

ISKCON MEDIA VEDIC LIBRARY

Creative Commons License
Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 Unported



You are free:

- to Share — to copy, distribute and transmit the work

Under the following conditions:

- Attribution. You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author or licensor (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work).
- Noncommercial. You may not use this work for commercial purposes.
- No Derivative Works. You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

For more free ebooks, mp3s, or photos visit:
www.iskconmedia.com

Śrī Bhaktyāloka

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Translated by Bhumipati Dāsa

Six Faults That Destroy Bhakti

Atyāhāra

Overeating or too much collecting

In his *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written the following verse:

atyāhāraḥ prayāsaś ca prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ
jana-saṅgaś ca laulyam ca ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati

“One's devotional service is spoiled when he becomes too entangled in the following six activities: (1) *atyāhāra*, eating more than necessary or collecting more funds than required; (2) *prayāsa*, overendeavoring for mundane things that are very difficult to obtain; (3) *prajalpa*, talking unnecessarily about mundane subject matters; (4) *niyamāgraha*, practicing the scriptural rules and regulations only for the sake of following them and not for the sake of spiritual advancement, or rejecting the rules and regulations of the scriptures and working independently or whimsically; (5) *jana-saṅga*, associating with worldly-minded persons who are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; and (6) *laulyam*, being greedy for mundane achievements.”

It is most important to consider the deep meaning of this verse. For anyone who wants to engage in pure devotional service, it is especially necessary to follow the instructions of this verse. For one who neglects to follow these instructions, attaining devotion to Lord Hari is extremely rare. We are hereby elaborating the meaning of this verse for the benefit of those who have a strong desire to attain pure devotional service. In this verse six impediments to devotional service are mentioned—*atyāhāra*, *prayāsa*, *prajalpa*, *niyamāgraha*, *jana-saṅga*, and *laulya*. We will separately discuss each of these six items. In this small chapter only the meaning of the word *atyāhāra* is being discussed.

Many people may think that the word *atyāhāra* refers only to overeating, but this is not so. It is explained in the first verse of *Upadeśāmṛta*:

vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam

etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiśyāt

“A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger, and the urges of the tongue, belly, and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.”

In this regard, the urge of the tongue is the desire to taste foodstuffs. The urge of the stomach is the desire to overeat. If we understand the word *atyāhāra* in the second verse as overeating, the fault of repetition occurs in this condensed collection of essential instructions. Therefore it is the duty of the learned readers to find other meanings for the word *atyāhāra* as used by the most grave Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Although *bhojana*, or eating, is the principle meaning of the word *āhāra*¹, the word *bhojana* also means to enjoy the objects of the five senses. Form by the eyes, sound by the ears, smell by the nose, taste by the tongue, feeling of heat and cold, soft and hard by the touch—in this way, the five senses enjoy. This type of material enjoyment is compulsory for an embodied soul. Without enjoying the sense objects, a living entity cannot survive. As soon as the living entity gives up sense enjoyment, he leaves his body. Therefore, giving up sense enjoyment is only a figment of the imagination, it can never be applied in practice. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.5-6):

<i>na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api</i>	<i>jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt</i>
<i>kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma</i>	<i>sarvaḥ prakṛti-jair guṇaiḥ</i>
<i>karmendriyāni samyamya</i>	<i>ya āste manasā smaran</i>
<i>indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā</i>	<i>mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate</i>

“Everyone is forced to act helplessly according to the qualities he has acquired from the modes of material nature; therefore no one can refrain from doing something, not even for a moment. One who restrains the senses of action but whose mind dwells on sense objects certainly deludes himself and is called a pretender.”

Since maintaining one's life is not possible without action, one must work to maintain his life. If such activities are done in the mood of enjoyment, then one's qualification as a human is lost and he becomes like an animal. Therefore if one can transform all his bodily activities into activities favorable to the devotional service of the Lord, then that is *bhakti-yoga*. Again, the Lord says in the *Gītā* (6.16-17, 5.8-9):

<i>nāty-aśnatas tu yogo 'sti</i>	<i>na caikāntam anaśnataḥ</i>
<i>na cāti-svapna-śīlasya</i>	<i>jāgrato naiva cārjuna</i>
<i>yuktāhāra-vihārasya</i>	<i>yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu</i>
<i>yukta-svapnāvabodhasya</i>	<i>yogo bhavati duḥkha-hā</i>
<i>naiva kiñcit karomīti</i>	<i>yukto manyeta tattva-vit</i>
<i>paśyañ śṛṇvan sprśaṇ jighraṇn</i>	<i>aśnan gacchan svapan śvasan</i>
<i>pralapan viśṛjan grhṇann</i>	<i>unmiṣan nimiṣann api</i>
<i>indriyāñdriyārtheṣu</i>	<i>vartanta iti dhārayan</i>

“There is no possibility of one's becoming a yogi, O Arjuna, if one eats too much, or eats too little, sleeps too much, or does not sleep enough. He who is temperate in his habits of eating, sleeping, working, and recreation can mitigate all material pains by practicing the yoga system. A person in the divine consciousness, although engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving about, sleeping, and breathing, always knows within himself that he actually does nothing at all. Because while speaking, evacuating, receiving, or opening or closing his eyes, he always knows that only the material senses are engaged with their

objects and that he is aloof from them.”

Although these instructions are effective for *jñānīs*, still, their purport is favorable for devotional service. The concluding verse of *Bhagavad-gītā* explains about *śaraṇāgati*, or full surrender. Keeping this in mind, one should renounce fruitive activities and philosophical speculation and accept sense objects as the Lord's mercy. This is known as pure devotional service. Therefore Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.255-256):

anāsaktasya viṣayān yathārham upayuñjataḥ
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate

prāpañcikatayā buddhyā hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumuṣubhiḥ parityāgo vairāgyaṁ phalgu kathyate

“When one is not attached to anything, but at the same time accepts everything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, one is rightly situated above possessiveness. On the other hand, one who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Kṛṣṇa is not as complete in his renunciation.”

The purport of these two verses is repeated in *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* by the instruction to reject *atyāhāra*. The purport is that if one accepts sense objects in the spirit of enjoyment, that is *atyāhāra*. But if sense objects are accepted as the Lord's mercy and only as far as required and favorable for devotional service, then it is not *atyāhāra*. If sense objects are honestly accepted as the Lord's mercy, then *yukta-vairāgya* is easily attained. Śrīman Mahāprabhu's order is to accept sense objects without attachment and chant Kṛṣṇa's name. Don't endeavor for palatable foodstuffs and fine clothes. Accept the sanctified *bhāgavata-prasāda* that is easily obtainable. This is the devotee's lifestyle. Whatever is required, take only that. Taking more or less will not yield auspicious results. If the practitioner takes or accumulates more than necessary, his spiritual life will be lost due to his being controlled by material mellows. If he does not properly accumulate, then the body, which is his means of worship, will not be protected.

The purport of the instruction to tolerate the urges of the tongue and belly mentioned in the first verse is this: The materialist easily becomes greedy to enjoy the finest tastes, and being afflicted by hunger, he becomes extremely agitated and enthusiastic to eat the available foodstuffs. This is a material urge. Whenever this type of urge will arise, it should be controlled by the cultivation of devotional service. The injunction to reject *atyāhāra* mentioned in the second verse is a constitutional rule for the practitioner. The injunction of the first verse is conditional, and the injunction of the second is constitutional.

There is one more thing to be said. All these instructions have two different types of applications—for the householders and for the renunciates. Householders can collect in order to maintain their family members. They should earn their livelihood and save according to religious principles. With this savings they should serve the Lord, the devotees, guests, family members, and themselves. If a householder collects more than his requirement, then this is an impediment in his devotional service and in his achieving the Lord's mercy. So saving too much and earning too much are both *atyāhāra*—there is no doubt. A renunciate will not collect at all. If he is not satisfied by the alms he obtains everyday, then he is guilty of *atyāhāra*. After getting nice foodstuffs, if he eats more than he needs, then he is guilty of *atyāhāra*. Therefore the householders and renunciates should consider

these facts carefully, and after giving up *atyāhāra*, when they engage in devotional service they will attain Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

Prayāsa Overendeavoring

If *prayāsa* is not given up, devotion will never arise. The word *prayāsa* means endeavor, useless labor. Spiritual life is nothing other than pure devotion unto the Supreme Lord. Devotion cannot be defined by any symptoms other than full surrender and subordination unto the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. Full surrender and subordination are the natural, eternal constitutional duties of the living entities. Therefore, only devotional service is the natural propensity or inherent occupation. In one's inherent occupation there is no need of *prayāsa*; still, in the living entity's conditioned state there is need for a small amount of *prayāsa* in order to cultivate devotional service. Except this little *prayāsa*, all other kinds of *prayāsa* are unfavorable for devotional service. *Prayāsa* is of two kinds—*jnāna-prayāsa* and *karma-prayāsa*. In *jnāna-prayāsa* the feeling of oneness, or *kevalādvaita*, arises. This is also known as *sāyujya*, merging, or *brahma-nirvāṇa*, absorption in the Supreme. *Jnāna-prayāsa* is hostile to spiritual life; this is explained in the Vedic literature, *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.2.3), in the following words:

*nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhasā na bahunā śrutena*

*yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas
tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām*

“The Supreme Lord is not obtained by expert explanations, by vast intelligence, or even by much hearing. He is obtained only by one whom He Himself chooses. To such a person, He manifests His own form.” Therefore devotion is the only way to attain the lotus feet of the Lord. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.14.3) Brahmā says to Lord Kṛṣṇa:

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām*

*sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*

“Lord Brahmā said, O my Lord Kṛṣṇa, a devotee who abandons [*jñāna-prayāsa**] the path of empiric philosophical speculation aimed at merging in the existence of the Supreme and engages himself in hearing Your glories and activities from a bona fide sadhu, or saint, and who lives an honest life in the occupational engagement of his social life, can conquer Your sympathy and mercy even though You are *ajita*, or unconquerable.”

