

Be what you are and make your life an expression of what you are—  
Divinity.

It is what you do that bears fruit,  
not what you know.

If you wish for happiness, work  
for the happiness of others.

If you wish that God would do  
everything for you, then do  
everything for the love of Him.

*Swami Chidananda*  
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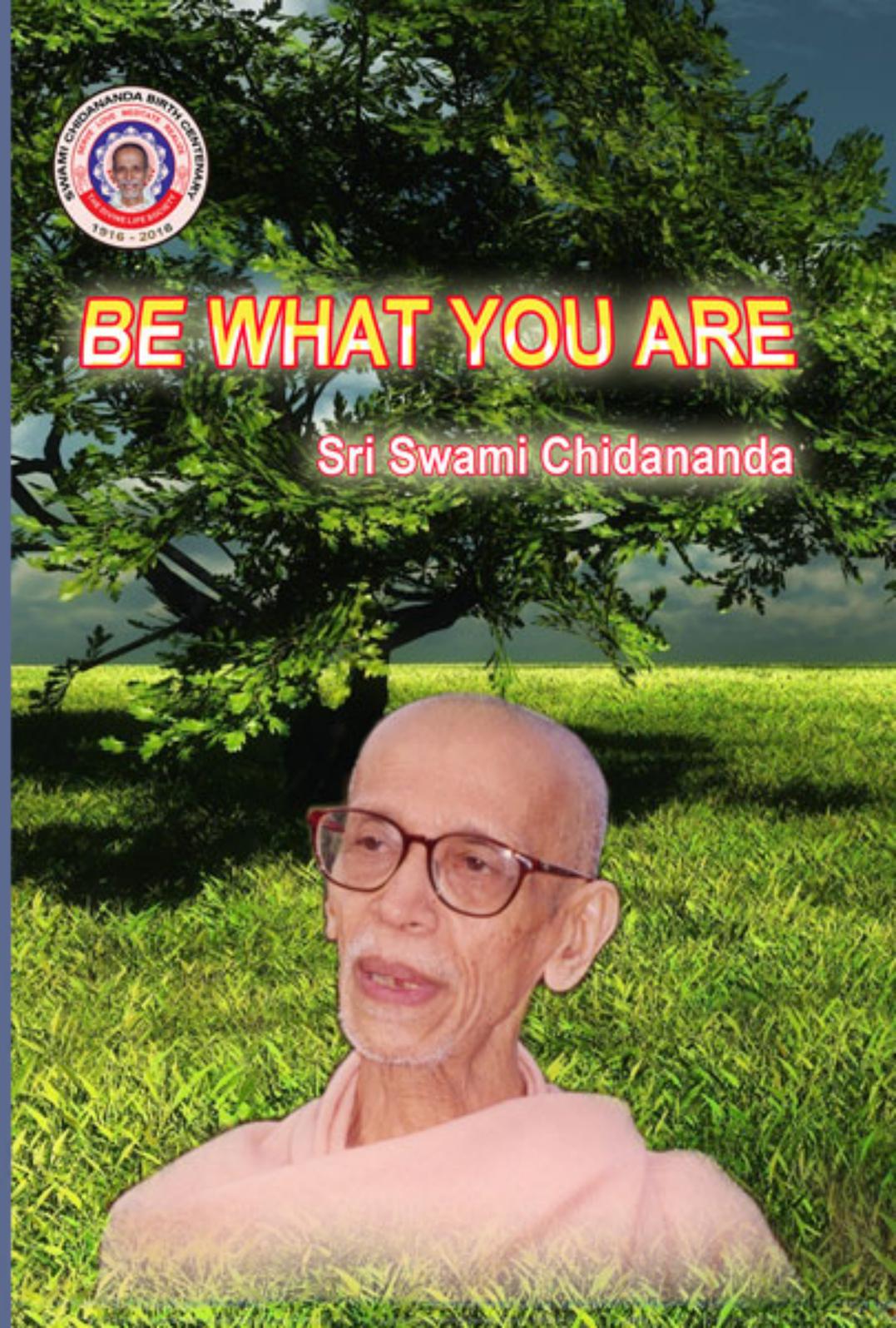


A DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION



**BE WHAT YOU ARE**

**Sri Swami Chidananda**



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*Published by*

**THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY**

P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192

Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttarakhand, Himalayas, India

