

Intellect and Instinct

(Letter from Sadananda in the 60s)

Intellect and instinct are like useless fireflies before the sun. To understand a little bit only, one must first forget all what one thinks, feels, has heard or learned from books, translations etc. In Sanskrit «desirous to hear» and «desirous to serve» are identical terms (cf. Gīta 18, 67): «not to be spoken to an aśuśrūṣu, to someone, who is not willing to listen, obey and to serve».

From birth to birth we have been exploiting each other and trying even to exploit God for our individual good and joy. But we may try in this life to learn to serve for the sake of the pleasure of the object of our service and love (Kṛṣṇa) and not in the hope of improving our own lot thereby. Service as aim and not as a means to an end.

Mere intellectualism leads to the idea of a dry «bloodless» and lifeless God. Mere sentimentality leads to a shallow romantic mysticism. Remember if and when a revelation by God is given at all, *it will be perfectly clear and distinct*. When and where it is greater than the capacity of our intellect to grasp, this revelation will tell us why it is so and what is the way to receive distinct and clear notions and concepts by His method. Poetic and mystic nebulous romanticism has done more harm to the cause of religion than the most vehement atheism.

A look at ourselves and the world teaches us that there is something wrong – there is a misunderstanding somewhere. The trouble is, *we do not know who we are*. Our instincts and desires to become happy ourselves compel us to remain slaves of our intuitions (immediate insights). Thus first religion must tell us – if she should have any value whatsoever – what we are and what is the relation between our body, individual soul, mind, reason and heart to the atma, who happens to come under the cover of body and mind. We must give up the pride to believe that we are such important creatures in the endless system of worlds, that God should be so much busy with the little tiny affairs of our life – so long as we do not go beyond the stage of intellectual animals, who want mental and emotional satisfaction.

The sand in the hour-glass of my life is running out rapidly. I wished so much I could be with you there and tell you certain things in clear and distinct words – which you would not like at first, because God's revelations cause shocks and destroy ourselves; admiration, complacency and self-assertion. But it is like a death-and-life operation – we escape it and then it becomes too late.

Nobody can cling to the ideas, feelings and instincts one fondles and nourishes like a baby – those wrong ideas and mysticism, being all foolish luggage – when treading the lonely path of serving and realising God.

NOBODY can please both – God and the world and one's own mind. Everyone has to watch himself carefully – do not trust your own mind or the mind of those who do not want to serve God without expectation of any reward.