In order to further clarify *prayāsa*, Lord Brahmā says:

*śreyah-ṣṛtīm bhaktim udasya te vibho
kliṣyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhaye*

*teṣām asau kleśala eva śiṣyate
nānyad yathā sthūla-tuṣāvaghātinām*

“My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavors are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labor becomes fruitless.” The philosophy of monism does not originate in the Absolute Truth; it is only a demoniac provision. Glorification of the knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord is often heard. That knowledge is pure and spontaneous—there is no need of *prayāsa*. The knowledge given in the *Catuḥ-slokī* [the four main *Bhāgavatam* verses] is *acintya bhedābheda*, inconceivably, simultaneously one and different. This knowledge is naturally dormant in the heart of the living entity. The Lord is like a spiritual sun, and the living entities are like molecular particles of the sun's rays. The living entity cannot remain in his constitutional form without being subordinate to the Lord, therefore servitorship of the Lord is his constitutional duty. Cultivation of this constitutional duty is the nature of the living entity. This is the spontaneous—devoid of *prayāsa*—*dharma*, or duty, of the living entity. Although in the conditioned state this *dharma* is almost dormant and is awakened by *sādhana*, or spiritual practice, still the *prayāsa* found in devotional practices is not like that found in the paths of karma and *jñāna*. If one takes shelter of the holy name with some respect, then within a short time the obstacles due to ignorance are removed and one's constitutional happiness is reawakened. But if one gives a place to *jñāna-prayāsa*, then he has to suffer more. And if *jñāna-prayāsa* is renounced in the association of devotees, then that is a devotional endeavor. The Lord says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.2-5):

<i>mayy āveśya mano ye mām śraddhayā parayopetās</i>	<i>nitya-yuktā upāsate te me yuktatamā matāḥ</i>
<i>ye tv akṣaram anirdeśyam sarvatra-gam acintyaṁ ca</i>	<i>avyaktaṁ paryupāsate kūṭa-stham acalaṁ dhruvam</i>
<i>sanniyamyendriya-grāmam te prāpnuvanti mām eva</i>	<i>sarvatra sama-buddhayaḥ sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ</i>
<i>kleśo 'dhikataras teṣām avyaktā hi gatir duḥkham</i>	<i>avyaktāsakta-cetasām dehavadbhir avāpyate</i>

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Those who fix their minds on My personal form and are always engaged in worshipping Me with great and transcendental faith are considered by Me to be most perfect. But those who fully worship the unmanifested, that which lies beyond the perception of the senses, the all-pervading, inconceivable, unchanging, fixed, and immovable—the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth—by controlling the various senses and being equally disposed to everyone, such persons, engaged in the welfare of all, at last achieve Me. For those whose minds are attached to the unmanifested, impersonal feature of the Supreme, advancement is very troublesome. To make progress in that discipline is always difficult for those who are embodied.”

In *karma-prayāsa* there is also no benefit. In the First Canto of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* it is said:

dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ pumsām viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratim śrama eva hi kevalam

“The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor, or *prayāsa*, if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.” Therefore *karma-prayāsa* is contrary to devotional principles in the same way as *jnāna-prayāsa*. The conclusion is that *karma-prayāsa* and *jnāna-prayāsa* are very detrimental. But a devotee who desires to properly pass his life still accepts his duties according to *varṇāśrama*, as those duties are favorable to devotional service and counted as part of devotional service. All these activities are no longer called karma. In these activities, the *svaniṣṭha* devotees, or devotees addicted to their own line of devotion, bring karma and its results within the realm of devotional service. The *pariniṣṭhita* devotees, or devotees fully addicted to devotional service, perform pious activities that are not contrary to devotional principles only to attract people. The devotees who are *nirapekṣa*, or neutral, accept activities favorable for devotional service without caring for popular approval.

Jnāna-prayāsa and its resultant *prayāsa* for the liberation of merging with the Lord are extremely contrary to devotional principles. If *aṣṭāṅga-yoga-prayāsa* aims at mystic powers and liberation, then it is also extremely contrary to devotional principles. The rules for devotional practice and the knowledge of the living entities' relationship of simultaneous oneness and difference are most natural and therefore devoid of *prayāsa*. This type of activity and knowledge is only accepted as a means. If they are accepted as the goal, then they become the source of fault. I will explain this further under *niyamāgraha*. The hard labor for activities like visiting holy places is *prayāsa* that is unfavorable for devotional service. If, however, one goes to the places of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes with a greedy desire to awaken his ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa and to associate with the devotees, then this is certainly devotional service—not useless *prayāsa*. Following the vows of devotional service is not useless *prayāsa*, they are all accepted as part of the process of devotional service. The *prayāsa* for serving the Vaiṣṇavas is not *prayāsa*; for greed to associate with one's own peers destroys faults in the form of desires to associate with worldly-minded people. The *prayāsa* for temple worship is a spontaneous manifestation of the heart's emotions. The *prayāsa* for activities like *saṅkīrtana* is only meant to open one's heart to chanting the Lord's holy names; it is therefore extremely natural.

There is no need for *prayāsa* in renunciation; because when devotion to Kṛṣṇa arises in the heart, the living entity easily becomes disinterested in everything other than Kṛṣṇa. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.2.7) says:

vāsudeve bhagavati bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyam jñānam ca yad ahaitukam

“By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge [or knowledge of eternally perfect servitorship of the Lord*] and detachment [or detachment free from *prayāsa**] from the world.” So when one gives up *jñāna*, karma, and *vairāgya prayāsa* and engages in devotional practices, then the obstacles of *jñāna*, karma, yoga, and

vairāgya cannot pull one down. Therefore it is established in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.2.42): *bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah*—“devotion, direct experience of the Supreme Lord, and detachment from other things—these three occur simultaneously for one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

When a devotee humbly and without duplicity chants and remembers the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, then real intelligence easily awakens in this way: “I am spiritual particle, servant of Kṛṣṇa; Kṛṣṇa is my eternal Lord; surrender to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet is my eternal nature; this world is like a traveler's rest-house; and to be attached to anything of this world will not give me eternal happiness.” Like this, a practitioner soon attains all perfection. *Jñāna-prayāsa*, *karma-prayāsa*, *yoga-prayāsa*, *mukti-prayāsa*, as well as overendeavoring for material enjoyment, worldly achievements, and association with materialistic people are all hostile principles for one who has taken shelter of the holy name. By these different forms of *prayāsa*, one's devotional service is ruined. The *prayāsa* for attaining *pratiṣṭhā*, or fame, is the lowest of all kinds of *prayāsa*. Although it is the lowest, it is unavoidable for many. And that also should be given up by the simple process of devotional service. Therefore Sanātana Gosvāmī has stated in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, the concluding verse:

sarva tyāge 'py aheyāyāḥ sarvānārtha bhuvāś ca te
kuryuḥ pratiṣṭhāviṣṭhāyā yatnam asparśane varam

“Even if one can give up all material desires, the desire for fame is very difficult to give up. This desire for fame, which is compared to stool, is the root cause of all *anarthas*. Therefore, one should carefully avoid touching this stool-like desire for fame.” This instruction is extremely serious. The devotee should follow this exclusive duty with special care.

A practicing devotee should pass his life in a natural occupation that is favorable to devotional service, and he should chant and remember the holy names with knowledge of his relationship with the Lord. This process of worship without *prayāsa* again has two different kinds of applications—for householders and for renunciates. Making *varṇāśrama* favorable to devotional service, the householder should pass his life engaged in devotional service free from *prayāsa*. They should earn and save only to easily maintain the family members. If they always remember that worshipping Hari is the only purpose of life, then they will never fall into illusion. In happiness and distress, in good fortune and bad, in waking and sleep—in every condition—worshipping Hari will quickly be perfected. And the renunciate should not save at all. He should maintain his body by daily begging alms and thus engage in devotional service. They should not stay in any enterprise. By entering into enterprise, he is at fault. The more he worships the Lord with humility and simplicity, the more he will understand Kṛṣṇa, by His mercy. As stated by Lord Brahmā in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.14.8):

tat te 'nukampām susamīkṣamāṇo
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtām vipākam

hṛd-vāg-vapurbbhir vidadhan namas te
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk

“My dear Lord, one who constantly waits for Your causeless mercy to be bestowed

upon him and who goes on suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds, offering You respectful obeisances from the core of his heart. is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim.” Nothing is achieved by *jñāna-prayāsa*, but one can know Kṛṣṇa only by His mercy. Therefore *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.14.29) says:

*athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-
prasāda-leśānugṛhīta eva hi*

*jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno
na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvan*

“My Lord, if one is favored by even a slight trace of the mercy of Your lotus feet, he can understand the greatness of Your personality. But those who speculate to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead are unable to know You, even though they continue to study the *Vedas* for many years.”

If one takes shelter of the holy names with humility, then by the mercy of the Lord—without *prayāsa*—all knowledge of the Absolute Truth that should be known awakens within the heart of the simple devotee. This knowledge is never attained by independent *prayāsa*.

Prajalpa Idle talking

Talking with one another is called *jalpana* or *prajalpa*. Nowadays in this world godlessness is so prominent that conversing with others means godless talk. Therefore it is not profitable for a practicing devotee to engage in *jalpana*. There can, however, be many kinds of *jalpana* in the cultivation of devotional service. They are all auspicious for the devotees. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in his *Kārpaṇya-pañjikā-stotra*:

*tathāpy asmin kadācid vāmadhīśau nāma-jalpini
avadya-vṛnda-nistāri- nāmābhāsau prasīdatam*

Devotees recite the purport of this verse in the following words:

*tathāpi e dīna-jane, yadi nāma-uccāraṇe,
nāmābhāsa karila jivane*

*sarva-doṣa-nivāraṇa, duhuñ-nāma-sañjalpana,
prasāde prasīda dui jane*

“While chanting the holy name of the Lord, if a wretched person in his lifetime achieves *nāmābhāsa*, or a glimpse of offenseless chanting, then all his faults are destroyed and Their Lordships become pleased with him.”

Kīrtana, offering prayers, and reciting the scriptures are all *jalpana*; but when these are performed with a favorable mood and devoid of material desire, then they are all cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore the conclusion is this: All *prajalpas* that are unfavorable to Kṛṣṇa's service are adverse to devotional service. The practitioner should carefully give up *prajalpa*. There is no fault in the activities of the *mahājanas*. The *mahājanas* have respectfully engaged in *prajalpa*

(favorable to devotional service), and this is our only duty. Sometimes puffed-up devotees advise that all types of *prajalpa* should be given up. But we are followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; being followers of Rūpa Gosvāmī we will always stick to the path shown by the sadhus who are following his instructions. In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, as quoted from the *Skanda Purāṇa*, it is said:

sa mṛgyaḥ śreyasām hetuḥ panthāḥ santāpa-varjitāḥ
anavāpta-śramaṁ pūrve yena santaḥ pratisthira

“One should strictly follow the easy path that the previous *mahājanas* have accepted. That path bestows great auspiciousness and is devoid of all misery.” Our *mahājana's* path is that which was shown by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Prahlāda Mahārāja, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and His associates. We are not to leave aside that path to follow the instructions of new puffed-up devotees. All the *mahājanas* have respected that *prajalpa* which nourishes devotion to Hari. We will discuss this in the appropriate place.