[www.sivanandaonline.org](http://www.sivanandaonline.org), [www.dlshq.org](http://www.dlshq.org)

First Edition: 2014  
[ 2,000 Copies ]

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**Swami Chidananda Birth Centenary Series—25**

***FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION***

Published by Swami Padmanabhananda for  
The Divine Life Society, Shivanandanagar, and  
printed by him at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy  
Press, P.O. Shivanandanagar, Distt. Tehri-Garhwal,  
Uttarakhand, Himalayas, India  
For online orders and Catalogue visit : [dlsbooks.org](http://dlsbooks.org)

## **PUBLISHERS' NOTE**

24th September 2016 marks the auspicious occasion of Birth Centenary of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. To commemorate this sacred occasion, the Headquarters Ashram has decided to bring out one hundred booklets comprising illuminating talks of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj for free distribution.

To propagate Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj's gospel of Divine Life, Worshipful Sri Swamiji Maharaj travelled extensively in India and abroad and showed the path of divine life to countless seekers through his spontaneous and highly inspiring lectures. His lectures, in Sadgurudev's words, are the outpourings of his saintly heart, the revelations of intuitive wisdom.

We are immensely happy to bring out some of his hitherto unpublished lectures in booklet form as our worshipful offering at his holy feet on the blessed occasion of his Birth Centenary. The present booklet '**Be What You Are**' is a compilation of his five inspiring talks at the sacred Samadhi Shrine during the year 1991, 1995 and 1998.

We express our heartfelt gratitude towards Shri Mukund Jere, Mrs. Moo Briddell and the inmates of the Headquarters Ashram for their loving service in transcribing, editing and compiling these talks.

May the abundant blessings of the Almighty Lord, Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj be upon all.

—*The Divine Life Society*

## **1. WHY DO SO FEW GO AFTER THE GOAL?<sup>1</sup>**

Worshipful homage to the eternal, infinite, all transcending, absolute nondual Reality, the Great Universal Spirit! May its divine grace be upon you all.

Loving adorations to revered Holy Master, Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in whose spiritual presence we are gathered as a fraternity of seeking souls, a fraternity of Sadhaks, a fraternity of those who are dedicated to the spiritual life. May His benedictions be upon you all in this quest after the permanent and the eternal, the imperishable and the immortal.

Prompted by the Indweller within, we refer to the arduous task of going beyond the beyond, of transcending the little self in order to get Self-realisation.

This attainment is so precious that those who have been fired with an earnest longing and yearning for it have given up everything, dedicated themselves to this quest one hundred percent and attained supreme heights of realisation. When such beings have done it, why is it that the vast majority does not do it, even though there is desire for happiness, joy, and desire for cessation of sorrow, pain and suffering, and desire for happiness always? They say this is

<sup>1</sup> Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 28/11/98

what they want, but they do not move towards that supreme state which can give them what they want. Why they do not go after it?

The various glittering things of the world cater to the insatiable desire of the senses, satisfying sights and sounds, tastes and smells, and thus they become important. The individual consciousness is riveted to these things, because it considers that they are sources of enjoyment. The prime cause is because one's consciousness is riveted to this body; and the senses are part and parcel of this physical body with which you are riveted in a state of identification and oneness. Thus riveted to the body, the senses have an insatiable urge for the enjoyment of objects and therefore, the mind is riveted to the sense objects. This is the great obstacle.

In spite of hearing many Satsangas and many talks and discourses, why does the individual's consciousness have so much attachment and affection to this physical sheath? Why it is? Do not one's spiritual studies, Satsanga, hearing of discourses have any effect in changing this situation? Long, long ago they have said, "Anything that is heard, anything that is studied can become yours only if you keep on contemplating it again and again; if you go on reflecting upon these truths again and again." So you have the answer!

You do not reflect upon the nature of this body to which you are so attached, with which you are identified. You do not deeply, seriously reflect upon what it is and towards what it is headed. Its fate is either to become one with the earth and to

be eaten by worms, or attain a watery grave, if you belong to the maritime profession, or become a handful of ashes that are scattered in the wind.

