



Grow In God-Nature

There is perfection within the individual soul that is referred to variously, such as *Ishvara amsha*, a part of God, Light of lights beyond all darkness. The Old Testament says that God created man in his image. He created Adam and breathed His Spirit into him. Therefore, there is in man the likeness of God. And the Islam says that man has been created with the Light of God within. There shines within you a spark of Divinity.

The science of Yoga is the development of that Light within you, so that your whole being becomes filled with light. This is called the spiritual process. Vedanta means to realise: "I am the Light. I am not the other things that cover the light." The Light within is central to the life of human beings. And the more you grow in *God-nature*, the more it becomes awakened, unfolded – the more you are ascending towards the ultimate Experience and the more you are progressing in the spiritual life.

What is God-nature? The concept of God in man's mind is that God is infinite compassion and mercy. He is ocean of compassion, all-merciful. And man is made in the image of God. We are part of God. We are made in His likeness. Within us, we are what He is. Therefore, compassion and mercy are inherent in us. Within man there is this potential of infinite goodness, love, kindness, compassion and mercy. And the more we manifest it, the more we grow in our real nature, our God-nature. Be an Angel of mercy. That is spiritual life – the ascent into God-nature, our *nija-svarupa*.

There is a picturesque verse in Hindi: "Softer than butter is the heart of a saintly spiritual person, because his heart melts not when he is being afflicted with heat but when he sees others being afflicted by heat." Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that one who considers sorrow, pain and suffering of others as his own suffering, is very dear to the Lord. Such a person is always engaged in trying to relieve the sufferings of all creations. He feels an innate identity everywhere with all things. His attitude towards others is to treat them as himself. This is the quintessence of the simple prayer of St. Francis of Assisi.

While on earth, we should live as the parts of Divinity that we are. That indeed would be a life worth living. That would have been life worth lived, and we would have put God's great gift to its highest use and made ourselves blessed forever.

God Bless You!

■ *Swami Chidananda*