Godless *prajalpas* are impediments to devotional service. They are of many types. Useless talks, arguments, gossip, debates, fault-finding in others, speaking falsehoods, blaspheming devotees, and worldly talk are all called *prajalpa*. Useless talk is extremely detrimental. Practicing devotees should discuss topics of Lord Hari in the association of other devotees and remember Hari's name, form, qualities, and pastimes in a secluded place without uselessly wasting time. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.8-9) it is said:

aham sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate
iti matvā bhajante mām budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ

mac-cittā mad-gata-prāṇā bodhayantaḥ parasparam
kathayantaś ca mām nityam tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca

“I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who perfectly know this engage in My devotional service and worship Me with all their hearts. The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are fully devoted to My service, and they derive great satisfaction and bliss from always enlightening one another and conversing about Me.” Also in the *Gītā* (9.14) it says:

satataṁ kīrtayanto mām yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā nitya-yuktā upāsate

“Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion.” In this way the practicing devotee should cultivate unalloyed devotion. If they spend their days and nights uselessly talking with materialists, then the Lord's instruction, “always chanting My glories,” will not be followed. In newspapers there is so much useless talk. For the practicing devotee to read newspapers is a great loss. But if there are topics about pure devotees described in the newspaper, then that can be read. After finishing their meal, mundane people normally smoke and engage in useless talk with other godless people. It is certainly difficult for them to become followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Reading novels is the same. But if one gets a novel with a story like that of Purañjana in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, then reading that is not an impediment, rather it is beneficial.

Argument is a *prajalpa* that is adverse to devotional service. All the arguments of the followers of *nyāyā* and *vaiśeṣika* are simply godless quarrels. They do not yield any result other than wasting the mind's strength and increasing one's restlessness. In the *Vedas* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 1.2.9) it is said: *naiṣā tarkeṇa matir apaneyā*—“This intelligence cannot be attained by argument.” The living entity's proper discretion is eternally established in his natural intelligence. That discretion naturally flows towards the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. But by arguing about directions, places, mistakes, and illusions, the heart becomes tough. Then natural discretion no longer remains. By accepting the Vedic Daśamūla instructions and arguing accordingly, one's mind does not become wicked. What is good, what is bad—when such deliberations are based on the *Vedas*, that is no longer *prajalpa*. That is why in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 25.153) Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given the instruction: *ataeva bhāgavata karaḥ vicāra*—“Study *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* very scrutinizingly.” Discussions to establish the knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord are not *prajalpa*. Those who conquer the assembly by useless arguments do not reach any conclusion; therefore it is certainly one's duty to give up such logician's association. This is confirmed in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 12.183) by Śrī Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, who said:

*tārkika-śṛgāla-saṅge bheu-bheu kari
sei mukhe ebe sadā kahi `kṛṣṇa' `hari'*

“In the association of the jackals known as logicians, I simply continued to bark a resounding `bheu bheu.' Now, from the same mouth I am chanting the holy names Kṛṣṇa and Hari.”

Those who are accustomed to discuss spiritual matters should remember the words of the Vārāṇasī *sannyāsī* as found in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 25.43):

*paramārtha-vicāra gela, kari mātra `vāda'
kāhān mukti pāba, kāhān kṛṣṇera prasāda*

“The atheists, headed by the Māyāvādī philosophers, do not care for liberation or Kṛṣṇa's mercy. They simply continue to put forward false arguments and counter-theories to atheistic philosophy, not considering or engaging in spiritual matters.” Useless arguments arise from envy or pride, aversion or attachment to sense gratification, or foolishness or self-pride. Quarrelsome people also become intoxicated by useless arguments. While discussing topics of the Lord and His devotees the practicing devotee should always be careful to avoid useless arguments.

Talking without reason about other people is extremely adverse to devotional service. Many people talk about others to establish their own reputation. Being envious, some people are accustomed to discuss others' character. The minds of those who are busy in such topics can never be fixed on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Talking about others should be rejected in all respects. But in the practice of devotional service there are many favorable topics that are faultless, even though they are about others. In order to completely renounce talking about others, one needs to live in the forest. The two different types of practicing devotees are the householders and the renunciates. Because the renunciates have no business whatsoever with sense enjoyment, they can give up talking about others in all respects. But because a householder is engaged in earning, saving, protecting, and

maintaining the family, he cannot completely give up talking about others. It is best for him to live in a Kṛṣṇa conscious family. When all one's material activities are related with Kṛṣṇa, then even his unavoidable talk about others becomes sinless and a part of devotional practice in relation to Kṛṣṇa. He should not talk about others in a way that is detrimental to anyone. He should talk about others only whatever little is necessary in his Kṛṣṇa conscious family. He should not talk about others without reason. Moreover, when a guru enlightens his disciple on some topic, then unless he occasionally talks about others, his instruction may not be clear. When previous *mahājanas* have talked about others in this way, there is merit in such talk, not fault. As Śukadeva Gosvāmī said in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (2.1.3-4):

nidrayā hriyate naktam vyavāyena ca vā vayah
divā cārthehayā rājan kuṭumba-bharaṇena vā

dehāpatya-kalatrādiṣv ātma-sainyeṣv asatsv api
teṣāṃ pramatto nidhanam paśyann api na paśyati

“The lifetime of such an envious householder is passed at night either in sleeping or in sex indulgence, and in the daytime either in making money or maintaining family members. Persons devoid of *ātma-tattva* do not inquire into the problems of life, being too attached to the fallible soldiers like the body, children, and wife. Although sufficiently experienced, they still do not see their inevitable destruction.” Although Śukadeva Gosvāmī talks about the materialists in order to instruct his disciple, he is not considered a *prajalpi*. Therefore such activities should be considered beneficial. Again, in order to instruct His own disciples, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu spoke about pseudo-renunciates in the following words from the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 2.117, 120, 124):

prabhu kahe,—vairāgī kare prakṛti sambhāṣaṇa
dekhite nā pāroṇ āmi tāhāra vadana

kṣudra-jīva saba markṭa-vairāgya kariyā
indriya carāṇā bule `prakṛti' sambhāṣiyā

prabhu kahe,—mora vaśa nahe mora mana
prakṛti-sambhāṣī vairāgī nā kare darśana

“The Lord replied: I cannot tolerate seeing the face of a person who has accepted the renounced order of life but who still talks intimately with a woman. There are many persons with little in their possession who accept the renounced order of life like monkeys. They go here and there engaging in sense gratification and speaking intimately with women. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said: My mind is not under My control. It does not like to see anyone in the renounced order who talks intimately with women.”

Unless one speaks in this way while instructing and while concluding a subject, there is no benefit for oneself or others. Therefore when the previous *ācāryas* have personally set example and taught others, how will we be benefitted by acting contrary to their instruction? And if one discusses in this way the improper behavior current in a religious sect or amongst the general public, then such talk is not adverse to devotional service. Even if one sometimes talks about a particular

person, there is no fault. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (4.14.29) Maitreya Muni, the foremost devotee, spoke about Veṅa Mahārāja in this way:

ittham viparyaya-matiḥ pāpīyān utpatham gataḥ
anunīyamānas tad-yācñām na cakre bhraṣṭa-maṅgalaḥ

“The great sage Maitreya continued: Thus the King, who became unintelligent due to his sinful life and deviation from the right path, became actually bereft of all good fortune. He could not accept the requests of the great sages, which the sages put before him with great respect, and therefore he was condemned.” Śrī Maitreya Ṛṣi needed to speak about others in this way; he spoke to his audience to instruct them. This is not *prajalpa*. The practicing devotee normally discusses ancient history in the association of devotees. Occasionally they talk about nondevotees. Such talk is always auspicious and favorable to devotional service. But those who talk about others while influenced by devotional impediments like envy, hatred, pride, or distinction are offenders at the feet of Bhaktidevī.

Debate arises only from a desire for conquest. It is extremely abominable. Fault-finding arises only from imposing one's own bad habits on others. This should be given up in all respects. Speaking falsehoods is another form of useless talk. Worldly talk is completely rejected by renounced devotees. Householders may accept some worldly talk that is favorable to devotional service. If topics like archeology, zoology, astrology, and geography are devoid of God consciousness, they should be rejected. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (12.12.49-50) Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has said:

mṛṣā giras tā hy asatīr asat-kathā
na kathyate yad bhagavān adhokṣajāḥ

tad eva satyaṁ tad u haiva maṅgalaṁ
tad eva puṇyaṁ bhagavad-guṇodayam

tad eva ramyaṁ ruciraṁ navam navam
tad eva śaśvan manaso mahotsavam

tad eva śokārṇava-śoṣaṇam nṛṇām
yad uttamaḥ śloka-yaśo 'nugīyate

“Words that do not describe the transcendental Personality of Godhead but instead deal with temporary matters are simply false and useless. Only those words that manifest the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord are actually truthful, auspicious, and pious. Those words describing the glories of the all-famous Personality of Godhead are attractive, relishable, and ever fresh. Indeed, such words are a perpetual festival for the mind, and they dry up the ocean of misery.”

Speech in the form of blaspheming sadhus is the source of great inauspiciousness. If one wants to attain devotion to Lord Hari, then he should make a vow like this: “In this life I will never blaspheme sadhus.” Devotees are sadhus. By blaspheming them, all one's virtues are destroyed. By blaspheming the supremely pure Lord Mahādeva, Prajāpati Dakṣa, the best of ascetics, met with severe inauspiciousness. As stated in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.4.46):

āyuh śriyaṁ yaśo dharmam lokān āśiṣa eva ca

hanti śreyāṁsi sarvāṇi puṁso mahad-atikramaḥ

“My dear King, when a man persecutes great souls, all his benedictions of longevity, beauty, fame, religion, blessings, and promotion to higher planets will be destroyed.”