There is a song as a part of the Granth Sahib, the sacred book of the Sikhs, enshrined in all Gurudwaras. In addition to the teachings of the ten Gurus starting from Guru Nanak, it contains many compositions of different mystics and saints and naturally also many by the great mystic Kabirdas. They have become part of the Gurubani and are included in the Granth Sahib. In that song Kabirdas calls upon man:

“O man, remember God, otherwise you will repent. If you don’t do it, and you have to give up your body and go before Yamadharmaraja and he asks you, ‘O you individual soul, how have you used this precious gift given to you by your Maker?’ What is your account of the days and weeks and months and years of your life? What have you done with them? Render your account! If you have flittered away your time and energy in sense indulgence, what face will you have? How can you look him in the face and answer?

“When Yamadharmaraja asks you, what face will you have? Look at Him and answer. O you sinner, out of avarice and covetousness you gather useless babbles here. What will you take with you when you depart?

“Why are you proud about your wealth, about your youth and strength? One day this so called youth and strength and body will be converted into ashes. This is the fate of the body.”

If you contemplate these things regarding your body and your earth life, then some sense will dawn within you. “What am I doing? What is all this accumulation of things and running after enjoyment? Why all this folly? What can I take with me when I go? Why don’t I keep clearly in view that one day this body will become a handful of ashes?” If you contemplate these things as part of your daily Sadhana, then alone can you transcend this net of delusion in which you find yourself caught. But you think you are free, you are independent to do whatever you want. Your independence is imagined! Your self-assertiveness and arrogance are stupid!

Thus Kabir admonishes in this Bhajan. These admonitions are very, very important and valuable for people in the spiritual life and on the path of Sadhana. “What am I doing? Why don’t I pay attention to Kabir’s call? Why should I carelessly flitter away the God given gift of this life’s span, for I have to account for it one day? And when I am asked to render account, what face will I have if I have misused it? What is the use of greed and accumulating things? What will come with me? Nothing. What is the use of being proud about wealth and youth and strength? For, one day I will be reduced to a handful of ashes.”

Thus a Sadhaka with the power of enquiry and discrimination ever exercises his mind in such a spiritual process and manages to free himself from stupid greed, from deluded attachment and from false identification with this perishable body. In this way he is able to transcend the little

self in order to attain the great Self, the experience of which liberates one forever.

May we all be engaged in the right manner of utilising this God given gift of life. May the supreme Universal Soul help us. May the benedictions of Holy Master help in this sublime task. God bless us all.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

## **2. THE SECRET OF MOVING TOWARDS THE SUPREME GOAL<sup>2</sup>**

Worshipful homage unto the Divine, the all-pervading indwelling Reality, the one eternal Truth behind and beyond innumerable ever-changing and vanishing names and forms that constitute this universe around you. Loving adorations to the spiritual presence of beloved and worshipful Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji. He has drawn you into his presence by his infinite grace and out of his infinite love for all sincere seeking souls, bestowing upon them his glance of grace and quickening their spiritual longings, so that they may start each day in a perfect way and it becomes another stepping stone to the fullest state of illumination, which is the ultimate goal of life.

Radiant Atman, the secret of living each day fully and perfectly is that it prepares you for the day, and it becomes another step upon this evolutionary plane. For this earth life is verily a process of moving forward, a process of rising upwards unto perfection—*Paripurnata or Brahmatva*.

No day should be devoid of this purposeful movement towards the goal supreme. For then, that day would be counted as not having been lived, not having been properly put to the highest and the best use. The secret of living each day perfectly and fully is to isolate it from eternity and regard it as the one and only day we have. A mystic says; “I live each

2 Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 24/9/91

day thinking that it is the last day. I regard it in this manner. This is my last chance. This is the day that is going to make my life. It is all that I have”.

Regarding it thus, fill it with the highest and the best within you. Let not a single minute slip away unutilised or in forgetfulness of your real nature and your central purpose of life, or in a state of negativity or inactivity. Make it positive. Make it dynamic. Make it active. Fill it with meaningful content. Let it be gainful and rich. Do it with great enthusiasm. Do it with much wisdom. But do it without forgetting to do so and not allowing it to pass away. Fill it with awareness of the living Reality. Thus, let it be rich in spiritual content, then no moment, no day would be wasted. It should all be an acquisition, a wealth, a treasure you have put by forever. This is wisdom.

They used to say: “Live as though you have already ascended unto heaven, and you are before the throne of the Most High.” Regarding yourself as in the presence of the Most High, acquit yourself creditably in His eyes. Let all your thoughts, words and actions be of the highest quality, worthy of that Presence Divine.

