ONE of the biggest problems in the world today is the fact that a system of morality is imposed on the human mind from an early age. These ideas of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, ‘good’ and ‘bad’, become very strong markers of identity. Whatever you consider good naturally draws you. Whatever you consider bad naturally repels you. This pattern of attraction and aversion becomes the basis of your identity.

The nature of your mind is that whatever you are averse to dominates it. Whenever you are told something is ‘evil’, resisting that becomes a full-time job! People who think they are good are often overbearing and hard to live with. The idea of moral superiority has been the source of too many inhuman acts on this planet to be ignored.

Most of the so-called ‘good’ people are merely avoiding what they consider ‘bad’. Avoidance does not mean freedom from something. It simply means denial or exclusion. So, what is considered to be goodness is often the result of exclusion.

Ideas of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ are mere social constructs. They have nothing to do with life. A uniform morality can never be imposed on the whole population because ideas of good and bad are always fluid. If you look at certain images of black men being lynched in Tennessee in the 19th century, you will see entire families unabashedly enjoying the spectacle. This is because social morality of the time decreed that this practice was right. Osama bin Laden had his own fantastic logic about why he had to do what he did. Veerappan had his own logic. Ask a Maoist, who is right now blasting a police van, and he has his own perfect logic! So, these ideas of good and bad are just a certain level of prejudice against life.

Open your mind

On a certain day, two Irish men were working on the street, in front of a London brothel. They saw a Protestant minister coming their way. He rolled up his collar, put his head down and quietly slipped into the brothel. They looked at each other, shrugged and said, “What else can you expect from a Protestant?”

They continued to work. After some time a Jewish rabbi came by, his face almost covered by a muffler. He ducked into the brothel, too. The workers were distressed. “Oh, times have gone bad. A religious man in a brothel! Sad news.”

After a while the local bishop came by, looked around furtively, tightened his cloak and slipped into the brothel.

Then one worker turned to the other and said, “One of the girls must be really sick.”

The moment you get identified with your ideas of goodness you are completely logged out! Your intellect is functioning around these identifications in such a way that you never see anything the way it is.

If you want an element of spirituality to happen to you, the first and foremost thing is that you drop your ideas of good and bad. You learn to look at life just the way it is. ‘Good’ and ‘bad’ are a matter of morality, but the solutions for all your problems exist in your humanity. If your humanity were alive, there would be no need for morality at all.

Make a list of all the things that the major religions of the world call a ‘sin’, and you will find that just to be alive is a sin. If you are born it is a sin; if you menstruate it is a sin; if you copulate it is a sin. Since the very life process is a sin, you live in perpetual guilt and shame. If people did not have so much fear and guilt in them, the temples, mosques and churches in the world would not be full.

People will always find ways to subvert values, morals and ethics. But when you are very joyful, you are naturally compassionate towards everyone around you. My whole life work is just to make human beings truly blissful. It is about reminding people that spirituality does not mean going away from life; it means coming alive in the fullest possible way.

Sadhguru, a yogi, is a visionary, humanitarian and a prominent spiritual leader (www.ishafoundation.org)