The conclusion of this essay is this: Whatever *prajalpa* is not favorable for devotional service should be carefully given up by Vaiṣṇavas who are cultivating *bhakti*. Amongst these instructions, the instruction to tolerate the urge to speak mentioned in the first verse—*vāco vegam*—is only a conditional urge. By giving up *prajalpa*, the urge to speak is permanently regulated. In order to pass one's life without sin, one should not speak anything more than whatever little is necessary. One need discuss only whatever is auspicious for oneself and others. If one wants to discuss topics of others, it will simply be useless speech. Therefore in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.28.2) Lord Kṛṣṇa instructed Uddhava as follows:

*para-svabhāva-karmāṇi yaḥ praśamsati nindati
sa āśu bhraśyate svārthād asaty abhiniveśataḥ*

“Whoever indulges in praising or criticizing the qualities and behavior of others will quickly become deviated from his own best interest by his entanglement in illusory dualities.”

Niyamāgraha

Too much attachment to, or too much neglect of, rules and regulations

Niyamas, or rules, are of two kinds—*vidhis*, or prescriptions, and *niṣedhas*, or prohibitions. Whatever is enjoined as one's duty is a prescription. Whatever is enjoined as restricted is a prohibition. Both kinds of rules are auspicious for the living entities.

Conditioned souls are eligible to attain a very exalted position from a very low position. Between these two positions there are many other positions. Each position is a gradual step. Each gradual step is a distinct level of advancement. Each and every gradual step has different prescriptions and prohibitions. Whenever a living entity steps to one level and stays there, he is obliged to follow the prescriptions and prohibitions of that step. By following those enjoined prescriptions and prohibitions, one becomes eligible to attain the next step. If one is unable to attain the next step, he falls down to a lower step. This is called degradation. Attaining the higher step is called advancement.

To properly follow the precepts of one's own level is called “one's prescribed duties” or steadiness in one's own position. Steadiness in one's own position is piety, and deviation from one's position is impiety. There is no other piety and impiety than this. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the following instructions to Uddhava in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.21.2, 7):

*sve sve 'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ
viparyayas tu doṣaḥ syād ubhayor eṣa niścayaḥ*

*deśa-kālādi-bhāvānām vastūnām mama sattama
guṇa-doṣau vidhīyete niyamārtham hi karmaṇām*

“Steadiness in one's own position is declared to be actual piety, whereas deviation

from one's position is considered impiety. In this way the two are definitely ascertained. O saintly Uddhava, in order to restrict materialistic activities, I have established that which is proper and improper among all material things, including time, space, and all physical objects.”

Prescriptions and prohibitions are further divided into two categories—conditional and constitutional. The living entity is pure spirit. The prescriptions and prohibitions in the living entity's constitutional position are constitutional rules. But when the living entity is separated from his transcendental position, he accepts the designations given by the illusory energy and is entangled in this world—these are false designations. These designations are of many varieties, but the constitutional situation is one without second.

In the eternal state of the living entity, *prema* is the only prescription and envy is the only prohibition. This prescription and prohibition is subordinate to the living entity's eternal nature. The living entity imbued with *prema* and devoid of envy is the shelter of eternal *rasa*. Although *rasa* is of five varieties, still they are one undivided spiritual truth. The rules of that position are not to be discussed here. We must know only that this state is the eternal condition of the living entity.

Although in the conditional state the rules are of different types, still all the steps are divided into three principle categories. According to the *Vedas*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, and all the *smṛtis*, three principle divisions are found—*karma*, *jñāna*, and *bhakti*. In each division certain prescriptions and certain prohibitions are enjoined. In the *karma* division, the rules of *varṇāśrama* and the ten supplementary *saṁskāras* as well as regulative prayers are prescribed. Sins and bad habits are prohibited. In the *jñāna* division, *sannyāsa*, renunciation, detachment, and discussing matter and spirit are prescribed. Fruitive activities, forbidden activities, and attachment to sense enjoyment are prohibited. In the *bhakti* division, indifference, performance of activities favorable to devotion, following the prescriptions and prohibitions of the *jñāna* division, and cultivating devotional service with the help of those prescriptions and prohibitions are prescribed. All activities opposed to the Lord, *jñāna*, renunciation, attachment to sense enjoyment, conclusions opposed to devotional service, and giving up action are prohibited.

When the conditioned soul advances by giving up his illicit activities, or low-class character, then he attains the level of *karma-kaṇḍa*. Such a person should remain in *varṇāśrama-dharma* and aspire to attain the level of *jñāna*. This is his duty. He should remain in *varṇāśrama* until he attains detachment from material activities by discussing the difference between matter and spirit and analyzing the nature of false ego, otherwise he becomes sinful. When that detachment is attained, then his higher qualification destroys his attachment to fruitive activities. But if that person still remains inclined to the rules of *karma-kaṇḍa*, then he cannot make advancement.

The duty of one who has attained the level of *jñāna-kaṇḍa* is to remain fixed in knowledge. Until he attains a taste for devotional service, he should remain under the rules of *jñāna-kaṇḍa*. As soon as the qualification for devotional service manifests, he should give up his attachment for *jñāna-kaṇḍa*, otherwise he is guilty of *niyamāgraha* and will not make advancement. As stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.9):

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate

“As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions.” *Śraddhā*, or faith, is the only qualification for *bhakti*. As stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.31):

*tasmān mad-bhakti-yuktasya yogino vai mad-ātmanah
na jñānam na ca vairāgyam prāyaḥ śreyo bhaved iha*

“Therefore, for a devotee engaged in My loving service, with mind fixed on Me, the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation is generally not the means of achieving the highest perfection within this world.”

The temple of *kṛṣṇa-prema* is situated on the highest peak of Goloka Vṛndāvana. In order to reach that peak one has to cross the fourteen planetary systems of *karma-kaṇḍa*, the Virajā-Brahmaloka of the *jñāna-kaṇḍa*, and then rise above Vaikuṅṭha. By gradually giving up attachment to the stages of karma and *jñāna*, one becomes eligible for *bhakti*. After crossing the various stages of *bhakti*, one reaches the temple door of *prema*.

Śraddhā is the only rule for people established on the level of *bhakti*. As *anarthas*, or unwanted habits, are destroyed by the power of devotional service performed under the shelter of sadhu and guru, that *śraddhā* transforms into devotional service with *niṣṭha*, or firm faith. As the *anarthas* are further destroyed, one progresses from the level of *niṣṭha* to *ruci*, or taste; from *ruci* to *āsakti*, or attachment; and from *āsakti* to *bhāva*, or emotion. When *bhāva*, in the form of *rati*, or affection, is mixed with the appropriate ingredients, it becomes *rasa*. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.14.26) it is said:

*yathā yathātmā parimṛjyate 'sau
mat-puṇya-gāthā-śravaṇābhidhānaiḥ*

*tathā tathā paśyati vastu sūkṣmam
cakṣur yathaivāñjana-samprayuktam*

“When a diseased eye is treated with medicinal ointment it gradually recovers its power to see. Similarly, as a conscious living entity cleanses himself of material contamination by hearing and chanting the pious narrations of My glories, he regains his ability to see Me, the Absolute Truth, in My subtle spiritual form.” Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī clarifies the sequence in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* as follows:

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu- saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ*

*athāsaktis tato bhāvas tataḥ premābhyudañcati
sādhakānām ayaṁ premṇaḥ prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ*

“In the beginning one must have a preliminary desire for self-realization. This will bring one to the stage of trying to associate with persons who are spiritually elevated. In the next stage one becomes initiated by an elevated spiritual master, and under his instruction the neophyte devotee begins the process of devotional service. By execution of devotional service under the guidance of the spiritual master, one becomes free from all material attachment, attains steadiness in self-realization, and acquires a taste for hearing about the Absolute Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This taste leads one further forward to attachment for Kṛṣṇa

consciousness, which is matured in *bhāva*, or the preliminary stage of transcendental love of God. Real love for God is called *prema*, the highest perfectional stage of life.”

In the process of *sādhana-bhakti* there are four stages—*śraddhā*, *niṣṭhā*, *ruci*, and *āsakti*. After passing these four stages one comes to the level of *bhāva*, which is the doorstep of *prema*. According to the degree of faith, each level has different rules. As one leaves behind one level and progresses to the next, he should honor the rules of the latter and leave aside those of the former. Those who do not give up the rules of the previous level are bound by those rules like chains that do not allow him to proceed to the next level.

In the process of devotional service, whatever rules are prescribed for each level are all subordinate to one principle rule. That general rule is given in the *Padma Purāṇa* as follows:

smartavyaḥ satataṁ viṣṇur *vismartavyo na jātucit*
sarve vidhi-niṣedhāḥ syur *etayor eva kiṅkarāḥ*

Remembering Kṛṣṇa is the eternal duty. All other prescriptions mentioned in the *śāstras* have arisen from this main prescription. Forgetting Kṛṣṇa is never allowed. All other prohibitions mentioned in the *śāstras* have arisen from this main prohibition. Keeping this main prescription in mind while advancing, the practitioner should give up his attachment for the prescriptions of the previous level and accept the prescriptions of the next level. Otherwise he will be guilty of *niyamāgraha* and weak in reaching the next level. The practitioner of devotional service must always remember this point. In the conclusion of *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* a special instruction is given in this regard:

kṛtyānyetāni tu prāyo *grhiṇām dhaninām satām*
likhitāni na tu tyakta- *parigraha mahātmanām*

“Whatever activities are written in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* are mostly all meant for householders and rich devotees. There are no rules written for the renunciates.” Also in the conclusion of the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* it is stated:

avaśyam tāni sarvāṇi *teṣām tād ṛktva siddhaye*
prāg apekṣyāṇi bhaktir hi *sadācāraika sādhanā*

“Although the rules for renunciates are avoided in this book, still renunciates should follow those rules in order to perfect their position.” The behavior exhibited by the renunciate sadhus is proper behavior in this connection. That alone is to be followed.

The first symptom of one who has attained *śraddhā* is surrender to the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. That surrender is of two types—for the householders and for the renunciates. *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* mentions only those rules that are meant for householders. That is why observances such as Śiva-caturdaśī are given therein. The surrendered renunciate should follow whichever observances are appropriate for renunciates. Both the householder and the renunciate become unalloyed surrender souls while advancing on the path of *sādhana*. Then their rules are only slightly different. At that stage they attain ultimate surrender due to advancement in *sādhana*. It is said in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.18.28), the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (20th *vilāsa*), and the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.36):

*jñāna-niṣṭho virakto vā mad-bhakto vānapekṣakah
sa-liṅgān āśramāms tyaktvā cared avidhi-gocarah*

“A learned transcendentalist dedicated to the cultivation of knowledge and thus detached from external objects, or My devotee who is detached even from desire for liberation—both neglect those duties based on external rituals or paraphernalia. Thus their conduct is beyond the range of rules and regulations.