But keep your feet firmly planted upon solid earth, so that you do not spend your time in day dreaming, vain imagination or futile memories. Do not do that. Be practical. Respond to the call of the moment, and fill each moment with rich content.

It is a question of Bhava. Within yourself let the Bhava be, “I am not of this earth, I am not of this world. I belong to none. Nothing belongs to me. I belong to that Supreme Being.

I am in His presence. I should shine with the same light. In the presence of that great light, darkness cannot exist. Therefore I should be a centre of shining light.” Thinking in this way about yourself, shine with inner spiritual light.

But in as much as the relative reality, the relative truth is concerned, it is a fact that you live amidst the creatures of God. Respond to this dimension in the manner it requires you to respond. Keep up the consciousness of the *Vyavaharic Satya* (relative reality) every moment. To each situation respond in the highest and the best manner, so that out of you comes much good to God’s Creation.

Let not the inner spiritual Bhava come in the way of making you a perfect Karma Yogi, perfect instrument of God’s goodness to His creation. Should there not be a beautiful and balanced harmony between the inner and the outer, Yoga and Karma? Move amongst God’s creatures while at the same time you are living in God, in the highest state of spiritual awareness of the presence of God. It is this harmony, it is this balance that constitutes the secret of living each day in a perfect and supremely divine manner.

Thus may you endeavor and be strengthened to make each day a shining gem, a diamond full of the Divine. God bless you all!

Hari Om Tat Sat!

### **3. THOUGHT AND SENTIMENT FOCUSED ON DIVINE BHAVA<sup>3</sup>**

Worshipful homage to that one great transcendental Reality, the supreme Universal Spirit, eternal and infinite! May that supreme Universal Spirit that is all pervading, immanent and indwelling be gracious to us all!

Loving adorations to revered and beloved Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj whose wisdom teachings caused that the great experiential truth, what exists in reality, is part of our thinking, feeling and reasoning. The one non-dual divine essence, that alone is. All other things are passing appearances, momentary sense perceptions, with no enduring quality. They are ever changing. While you perceive them for a fleeting moment, you may take them for reality, but they are a fleeting reality. And senses sometimes deceive. In various ways His wisdom teachings made our true situation clear to us; upon what you must focus and what you must dismiss through your higher reasoning as mere passing appearance. He was never tired of reiterating this teaching. Do not necessarily create problems for yourself by focussing upon that which is a temporary, phenomenal experience. Always focus upon that which is permanent. Know this temporary experience for what it is and reject it. Do not be enslaved by it. Wake up! That was His call.

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3 Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 24/10/98

Within each of us is an aspect that has distinct faculties for performing distinct actions or for a distinct functioning. This inner being is called fourfold: thought function, reasoning function and the function for storing, recollecting and remembering. The fourth, our neutral ego principle—I think, I reason, I remember - is connected with the other three and co-ordinates them. It is connected and related to all three and makes use of the past by extracting through the power of logic and reasoning that which may be useful for the present. It gives the mind the thinking faculty, so that it may become of practical applicability and utility to us in the present. So the neutral ego principle performs a very useful and very important function. If it is properly recognised as such, the ego principle can become our greatest asset and helper. This is what a wise aspirant, an awake, alert seeker should do.

We shall at this moment keep this reasoning faculty aside. We shall try to bestow a few thoughts upon the thinking and feeling part; because the thought function manifests in action in two different ways. One is thought function, the other is feeling function. The lighter side of the feeling function is referred to as sentiment and the deeper side is referred to as emotion. Just as we are setting aside the reasoning function for our purpose, we shall also set aside the deeper emotional function. We shall concern ourselves with the thought function and the sentiment function; because when they act in combination, they have a unique effect, a unique force. When thought and sentiment are combined,

they bring into being a third state, a third principle, which is referred to in Yoga, in Vedanta, as Bhava.

In no other system of psychology has this been so clearly defined and so very correctly understood and applied as in Vedanta, in Bhakti and Karma Yoga. The uniqueness of Bhava is that the combination of sentiment and thought emerge as a distinctive force in us. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that it has the ability to bring about experience.

