

## Now Or Never

*Imagine a boy who adorns his study desk with a beautiful rose for several days. When the rose rots and stinks, he offers it to his sweetheart with a smiling "I love you."*

Hardly anyone would do this with one's beloved. Yet many people, who profess to be religious, do this with the Supreme. They use the best part of their lives for selfish godless enjoyment. When their bodies age and become good-for-nothing, then they – sometimes – offer their lives to the Supreme with a ceremonious "I am Your devotee".



Of course, turning to God at least in old age is much better than not turning to Him at all. Still postponing that decision till the fag end of life is lamentable.

Let's see ten more points why we should turn to God at the earliest possible age, or, in other words, right now:

### **1. The purpose of life:**

We are souls fallen from the eternal world and transmigrating through various species in material existence. Now that we have received human bodies, we have the opportunity to revive our dormant divine love and return back to our lost spiritual home. Therefore, life from beginning to end should be a progressive journey of increasing devotion to God.

### **2. Why bury treasure deeper:**

Suppose somebody knows there's a treasure underground, yet covers it with mud. Isn't that unfortunate? Devotional service is the only true treasure of life; it's the only wealth which brings fulfillment in this life and which accompanies us to the next life. Despite knowing this, if we preoccupy ourselves with materialistic pursuits, we will simply be thickening the



covering of materialistic impressions on our latent spiritual awareness. Moreover, we will be habituating ourselves to materialistic living. And, as is rightly said, the chains of habits are too soft to be felt but too hard to be broken. So, if we postpone devotional service in favor of materialistic pursuits, aren't we like the unfortunate person who buries his own treasure deeper?

### **3. At your risk:**

Postponing spiritual life to old age is based on the assumption that we will live till old age. But death does not follow the queue system of first come, first go. So why delay at our own risk? Misled by the notion that death was far away, in our many previous lives, we postponed devotional service till it was too late. That's why we are still here in this miserable material world soon to undergo another round of suffering of old age, disease and death. Will we repeat our past mistake in this life too?

### **4. How old are you:**

And what is old age anyway? It is proximity to death. As we may all die at anytime, are we all not old? That's why we refer to ourselves and others as, say, "thirty years old" – not "thirty years young".

### **5. Already late:**

So is youth the right time for spiritual life? No, it isn't. Childhood is, as proclaimed by books of timeless wisdom like the Srimad Bhagavatam (7.6.1). That's because the impressions that we acquire during our formative years become deeply ingrained. Just as wet clay is easier to shape than dry clay; it's much easier to give ourselves a spiritual orientation in our formative childhood years than in later years.

Why should the best career ambition in life – everlasting wisdom and happiness – deserve anything less than the best learning years of life?

If we are teenagers, youths or middle-aged people or senior citizens, then we are already late in starting spiritual life – late by several years. Just as a late train has to accelerate to reach on time, we need to practice devotional service



with above-average intensity if we want to attain the samadhi of divine love before death reaches us.

**6. Cheaters get cheated:**

In India, during funeral ceremonies, Hindus chant, “*rama naam satya hai*” (the name of God is the only truth). But when a living person invests time in chanting, these same people often discourage him. Despite their pompous words, what they are effectively saying is “*rama naam vyartha hai*” (Chanting the name of God is a waste of time.) Double standards. Those who try to cheat the Supreme will themselves be cheated. Despite their show of religiosity, they will continue to suffer in material existence life after life. Why should we join them?

**7. From the start:**

“Spiritual life is for old age” is a bogus and baseless idea. It’s true that in Vedic culture *sannyasa* – life dedicated to God – is the last stage of life. But the first stage of life is brahmacharya, life in pursuit of *brahman*, God.

**8. When will the waves stop:**

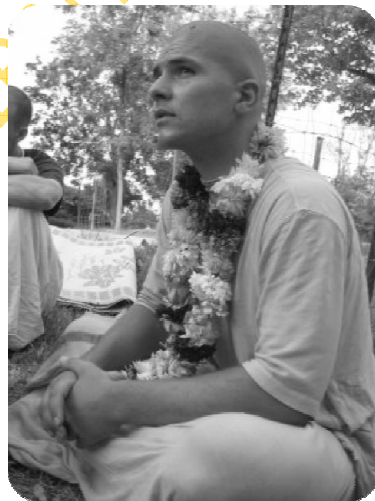
If someone wants to swim in the ocean, but waits for the waves to stop, how long will he have to wait? Forever. Similarly, if we want to take to spiritual life, but wait for the waves of material distractions to subside, how long will we have to wait? Forever.

**9. God Himself is waiting:**

God, as the Paramatma dwelling in our hearts, has been waiting for us for very many lifetimes. How much longer are we going to keep Him waiting?

**10. If it’s not now, it’s never:**

Because sometime we have to decide “now is the time.” And all the factors that are distracting us now, or similar factors, will be there in the future too. Therefore let’s take the bold decision now. Let’s invest



our time for God *now* and reap the ultimate dividend of a satisfied life here and hereafter. ☞

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