*ekāntitām gatānāntu śrī-kṛṣṇa-caranābjayoh
bhaktiḥ svataḥ pravartteta tad vighnaiḥ kiṁ vratādibhiḥ*

“When one becomes a pure devotee of the Lord, then devotion is spontaneously established in his heart. What then is the need to observe rituals that simply obstruct one's devotional service?

*na mayy ekānta-bhaktānām guṇa-doṣodbhavā guṇāḥ
sādhūnām sama-cittānām buddheḥ param upeyuṣām*

“Material piety and sin, which arise from the good and evil of this world, cannot exist with My unalloyed devotees, who, being free from material hankering, maintain steady spiritual consciousness in all circumstances. Indeed, such devotees have achieved Me, the Supreme Lord, who am beyond anything that can be conceived by material intelligence.”

In the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* it is stated:

*evam ekāntinām prāyah kīrtanam smaraṇam prabhoḥ
kurvatām parama-prītyā kṛtyam anyan na rocyate*

*vihiteṣv eva nityeṣu pravartante svayam hi te
ityādy ekāntinām bhāti mātmyam likhitam hi tat*

The devotees whose minds are fixed on chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa's glories in pure love have no taste for activities prescribed for lower stages. Although they are not attached or bound to follow the prescribed rules of the scriptures, they sometimes follow out of their own accord. This is nicely explained in the eighth verse of the *Upadeśāmṛta*. These are the glories of the pure devotees; that is, their glories are not diminished by neglecting other's prescribed rules.

The purport is that exalted devotees follow whatever rules of the lower stages they like. The *jñānīs* follow the *varṇāśrama-dharma* of the karmis by their own will, not by rule or obligation. Similarly the devotees, out of their sweet will, also follow the rules of the karmis and *jñānīs* for some purpose. This means that although they are not obliged to follow the prescriptions and prohibitions, they do so on their own accord. The topmost pure devotees are also not considered overly attached to regulations when they follow the rules of karma, *jñāna*, and ordinary *sādhana-bhakti*. Independently they are engaged in the unalloyed devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The practicing devotee who gives up *niyamāgraha* but spontaneously follows the rules achieves auspicious results.

The conclusion is that the practitioner attains a higher level as a result of following the rules prescribed according to his qualification. He should not maintain attachment for the rules of his previous level. Keeping this instruction always in mind, he should always engage in chanting and remembering Lord Kṛṣṇa and thus continue advancing to higher levels.

Jana-saṅga Association with worldly-minded persons

The word *jana* refers to both male and female human beings. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*: *sadho saṅgaḥ svato vare*—“a devotee should associate with devotees who are more advanced.” Practicing devotees are generally superior to karmis and *jñānīs* in all respects. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.28) it is said:

yeṣāṃ tv anta-gataṃ pāpaṃ janānāṃ puṇya-karmaṇāṃ
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ

“Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life and whose sinful actions are completely eradicated are freed from the dualities of delusion, and they engage themselves in My service with determination.” Therefore devotees are naturally pure. There is no possibility for them to commit sin. They are not less intelligent like the karmis and *jñānīs*, because they have taken shelter at the lotus feet of the omniscient Supreme Lord. Faith in the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa is achieved as a result of many lifetimes of pious activities. So there is no doubt that the devotees' activities are pure. From faith, the desire to associate with devotees naturally arises. By associating with devotees, everything is achieved. The glories of *sādhu-saṅga* are mentioned in the *Ādi Purāṇa* as follows:

ye me bhakta-janāḥ pārtha na me bhaktās ca te janāḥ
mad-bhaktānāṃ ca ye bhaktās te me bhakta-tamā matāḥ

“O Partha, those who claim to be My devotees are actually not My devotees, but those who are the devotees of My devotees are actually My devotees.”

Regarding the need to associate with devotees, it is said:

darśana sparśanālāpa sahavāsādibhiḥ kṣaṇāt
bhaktāḥ punanti kṛṣṇasya sākṣād api ca pukkaśam

“Even an outcaste becomes completely pure by seeing, touching, conversing with, or living with Kṛṣṇa's devotee for even a moment.” The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.5.32) states:

naiṣāṃ matis tāvad urukramāṅghriṃ
sprśaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthaḥ

mahīyasāṃ pāda-rajo-'bhiṣekam
niṣkiñcanānāṃ na vṛṇīta yāvat

“Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination.”

The scriptures often state that without associating with the Lord's devotees, Bhaktidevi does not manifest in one's heart. It is most necessary for *sādhakas* to

associate with devotees. Therefore, in this context, the word *jana-saṅga* is understood to mean persons who are devoid of devotion. That is why Śrīla Rūpa Prabhu has included the instruction to give up worldly association as one of the limbs of devotional service. In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.43) it is stated: *saṅga tyāgo vidureṇa bhagavad vimukhair janaiḥ*—“One who desires to attain devotion to Kṛṣṇa should carefully give up the association of worldly people.” That means the devotees should not engage in the activities mentioned in the fourth verse of the *Upadeśāmṛta* with worldly people. Activities like talking with worldly people in the course of one's work are not considered association. But when the same activities are done with affection for someone, then one is considered to be associating with that person.

Every practicing devotee should know the various kinds of worldly people. Therefore we are hereby most unwillingly enumerating these people. These worldly people are of seven kinds: (1) Māyāvādīs and atheists, (2) sense enjoyers, (3) those who fond of the sense enjoyers, (4) women, (5) womanizers, (6) the hypocritically devout, and (7) the ill-behaved foolish outcastes.

The Māyāvādīs do not accept the eternal name, form, qualities, and pastimes of the Supreme Lord. They consider the living entity as a product of *māyā*; therefore in their opinion the living entity has no eternal existence. They do not consider devotional service eternal; rather, they consider it a temporary method to cultivate knowledge. All the Māyāvādī conclusions are opposed to the principles of devotional service. Therefore by associating with Māyāvādīs, one's devotion gradually disappears. Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara gave the following instruction in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 2.94-95):

*buddhi bhraṣṭa haila tomāra gopālera saṅge
māyāvāda śunibāre upajila raṅge*

*vaiṣṇava hañā yebā śārīraka-bhāṣya śune
sevyā-sevaka-bhāva chāḍi' āpanāre `īśvara' māne*

“You have lost your intelligence in the association of Gopāla, and therefore you are eager to hear the Māyāvāda philosophy. When a Vaiṣṇava listens to the *Śārīraka-bhāṣya*, the Māyāvāda commentary upon the *Vedānta-sūtras*, he gives up the Kṛṣṇa conscious attitude that the Lord is the master and the living entity is His servant. Instead, he considers himself the Supreme Lord.”

Those who do not accept the Supreme Lord, who is glorified by the *Vedas*, are called *nāstikas*, or atheists. Their minds have been polluted by false arguments; therefore one's devotion is lost in their association.

Association with sense enjoyers is harmful. Those who are always busy associating with sense enjoyment are filled with blasphemy, envy, and violence. Quarrel, argument, and hankering for sense enjoyment is their life. The more they enjoy, the more their thirst for sense enjoyment increases. The sense enjoyers do not get time to speak or hear topics of Kṛṣṇa. Whether they engage in pious activities or sinful activities, the sense enjoyers always remain far from knowledge of the self. Therefore in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 6.278) Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has said:

*viṣayīra anna khāile malina haya mana
malina mana haile nahe kṛṣṇera smaraṇa*

“When one eats food offered by a materialistic man, one's mind becomes contaminated, and when the mind is contaminated, one is unable to think of Kṛṣṇa properly.” Those persons who externally engage in sensual activities and accept sense objects just to maintain body and soul together but internally engage in their constitutional position as servants of Kṛṣṇa are not counted amongst the sense enjoyers, who are attached the fruits of their activities.

The sense enjoyers and persons fond of sense enjoyers are both worldly-minded. Persons who are fond of sense enjoyers are themselves also sense enjoyers, because they always think of sense enjoyment within their hearts. There are some people who are not themselves sense enjoyers, but they take pleasure in associating with sense enjoyers. Their association should also be renounced, because they will soon become sense enjoyers and bad association themselves. There are two types of sense enjoyers—those who are extremely attached to sense enjoyment and devotees who are attached to sense enjoyment. Associating with those who are extremely attached should be totally rejected. The devotees who are attached to sense enjoyment are also of two types—those who have included the Lord as a part of their sense enjoyment and those who have kept the Lord in the center of their sense enjoyment. Association with the latter type is preferable to association with the former. Although those who engage in sense enjoyment according to religious codes are better than the sinful sense enjoyers, still the practicing devotee should not associate with them until they become devotees. Simply by wearing the dress of a renunciate one does not become a devotee free from sense gratification, because renunciates often collect and save objects of sense enjoyment. On the other hand, many persons resemble sense enjoyers but utilize everything in the worship of Lord Hari in the mood of detachment. Considering all this, the practicing devotee should give up the association of sense enjoyers and those fond of them and engage in devotional service in a secluded place or, if he is fortunate, in the association of genuine devotees.

Do not associate with women. On the other hand, when a woman is engaged in *sādhana-bhakti*, she should not associate with men. Associating with the opposite sex is very inauspicious for the advancing devotee. There are two types of men and women. When a man and woman are married according to religious principles, there is no sin in their touching and talking with each other; rather, this touching and talking is beneficial because of the scriptural sanction. There is, however, no provision for illusory activities other than the execution of reciprocal duties. If they are illusioned by each other and they engage in activities other than prescribed duties, then that is called *strī-saṅga* and *puruṣa-saṅga*, or association with the opposite sex. For those who are engaged in worshiping Kṛṣṇa, such association yields inauspicious results. If either one is guilty of such association, then they become an obstacle for the other party. If the wife is helpful in the discharge of devotional service, then the fault of *strī-saṅga* does not arise. But if the wife is an impediment in the discharge of devotional service, then one should carefully give up her association. We should consider the behavior of the great Vaiṣṇava *ācārya*, Śrīmad Rāmānujācārya², in this connection. When there is no marital relationship and one converses with a woman with evil intentions, then this is *strī-saṅga*. That is sinful and detrimental to devotional service. Considering these points, the practicing devotee should very carefully give up the association of women and persons fond of women. As stated in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (3.31.35):

na tathāsya bhaven mohō bandhaś cānya-prasaṅgataḥ

yoṣit-saṅgād yathā puṁso yathā tat-saṅgi-saṅgataḥ

“The infatuation and bondage which accrue to a man from attachment to any other object is not as complete as that resulting from attachment to a woman or to the fellowship of men who are fond of women.” For a householder devotee, touching and speaking to his wife in the above mentioned manner is not detrimental to devotional service; but for a renunciate there cannot be any type of talking or touching a woman, otherwise his practice of devotional service will be completely spoiled. Association with such a deviated person should be totally rejected.