If directed in a very intelligent and purposeful manner, it has the ability to bring about or transform itself into experience. What your Bhava is that you become. What your Bhava is that is what you experience in the outer world. If you hold the Bhava that the world is real, it becomes a reality. If you hold the Bhava that this is only a fleeting, changeful, temporary appearance, then it becomes a fleeting, changeful, temporary appearance and loses its power to hold you enslaved. It cannot do anything to you. It is what it is. Whatever it is, we are not bothered about that now. Not that it changes, but to you it changes. It becomes either a solid reality or just a temporary appearance. Whatever your Bhava is, that is what you are. Think yourself as a physical being, then you begin to function as a physical being. Think yourself as a worldly being, you begin to function as a worldly being. If you have the Bhava that you are spiritual, everything about you becomes spiritual. If you have the Bhava that you are divine, everything about you will slowly and gradually begin to be divine. This is the truth. As is the Bhava, so is the Anubhava (direct experience). Sentiment and thought combined become a certain outlook and attitude within you and is

known as Bhava. It is your unfailing asset. You must cultivate the right Bhava. The world, you yourself and everything becomes according to the Bhava with which you view it.

Adi Shankaracharya said, "Let me live with the Bhava that everything within me is nothing but an adoration of God, an adoration of the Divine. All that is taking place inside the physical the physiological and the psychological aspect, all that is happening upon these three dimensions of my being, all this is adoration. My whole life is adoration. Every function of any one of my three aspects here is adoration." No wonder he is known all over the world as an Anubhava Jnani, a man who did not merely mouth words, but he always stated the truth, always gave expression to the Reality. This Bhava is expressed as follows:

*Atma tvam girija matih sahacharah pranah*

*shareeram griham*

*Puja te vishayopabhograchana nidra samadhisthitih*

*Sancharah padayoh pradakshinavidhih stotrani*

*sarva giro*

*Yad-yat karma karomi tad-tad akhilam shambho*

*tavaradhanam.*

Thou art Atma, Buddhi is thy consort, the Pranas are  
thy attendants,

This body is thy house, action of sensual enjoyments is  
thy worship, Deep sleep is Samadhi,

Walking by my feet is the perambulation around thee,

All my words are hymns to thee,

Whatever actions I perform, all are thy worship,

O Shambho!

We may ask a question, “Did this experience of reality bring about the Bhava in him or this Bhava that he carefully cultivated bring about this experience within him?” Is it a paradoxical query? No. For this question can be answered. Did experience bring Bhava or Bhava bring experience? The answer is both. This is a point that you must ponder. The answer is both, it is a mutual interaction. One led to the other. One brought about the other, and in this way, it is a combination of both. You can reflect over this.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

## **4. BE WHAT YOU ARE<sup>4</sup>**

Worshipful homage to the supreme, eternal, beginningless and endless all-pervading and infinite Cosmic Spirit, the Paramatman, the source, support and fulfillment of universes and worlds without end, imponderable, immeasurable, incomprehensible! Knowable only to whom It reveals Itself by Its own inscrutable divine will; It is transcendental, without name and form, without birth and death, beyond time and space; the one, the unique, non-dual without a second, may Its grace be upon each and every one of you sincere seeking souls who have assembled together here in this early morning spiritual fellowship.

With divine grace and the choicest benedictions of God and Guru what can you not achieve? Is there anything that is not possible for you? There is nothing impossible for you! This is the simple truth if you augment these two graces, these two supreme good fortunes, these two tremendous plus factors in your life, divine grace and the grace of the Guru. If you augment and enhance this with your sincere Purushartha, with your sincere self-effort, nothing in this universe can stand between you and the supreme fulfillment of your life in enlightenment and Aparoksha Anubhuti. And all this is as it ought to be, as it is meant to be, for this great attainment which is your birthright. This is why you have been sent here, endowed with the human status. The unique abilities to think, feel, reason, enquire, discriminate, analyse,

<sup>4</sup> Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 17/10/95

pursue, investigate, to serve and to love and to discipline yourself, control your senses, conquer your mind and direct the faculties of the ingathered mind towards the Great Reality. All these abilities are unique to you.

They constitute the quintessence of the supreme human status. Whatever your little problems or drawbacks are, whatever your deficiencies, whatever your handicaps, the very fact of your human birth makes you supremely endowed. In this one fact all human beings are equally fortunate. The great ones and the living scriptures say that this status is fashioned in the likeness of the Maker, of the bestower of this status. He not only brought us into being in His likeness, but He entered into us and indwells us in His perfection.

