

SELF-REALIZATION

By Bjørn Pettersen

What does it mean to “realize oneself”? In the Genesis of the Bible it is said that God created the human being “in His image”, i.e. similar to Himself. Jesus confirmed this by saying that the first and greatest commandment is that “you shall love God with all your heart and mind and soul”, but there is also another commandment which is *just as* great – “you shall love your neighbour as your self”. From the standpoint of love all these three therefore have equal status – God, yourself and your neighbour. But as Christianity does not allow philosophy, and as philosophy in our Western cultural sphere is only speculative, the human’s relation to God has always been mysterious. Indian philosophy, on the other hand, which is practical and not speculative, has always maintained that there is no distinction between the human soul and the soul of God – yes, that actually there are not many souls but that in reality there is only one single Soul who, through the endless diversity and variety of life forms in this creation, apparently emerges as many. This overwhelming, accepted and established *seemingness*, which appears as real and which causes our identification with the part instead of the whole, makes our ignorance about ourselves, God and life, and which again causes all of our problems both individually and collectively. The one who sees and experiences this through his or hers own body and mind, realizes the Self or God.

If you know that you *are* not your physical body, and that you *are* nothing of all that your mind contains, either your thoughts, feelings, wishes or wills, but that all these are only something you *have* in order to experience life. – If you acknowledge that, even if all of your body cells have been replaced and renewed many times, and even if you have changed your opinions, attitude, feelings and perhaps even your nature many times during your life, your “I-feeling” beyond everything has never ever changed – because you feel yourself exactly the same to-day as you have always done as long as you can remember. – If you experience that you, in spite of intense ups and downs, hardships and ease, joys and sorrows in life, are not carried away or overturned but keep your composure and perspective, and at the same time experiences that your life becomes more and more focused and conscious. – If you love God (the All – the Absolute), your Self and your neighbour (all living creatures) in equal high measure and with all your heart and mind and soul. – Yes, then you realize your Self and enjoy freely this ever-wondrous life!