One should give up the association of *dharmadvajīs*, the hypocritically devout, with special care. Those who accept the external signs of *dharma* but do not actually follow *dharma* are called *dharmadvajīs*. There are two types of *dharmadvajīs*—the hypocrites and the fools, or the cheaters and the cheated. Such hypocrisy in *jñāna-kaṇḍa* and *karma-kaṇḍa* is also condemned. In devotional service this hypocrisy ruins everything. Better associate with sense enjoyers, for in this whole world there is no worse association than the *dharmadvajī*. The deceitful *dharmadvajīs* accept the signs of *dharma* with a desire to cheat the world, and to fulfill their crooked desires they cheat the foolish by helping them in their rascaldom. Some of them become gurus and others become disciples, and by trickery they accumulate wealth, women, false-prestige, and material assets. If one gives up the association of crooked hypocrites, then he can honestly engage in devotional service. Honest worship is the only way to attain Kṛṣṇa's mercy. As stated in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.3.38):

*sa veda dhātuḥ padavīm parasya
duranta-vīryasya rathāṅga-pāṇeḥ*

*yo 'māyayā santatayānuvṛtṭyā
bhajeta tat-pāda-saroja-gandham*

“Only those who render unreserved [without hypocrisy*], uninterrupted, favorable service unto the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who carries the wheel of the chariot in His hand, can know the creator of the universe in His full glory, power, and transcendence.” Again in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (2.7.42) Lord Brahmā tells Nārada:

*yeṣāṁ sa eṣa bhagavān dayayed anantaḥ
sarvātmanāśrita-pado yadi nirvyalīkam*

*te dustarām atitaranti ca deva-māyām
naiṣāṁ mamāham iti dhīḥ śva-śṛgāla-bhakṣye*

“But anyone who is specifically favored by the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, due to unalloyed [without hypocrisy*] surrender unto the service of the Lord, can overcome the insurmountable ocean of illusion and can understand the Lord. But those who are attached to this body, which is meant to be eaten at the end by dogs and jackals, cannot do so.”

Externally exhibiting the symptoms of a Vaiṣṇava while internally remaining a Māyāvādī is actually pseudo-Vaiṣṇavism, or hypocrisy. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 13.93, 109-110) there is a description of Rāmadāsa Viśvāsa, who was externally a great Vaiṣṇava, devoted to Lord Rāmacandra:

*aṣṭa-prahara rāma-nāma japena rātri-dine
sarva tyaji' calilā jagannātha-daraśane*

*rāmadāsa yadi prathama prabhure mililā
mahāprabhu adhika tānre kṛpā nā karilā*

*antare mumukṣu teṅho, vidyā-garvavān
sarva-citta-jñātā prabhu—sarvajña bhagavān*

“Rāmadāsa had renounced everything and was going to see Lord Jagannātha. While traveling, he chanted the holy name of Lord Rāma twenty-four hours a day. When Rāmadāsa Viśvāsa met Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Lord did not show him any special mercy, although this was their first meeting. Within his heart, Rāmadāsa Viśvāsa was an impersonalist who desired to merge into the existence of the Lord, and he was very proud of his learning. Being the omniscient Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu can understand the heart of everyone, and thus He knew all these things.”

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, in his great humility, has stated:

*kāma, krodha chaya jane, lañā phire nānā sthāne,
viṣaya bhuñjāya nānā mate.*

*haiyā māyāra dāsa, kari nānā abhilāsa,
tomāra smaraṇa gela dūre*

*artha-lābha—ei āṣe, kapāta-vaiṣṇava-veṣe,
bhramiyā bulaye ghare ghare.*

“The six enemies, beginning with lust and anger, are taking me here and there to enjoy various forms of sense gratification. Being a servant of Māyā, I have unlimited desires and have therefore forgotten You. Hoping to gain wealth, I wander from house to house in the dress of a pseudo-Vaiṣṇava.”

Unless one gives up the association of this type of *dharmadvajī*, one cannot purely engage in devotional service. Most of the people in the world are of this type. Therefore until one gets the opportunity to associate with a pure devotee, he should pass his life engaged in devotional service in a solitary place.

The worship of Kṛṣṇa is not enhanced by associating with ill-behaved, foolish outcastes. They are naturally attached to eating meat and drinking wine, and they are not situated in *varṇāśrama-dharma*. Their character is always unregulated. By associating with ill-behaved persons, the mind becomes polluted. But if those persons become faithful in devotional service by associating with a Vaiṣṇava and they gradually get a taste for worshipping Kṛṣṇa with a pure heart, then their association is auspicious. Even if they commit abominable actions for some time due to their former nature, still they are sadhus. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.30-31) it is said:

*api cet su-durācāro bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

*kṣipraṁ bhavati dharmātmā śāśvac-chāntim nigacchati
kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*

“Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination. He quickly becomes righteous and attains lasting peace. O son of Kuntī, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.”

The purport is this: If the outcastes attain faith in unalloyed devotional service by some good fortune, then it can be said that they have attained the genuine path. There is no doubt that in a short time they too will become pure and peaceful by following the footsteps of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Ill-behavior, due to one's nature, necessarily remains for some time. Even then, such association cannot be called bad. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.27-29) the symptoms of such persons are described as follows:

<i>jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu</i>	<i>nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu</i>
<i>veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān</i>	<i>parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ</i>
<i>tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ</i>	<i>śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayaḥ</i>
<i>juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān</i>	<i>duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan</i>
<i>proktena bhakti-yogena</i>	<i>bhajato māsakṛṇ muneh</i>
<i>kāmā hṛdayā naśyanti</i>	<i>sarve mayi hṛdi sthite</i>

“Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee remains happy and worships Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities. When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshipping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed.”

The conclusion is that the association of pious and sinful persons who are bereft of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is undesirable. On the other hand, the association of persons who are sinful, yet devoted to the Lord, is desirable. The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.51) quotes the following verse spoken by Mahārṣi Kātyāyana in the *Kātyāyana-saṁhitā*:

<i>varam huta-vaha-jvālā-</i>	<i>pañjarāntar-vyavasthitih</i>
<i>na śauri-cintā-vimukha-</i>	<i>jana-saṁvāsa-vaiśasam</i>

“It is better to accept the miseries of being encaged within bars and surrounded by burning flames than to associate with those bereft of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such association is a very great hardship.”

While practicing devotional service one should carefully understand this subject and act accordingly.

Laulya Ardent longing or greed

The meaning of the word *laulya* is restlessness, greed, and desire. Restlessness is of two kinds—restlessness of the mind and restlessness of the intelligence. The *citta*,

or mind, has the propensity for following the dictates of the senses. When the mind follows the dictates of the senses and becomes absorbed in a particular subject, attachment or aversion arise. Therefore restlessness of the mind is of two types—restlessness due to attachment and restlessness due to aversion. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.67) it is said:

indriyānām hi caratām yan mano 'nuvidhīyate
tad asya harati prajñām vāyur nāvam ivāmbhasi

“As a boat on the water is swept away by a strong wind, even one of the roaming senses on which the mind focuses can carry away a man's intelligence.” Again in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.34) it is said:

indriyasyendriyasyārthe rāga-dveṣau vyavasthitau
tayor na vaśam āgacchet tau hy asya paripanthināu

“There are principles to regulate attachment and aversion pertaining to the senses and their objects. One should not come under the control of such attachment and aversion, because they are stumbling blocks on the path of self-realization.” In order to regulate *lauhya*, in the form of restlessness of the mind, one has to take shelter of goddess Bhaktidevī. The instruction of Bhaktidevī is this: When the cause of the mind's restlessness is sense gratification and this restlessness is the main obstacle in the practice of devotional service, then all sensual activities should be dovetailed in the service of the Lord and the attachment to sense gratification should be transformed into attachment for the Lord. Then the mind becomes fixed in devotional service by taking shelter of that attachment. The eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, and the sense of touch are called knowledge acquiring senses. The hands, the legs, the anus, and so on are the working senses. When the objects of all these senses are associated with in a devotional mood, then the mind becomes fixed on the Lord. Taste, form, smell, touch, and sound—these are the objects of the senses. One has to arouse a mood of devotion in all these objects, and enjoy them, then devotional service is cultivated. Among the objects of the senses, aversion should be applied on any that are unfavorable for devotional service and attachment should be applied on any that are favorable for devotional service. But until the restlessness of the intelligence is vanquished, how will the restlessness of the mind be checked? When the restlessness of the intelligence is vanquished, the mind can regulate attachment and aversion for sense objects by the strength of the intelligence.

The intelligence is that which discriminates between the mind's good and bad propensities. That intelligence is of two types—resolute and many-branched. There is one type of resolute intelligence, and there are unlimited types of many-branched intelligence. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.41):

vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana
bahu-śākhā hy anantās ca buddhayo 'vyavasāyinām

“Those who are on the spiritual path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the intelligence of those who are irresolute is many-branched.” Disturbances such as lust, desire to attain the heavenly planets, increasing activities that produce enjoyment and opulence, and rejection of the spiritual world all arise from the many-branched intelligence of irresolute persons. Therefore in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.44) it is stated:

bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām tayāpahṛta-cetasām
vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ samādhau na vidhīyate

“In the minds of those who are too attached to sense enjoyment and material opulence, and who are bewildered by such things, the resolute determination for devotional service to the Supreme Lord does not take place.” Those whose intelligence is fixed in *samādhi* are transcendently situated and have steady minds. Their symptoms are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.55-56) as follows:

prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthita-prajñas tadocyate

duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-spr̥haḥ
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ sthita-dhīr munir ucyate

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O Pārtha, when a man gives up all varieties of desire for sense gratification, which arise from mental concoction, and when his mind, thus purified, finds satisfaction in the self alone, then he is said to be in pure transcendental consciousness. One who is not disturbed in mind even amidst the threefold miseries or elated when there is happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called a sage of steady mind.” These two verses from the *Gītā* clarify the process of tolerating the urges of speech, mind, and anger as recommended in the first verse of *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*.

