

“You Must Introspect”

Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī seldom used the word must, but occasionally he did. He has said that you must meditate. He has also said that you must introspect. He has likened it to going into a old room in a house, seeing what’s there and cleaning it out. He has also repeated Gurudev’s aphorism, “Scrutinize always your inner motives.”

So, at its fundamental level, introspection means that we have some idea of what our mind is doing, how it will say one thing, but its motivation is something else. We think that we are upright, honest people, but we find that our minds are very tricky, crooked even. And yet we say we are seekers of the truth. How can we ever find the truth if we constantly say one thing and think another? Therefore, we must do that fundamental introspection.

But then, at another level we have to find out the subtle forces that are working on our mind. What is it that makes us think one thing and say something else? We find that there is a force within us that is called *avidyā māyā*, that wants to take us away from the truth, that wants us to be treacherous. We have to see that force within us, that urge within us, that creates something we call ego.

But we have to equally see that there is another force, called *vidyā māyā*, that tells us that our happiness and success is not in our selfish attention to ourself, but in being good and doing good, in seeing everything as one. We have to be *guṇātīta*, rise above the three *guṇas* and see the play of the three *guṇas* in our psyche. We need to enquire who am I really? We need to trace it back. We need to keep on meditating. We need to let go, to see that there is a mysterious power working through us, to recognize that all the Purāṇas are based upon the universal battle between the opposing forces. Finally we have to take refuge in a power that ultimately we can never know, that we depend upon through faith.

All this is done through introspection. It is not an easy task. The mind doesn’t want to do it. The mind wants to stay in a position of keeping things outside itself, of making everything an object. It doesn’t want to go in and look at the inner motivation. But Pūjya Swāmī Chidānandajī, while he very seldom has said must, has told us, “You must introspect.”