pour through them. This is what it is to live an authentic life. It is for our mind to get out of the way, to allow our authentic life to express through us.

But it is not meant just to express through us only in one aspect of our life like an artistic development or our meditation. We're meant to allow it to pour through all aspects of our life. Therefore, there is to be a continuous effort to purify ourselves, in all aspects of life, of those things that deny our true divinity, deny who we really are. Thus to live an authentic life, a divine life, means to continuously work on ourselves, to rid ourselves of every aspect of our life that denies our true divinity that is always there.

Leading a divine life means that we start off where we are. We connect ourselves to God through the channel that is easiest to us, and then we express that connection in all parts of our life—constantly expanding our authenticity until we become a truly authentic expression of what we have always been.