Now it should be known that there are two types of intelligence. The propensity to discriminate between good and bad under the dictation of the mind is called mundane intelligence, and the intelligence to discriminate between good and bad under the dictation of the soul is called spiritual intelligence. That is why in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.42) it is said:

indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ
manasas tu parā buddhir yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ

“The working senses are superior to dull matter; mind is higher than the senses, because the senses work under the dictation of the mind's propensities; intelligence is still higher than the mind, for intelligence is the propensity of the soul and therefore the master of the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence.” The intelligence also pervertedly accepts materialism only when under the control of the false ego. When under the control of the pure ego, in the form of identifying oneself as the servant of Kṛṣṇa, the intelligence is always naturally pure. Therefore the *Vedas* establish that the knower of the body is intelligent. That spirit soul is higher than the intelligence, because intelligence is only the soul's propensity.

When a living entity realizes himself as a pure spiritual particle, then his spiritual ego, in the form of identifying himself as the servant of Kṛṣṇa, naturally arises. At that time the intelligence in its pure form rejects materialism and accepts spiritualism. At that time a living entity has no desire other than the service of Kṛṣṇa, and he rejects material desires as insignificant. In this position the living entity is known as *sthita-prajña*, transcendently situated, or *sthita-dhī*, steady-minded. Being empowered by spiritual potency, the intelligence then becomes steady and controls the mind and heart by regulating them. Then the mind, under the direction of the intelligence, controls the senses by regulating them, and a

favorable mood for devotional service manifests in the sense objects (*indriyasya arthe*). This is called *indriya nigraha*, controlling the senses in devotional service. Whatever arrangements are there for controlling the senses in the paths of dry knowledge and renunciation does not properly control the senses. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.59) it is said:

viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ
rasa-varjaṁ raso 'py asya paraṁ dṛṣṭvā nivartate

“The embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment, though the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness.” This is real sense control. One should spiritualize the senses and control them with the mind, and one should spiritualize the mind and control it with the intelligence. By this process, *laulya*, in the form of restlessness of the intelligence and mind, is vanquished. When the intelligence is restless, the mind cannot be fixed. The restless intelligence wanders—sometimes in karma, sometimes in yoga, sometimes in dry renunciation, and sometimes in dry knowledge. To fix the intelligence in *bhakti* by giving up restlessness, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.32-34) prescribes:

yat karmabhir yat tapasā jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yat
yogena dāma-dharmaṇa śreyobhir itarair api

sarvaṁ mad-bhakti-yogena mad-bhakto labhate 'ñjasā
svargāpavargaṁ mad-dhāma kathañcid yadi vāñchati

na kiñcit sādhave dhīrā bhaktā hy ekāntino mama
vāñchanty api mayā dattaṁ kaivalyam apunar-bhavam

“Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties, and all other means of perfecting life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions. Because My devotees possess saintly behavior and deep intelligence, they completely dedicate themselves to Me and do not desire anything besides Me. Indeed, even if I offer them liberation from birth and death, they do not accept it. The devotees naturally enjoy the pleasure of My service.”

Considering all this, the practicing devotee should give up *laulya* in the form of restlessness and attain fixed intelligence in devotional service.

Another meaning of the word *laulya* is greed. If greed is directed to other objects, then how can it be applied in relation with Kṛṣṇa? Greed should be carefully engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa. Greed for material enjoyment should be conquered by the above-mentioned method. That is why it is said that persons who are overcome by lust and greed cannot become as pure through the process of yoga (beginning with *yama*) as they can by serving Kṛṣṇa. As stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.6.36):

yamādibhir yoga-pathaiḥ kāma-lobha-hato muhuḥ
mukunda-sevayā yadvat tathātmāddhā na śāmyati

“It is true that by practicing restraint of the senses by the yoga system one can get

relief from the disturbances of lust and greed, but this is not sufficient to give satisfaction to the soul, for this [satisfaction] is derived from devotional service to the Personality of Godhead;” because *śamo man-niṣṭhatā buddheḥ*—“absorbing the intelligence in Me constitutes mental equilibrium.” (Bhāg. 11.19.36) By developing greed for Kṛṣṇa's service, the Vaiṣṇava's service, and chanting the holy names, there will be no greed for inferior things. One who becomes greedy by seeing the Vrajavāsī's service to Kṛṣṇa is very fortunate. By the mercy of that greed, he attains the qualification for *rāga-bhakti*. One's material greed is vanquished in proportion to the development of greed for *rāgātmikā* service. If one has greed for nice foodstuffs, drinks, sleeping, smoking, and drinking wine, then one's devotion diminishes. Greed for wine, wealth, and women is most contrary to devotional principles. Those who have a desire for attaining pure devotional service should carefully give up such things. Whether for auspicious things or sinful things, greed for anything not related to Kṛṣṇa is most despicable. Greed only in relation to Kṛṣṇa is the cause of all auspiciousness. The greed attained by the *mahājanas* for topics of Kṛṣṇa is mentioned in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.1.19) as follows:

vayaṁ tu na vitṛpyāma uttama-śloka-vikrame
yac-chṛṇvatām rasa-jñānām svādu svādu pade pade

“We never tire of hearing the transcendental pastimes of the Personality of Godhead, who is glorified by hymns and prayers. Those who have developed a taste for transcendental relationships with Him relish hearing of His pastimes at every moment.” Another name for greed in relation to Kṛṣṇa is *ādara*, or respect. We will discuss this in detail later.

Another meaning of *lauḷya* is desire. Desires are of two types—desire for material enjoyment and desire for liberation. Unless one gives up these two types of desires, one can not practice devotional service. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.15):

bhukti-mukti-sprhā yāvat piśācī hṛdi vartate
tāvad bhakti-sukhasyātra katham abhyudayo bhavet

“The material desire to enjoy the material world and the desire to become liberated from material bondage are considered to be two witches, and they haunt one like ghosts. As long as these witches remain within the heart, how can one feel transcendental bliss? As long as these two witches remain in the heart, there is no possibility of enjoying the transcendental bliss of devotional service.”

There are two types of material enjoyments—worldly and heavenly. Wealth, women, children, opulences, kingdom, victory, good food, good sleep, associating with women for sense enjoyment, good birth, and other pleasures are all worldly enjoyments. Going to heaven and drinking nectar there, as well as sense gratification free of old age are all heavenly enjoyments. When the heart is filled with the desire to enjoy, one cannot selflessly worship Kṛṣṇa. Therefore unless the desire for enjoyment is completely uprooted from the heart, one's progress in devotional service will be obstructed. In this regard, there is one thing to be said: If all these material enjoyments are favorable to devotional service, then householders can accept them without sin. In that case all these enjoyments are not called enjoyments, but rather they are means of progress in a devotee's life. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.2.9-10) has stated:

dharmasya hy āpavargyasya nārtho 'rthāyopakalpate
nārthasya dharmaikāntasya kāmo lābhāya hi smṛtaḥ

kāmasya nendriya-prītir lābho jiveta yāvatā
jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā nārtho yaś ceḥa karmabhiḥ

“All occupational engagements are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain. Furthermore, according to sages, one who is engaged in the ultimate occupational service should never use material gain to cultivate sense gratification. Life's desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's works.” Another name of *dharmā*, or occupational service, is *yukta-vairāgya*.

Desire for liberation must be rejected. There are five type of liberation; namely, *sālokya*—living on the same planet; *sārṣṭi*—having the same opulence; *sāmīpya*—to be a personal associate; *sārūpya*—having the same bodily features; and *sāyujya*—oneness. *Sāyujya*, liberation in the form of merging with the Lord, is hated by the practitioner of devotional service. Although *sālokya*, *sārṣṭi*, *sāmīpya*, and *sārūpya* are devoid of the desire for enjoyment, still they are undesirable. As soon as a living entity becomes free from material bondage by the strength of devotion, he immediately attains liberation. That liberation, however, is not the principle fruit of *bhakti*. The pure love for Kṛṣṇa attained by liberated souls is the principle fruit of *sādhana-bhakti*. In this regard, Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya makes the following appropriate statement in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 6.267-269)*:

‘sālokyādi' cāri yadi haya sevā-dvāra
tabu kadācit bhakta kare aṅgikāra

‘sāyujya' śunite bhaktera haya ghrṇā-bhaya
naraka vāñchaye, tabu sāyujya nā laya

brahme, īsvare sāyujya dui ta' prakāra
brahma-sāyujya haite īsvara-sāyujya dhikkāra

“If there is a chance to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a pure devotee sometimes accepts the *sālokya*, *sārūpya*, *sāmīpya*, or *sārṣṭi* forms of liberation, but never *sāyujya*. A pure devotee does not like even to hear about *sāyujya-mukti*, which inspires him with fear and hatred. Indeed, the pure devotee would rather go to hell than merge into the effulgence of the Lord. There are two kinds of *sāyujya-mukti*—merging into the Brahman effulgence and merging into the personal body of the Lord. Merging into the Lord's body is even more abominable than merging into His effulgence.”

The purport is that the liberation of a devotee, in the form of freedom from bondage, is easily attained by the will of Kṛṣṇa. That is why one should not pollute his endeavor for devotional service with desires.

It is the essential duty of the practicing devotee to carefully give up materialistic *laukya*.

Six Qualities That Enhance Bhakti

Utsāha Enthusiasm

In his *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has described *atyāhāra*, *prayāsa*, *prajalpa*, *niyamāgraha*, *jana-saṅga*, and *laulya* as detrimental to devotional service. We have already separately described these six items. Now, in the third *śloka* he mentions the six items favorable for devotional service:

utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt
saṅga-tyāgāt sato vṛtteḥ ṣaḍbhir bhaktiḥ prasidhyati

“There are six principles favorable to the execution of pure devotional service: (1) *utsāha*, being enthusiastic; (2) *niścaya*, endeavoring with confidence; (3) *dhairya*, being patient; (4) *tat-tat-karma-pravartana*, acting according to regulative principles [such as *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam*—hearing, chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa]; (5) *saṅga-tyāga*, abandoning the association of nondevotees; and (6) *sato vṛtteḥ*, or *sādhu-vṛtti*, following in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas*. These six principles undoubtedly assure the complete success of pure devotional service.”

