

## QUESTIONS THAT I ASK MYSELF

Q: **GIVEN THAT GOD DOES EXIST, HOW CAN WE ACTUALLY REALIZE HIM?**



**Ramakrishna Paramahansa** says, "He is born in vain, who having attained the human birth, so difficult to get, does not attempt to realize God."

But, God is an unknown, unseen thing for me. How then can I set about doing this task?

**Ramakrishna Paramahansa** says, "To realize God, there should be a strong yearning for Him. The yearning should be as strong as the yearning, which a child

has for his mother. If one can yearn to realize God in the same way as he yearns for a new job while wandering jobless from pillar to post, he shall definitely succeed. One should be restless for God. This feeling of restlessness is like the state of mind of the person who has someone ill in his family. His mind is in the state of perpetual restlessness, thinking of how the sick person may be cured.

One should be very aggressive in his desire to realize God. His love towards God should be so violent that he should set time limits for himself to reach God! One who's milder and passive in his desire to reach God may never succeed."

**But, are there any preconditions to realize God?**

**Ramakrishna Paramahansa** says, "One cannot see one's image in the mirror if it is covered with dirt. Also, water cannot be seen in a pond that is covered with scum and weeds. In order to see what we want, dust from the mirror surface and scum from the water surface have to be removed respectively. Similarly, one can never realize God if his mind is full of worldly thoughts. He'd have to detach himself from the worldly pleasures to reach God. To do this, one should continuously sing the praises of the Lord and plead to Him to *help him to reach Him*. This however does not imply that he should leave everything and start chanting His name. His work should be always of primary importance. All this would come along with work."

**In what kind of an environment should the entire process take place?**

**Ramakrishna Paramahansa** says, " One must go into solitude in order to attain divine love. Just as butter can be obtained from milk only when it is allowed to curd at a secluded spot and not disturbed too much, God can be realized only when man attempts to do so in solitude. His attempts should be made in an environment, which is free from worldly anxieties, shame, hatred and fear. When engaged in devotional practices, one should stay aloof from those that criticise him and his practices. He should direct his heart towards God just as the magnetic needle in a sailing vessel is always directed towards the north. This would prevent him from drowning in the ocean of worldliness just like the needle, which prevents the vessel from losing its way.

Just as a thread cannot be inserted into the needle hole if even a single fibre sticks out, God cannot be attained if there's the slightest attachment to worldly affairs. Concentration becomes very difficult to achieve in that case and without concentration, our efforts cannot bear fruit."

The great saint with this short story explained the entire procedure of realization of God.

"When a disciple asked his Guru about how he can attain God, the Guru took him to a nearby pond. Suddenly the Guru pressed the disciple's head under the water. After a few moments, he released his hold. The disciple stood up, gasping for breath. The Guru asked him how he felt, to which he said that he felt that he'd die anytime in his extreme want for air!

To this the Guru told him, 'when you feel like this while yearning for God, you would certainly attain Him'."

An answer to a question cannot be more complete.