This is our Reality and this is the central fact. Therefore, you have within you the full potential for expressing in and through your life the God-nature. When you have this supreme good fortune, this wonderful ability and capacity for expressing the God-nature, why not avail of it, why not? Be an asset to God's world. Be like a rare fragrant flower in this garden of His which you call the world. Add beauty to it by your being in it. Be always creative, be always positive. Move through life with a radiant light. Be in life enriching it by your being. Think of ways and means of doing it and think also of ways and means of not doing the contrary, how to avoid the contrary. Be always something that may be even as the leaven which makes the bread rise, the factor that enhances the value of a thing. Be all this through your thought and word and action. Be all that contributes to harmony, to beauty, to unity,

to happiness. In short, be what God means you to be here and now. This is the true value of life. It is an opportunity and a possibility of being all this and more if only you make up your mind.

That such is the fact, that you have been sent to be this, comes from a simple statement, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Without salt everything becomes insipid. Because of salt everything becomes tasty. "Ye are the salt of the earth." In this very simple, yet very deeply meaningful utterance, is what you are supposed to be to this world. Be such a factor that without you the world will become insipid. Because you are here, everything will become enjoyable, delicious, relishing. This is your supreme privilege. Avail of it and make everything beautiful, and add light and glory to God's handy-work. This indeed is making use of life, not bypassing life, not allowing life to just pass away. Therefore, they say take time by the forelock; make use of every opportunity to shine with divinity. Take hold of every occasion to express your divine perfection, your God-nature. Every moment comes to you as a golden occasion, offering itself before you, calling you now.

Be what you are. Express your divinity, manifest your divinity. Every moment is an occasion to be a witness to the glory and the perfection of God by your own being. Despite the fact that God is supremely transcendental, incomprehensible, immeasurable, beyond time and space, beyond name and form, nevertheless, there is an inseparable, relationship between you and Him; this relationship is one of the essential identity in nature. You are part of God, and God

is an inseparable part of you. This is the mystical fact, paradoxical fact. Here you are at this moment limited in time and space, bound in name and form, but you are closely related to that transcendental Being. It is beyond the ability of mind and intellect to grasp and comprehend that Being; yet you are closely related. Because within you dwells another essence, another principle, unlimited, unbound, ever free, infinite and eternal, and that principle and essence is you, that is what you are. Be fully aware, be fully awake to this truth, to this fact which is central to your being. God's grace and Guru's benedictions enable you to do it and be it.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

## **5. PRAY FOR SINCERITY AND EARNESTNESS<sup>5</sup>**

Worshipful homage to the absolute and transcendental eternal Spirit Divine, the origin, the support and the fulfillment of all things! May its divine grace be upon you all! Loving adorations to revered and beloved Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj in whose spiritual presence we are assembled here at this moment. May his glance of grace and hand of benediction be with you throughout your life as you strive earnestly and sincerely to lead a divine life.

Earnestness and sincerity in one's life through daily conduct and behavior and earnestness and sincerity in one's spiritual Sadhana to attain the supreme goal of human existence, it is this earnestness and sincerity that unfailingly draws down the blessings and benedictions of your master and the divine grace of the Supreme. It is the grace of God and the benedictions of the Holy Master that make one's efforts fruitful and successful in fulfillment.

There seems to be some mystical connection between the earnestness and sincerity of one's outer and inner life and the divine grace and benedictions of the Holy Master. It may not be a cause and effect relationship but rather some mystical relationship. Definitely there does exist a relationship. And it may be that one's sincerity and

<sup>5</sup> Talk given at Sri Samadhi Mandir on 25/9/98

earnestness acts as a catalyst to one's aspirations, one's spiritual life and one's Sadhana and Yoga Abhyasa. Sincerity and earnestness act as a catalyst helping to bring the desired consummation of this process of spiritual life and spiritual Sadhana.

When it is there, everything seems to start; when it is not there, no matter how much one strives, it seems as though one is getting nowhere. That is why Masters always urged their followers to be sincere, to be earnest to the core.

Let us therefore, pray to the Almighty Supreme Being and to Holy Master that this gift of sincerity and earnestness coming from the innermost core of our heart may be given to us. Let us pray for this divine gift. May this be our prayer to the Holy Master, to the Supreme Being, and may this be our prayer also to the Divine Mother whom we adore during these nine days of Navaratra Durga Puja. And may the supreme Almighty Being, may the cosmic Divine Mother and may beloved and worshipful Holy Master grant us this prayer and crown our lives with liberation and divine perfection and make us blessed forever.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