Now we should discuss these six items separately. Therefore first I am speaking about the conclusions regarding *utsāha*.

Without *utsāha*, one becomes negligent in his worship. Negligence is born out of inactivity, apathy, or indifference. Laziness and inertia are called inactivity. When *utsāha* is generated, laziness and inertia cannot remain. The absence of desire to work is inertia. This inertia is opposite to the nature of spirit. If one allows this inertia to remain in his body or heart, then how can he perform devotional service? The state of apathy develops from carelessness. One should practice devotional service without deviation. This is instructed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.23) in the following words:

taṁ vidyād duḥkha-saṁyoga- viyogaṁ yoga-saṁjñitam
sa niścayena yoktavyo yogo 'nirviṇṇa-cetasā

“This indeed is actual freedom from all miseries arising from material contact. One should engage oneself in the practice of yoga with determination and faith and not be deviated from the path.” In his commentary on this verse, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Mahāśaya has said: *ātmanya yogyatva-mananaṁ nirvedas tad rahitena cetasā*—“one becomes indifferent to whatever work he feels unqualified for.” Devotional service should be performed in this mentality. Regarding *bhakti-yoga*, it is said in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.7-8):

nirviṇṇānām jñāna-yogo nyāsinām iha karmasu
teṣv anirviṇṇa-cittānām karma-yogas tu kāminām
yadṛcchayā mat-kathādau jāta-śraddhas tu yaḥ pumān
na nirviṇṇo nāti-sakto bhakti-yogo 'sya siddhi-daḥ

“Among these three paths, *jñāna-yoga*, the path of philosophical speculation, is

recommended for those who are disgusted with material life and are thus detached from ordinary, fruitive activities. Those who are not disgusted with material life, having many desires yet to fulfill, should seek perfection through the path of karma-yoga. If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My glories, such a person, being neither very disgusted with nor attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of *bhakti-yoga*.” The purport is this: For those who have attained indifference for material activities but have not yet realized spiritual activities, what can remain in their hearts besides indifference? For them the undifferentiated *brahma-jñāna* is the topmost achievement. For those who have not attained indifference for material activities due to lack of spiritual realization, there is no way to cleanse the heart other than karma-yoga. Those who have realized spiritual activities and understood that material activities are insignificant attain indifference for all material activities. They accept some material activities as a support for their spiritual awakening, but they have no attachment for such activities. In proportion to the degree that they discuss spiritual topics in devotion, freedom from material association is awakened as an extraneous fruit. The symptoms of a devotee are given in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.27-8) as follows:

<i>jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu</i>	<i>nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu</i>
<i>veda duḥkhātmaḥ kāmān</i>	<i>parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ</i>
<i>tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ</i>	<i>śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayaḥ</i>
<i>juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān</i>	<i>duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan</i>

“Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities.” Karma arises from lust, *jñāna* arises from indifference, and *bhakti* arises from faith in the Supreme Lord. The person who has attained faith is naturally disgusted with material activities. He accepts without attachment only those activities that are favorable for increasing his faith in the Lord. Without the material body one cannot cultivate devotional service. So there is no benefit if one renounces the activities that are needed to maintain the physical body, thinking them to be the source of misery and lust. The fruits of those activities, which are the source of misery for others, are therefore enjoyed by the devotees, who condemn them as insignificant. They worship Kṛṣṇa with devotion and firm faith while enjoying the fruits of their work as they fulfill the necessities of life. Those who enjoy the results of material activities with ardent affection are called attached. Those who neglect the results of karma, but accept only what is favorable to devotional service are called unattached. Although they are unattached to material activity, they work enthusiastically in devotional life. The process of advancement for the practitioner of devotional service is stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.29-30, 35) as follows:

<i>proktena bhakti-yogena</i>	<i>bhajato māsaḥ muneh</i>
<i>kāmā hṛdayyā naśyanti</i>	<i>sarve mayi hṛdi sthite</i>

bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
ksīyante cāśya karmāṇi mayi dr̥ṣṭe 'khilātmani

nairapekṣyaṁ param prāhur niḥśreyasam analpakam
tasmān nirāśiṣo bhaktir nirapekṣasya me bhavet

“When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshiping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed. The knot in the heart is pierced, all misgivings are cut to pieces, and the chain of fruitive actions is terminated when I am seen as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is said that complete detachment is the highest stage of freedom. Therefore, one who has no personal desire and does not pursue personal rewards can achieve loving devotional service unto Me.” The purport is this: It is useless trying independently to destroy ignorance and lust in the heart. But ignorance, lust, fruitive activities, all doubts, and material bondage are destroyed by the mercy of the Lord in the course of cultivating devotional service. The endeavor of karmis and *jñānīs* does not yield such results. Therefore when one becomes neutral by giving up other desires and hopes, he attains pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

We should not lose enthusiasm because we have no strength to destroy the reactions of karma. In the very beginning of devotional service the *sādhaka* must have faith with full enthusiasm. One pure Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* has written that the process of *bhajana-kriya*, devotional practice, is of two types—*niṣṭhitā*, fixed, and *aniṣṭhitā*, flickering. With faith, one should learn devotional service under the merciful direction of a sadhu; and when he attains the stage of firm faith, he engages in *niṣṭhitā*, fixed, devotional service. Until he attains this fixed devotional service, his service remains flickering. In this stage of devotional service there are six symptoms: *utsāha-mayī*, false confidence; *ghana-taralā*, sporadic endeavor; *vyūḍha-vikalpā*, indecision; *viśaya-saṅgarā*, struggle with the senses; *niyamākṣamā*, inability to uphold vows; and *tarāṅga-rangiṇī*, enjoying the facilities offered by *bhakti*.

In *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* carelessness is counted among the offenses against the holy name. In that scripture the word *pramāda* is described as inattentiveness. *Śrī Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi* has further divided this inattentiveness in three ways—apathy, inactivity, and distraction. Until one gets free from these three types of inattentiveness, one cannot perform devotional service at all. Even if one gives up all other *nāmāparādhas*, if he remains inattentive, he can never have attraction for the holy names. If one has enthusiasm in the beginning of devotional service, and that enthusiasm does not become cold, then one will never become apathetic, lazy, or distracted in chanting the holy names. Therefore enthusiasm is the only support for all types of devotional service. By enthusiastically performing devotional service one can very quickly give up *aniṣṭhitā* service and attain *niṣṭhā*. Therefore Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said:

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu- saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ

By the awakening of faith, one becomes eligible for devotional service. When this eligibility is attained, one achieves the association of devotees. By the association of devotees, one is engaged in the execution of devotional service. In the beginning

there is no *niṣṭhā*, or firm faith, in that service because various types of *anarthas* keep crushing the heart. All *anarthas* are vanquished, however, by performing devotional service with enthusiasm. The more *anarthas* are vanquished, the more *niṣṭhā* is awakened.

The word *śraddhā* certainly means faith, but enthusiasm is the life of *śraddhā*. Faith without enthusiasm is meaningless. Many people think they have faith in God, but because they have no enthusiasm, their faith has no meaning. Therefore, due to lack of *sādhu-saṅga*, they do not perform devotional service.

Niścaya Confidence

In his *Upadeśāmṛta*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has instructed the practitioners of devotional service to be confident. Until this confidence is achieved, one will remain doubtful. Doubtful persons never have auspiciousness. For how will those who are doubtful at heart have faith in unalloyed devotional service? The *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.40) says:

ajñāś cāśraddadhānaś ca samśayātmā vinaśyati
nāyam loko 'sti na paro na sukhaṁ samśayātmanaḥ

“But ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness; they fall down. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next.” One who has faith is certainly without doubts, because the word faith means firm conviction. As long as doubts are there, firm conviction cannot remain in the heart. Therefore faithful living entities are always doubtless. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has ordered all Vaiṣṇavas to first understand three truths—*sambandha*, *abhidheya*, and *prayojana*. There are ten principle subjects in these three truths. The first is that Vedic literatures are the only authority. In order to ascertain the truth, one must accept authority. There are nine realities, which can be known only through Vedic authority. Different scriptures have defined different authorities. Some say *pratyakṣa*, or direct understanding, some say *anumāna*, or hypothetical understanding, and some say *upamāna*, or analogies, are authorities. And others include other subjects as authorities. All other authorities, however, are considered auxiliary authorities by the Vaiṣṇava literatures propounded by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Therefore the self-perfect authority received through the disciplic succession is the only principle authority to be accepted. All the natures that exist in this world are divided into two categories—some are inconceivable and some are conceivable. The material natures are conceivable because they automatically awaken in the course of thinking. Spiritual nature is inconceivable because it is not perceivable by people's poor fund of knowledge. Inconceivable natures cannot be known without self-realization. Therefore there is no entrance into inconceivable subjects for authorities like *pratyakṣa*, which are included in the category of argument. That is why Śrī *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (as quoted from the *Mahābhārata*, *Udyoga-parva*) says:

acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā na tāṁs tarkeṇa yojayet
prakṛtibhyaḥ param yac ca tad acintyasya lakṣaṇam

“The state of *acintya* cannot be ascertained by argument. It is that which is beyond the twenty-four elements of material nature.” There is no entrance for *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* in that state. In order to know the inconceivable nature, self-realization is the only means. Self-realization is almost impossible for ordinary people. Seeing people's terrible madness, the most merciful Supreme Lord manifested the Vedic literatures. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.122, 124, 125) Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said:

māyā-mugdha jīvera nāhi svataḥ kṛṣṇa-jñāna
jīvere kṛpāya kailā kṛṣṇa veda-purāna

veda-śāstra kahe—`sambandha' `abhidheya' `prayojana'
`kṛṣṇa'—prāpya sambandha, `bhakti'—prāptyera sādhana

abhidheya-nāma `bhakti' `prema'—prayojana
puruṣārtha-śiromaṇi prema mahā-dhana

“The conditioned soul cannot revive his Kṛṣṇa consciousness by his own effort. But out of causeless mercy, Lord Kṛṣṇa compiled the Vedic literature and its supplements, the *Purāṇas*. The Vedic literatures give information about the living entity's eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, which is called *sambandha*. The living entity's understanding of this relationship and acting accordingly is called *abhidheya*. Returning home, back to Godhead, is the ultimate goal of life and is called *prayojana*. Devotional service, or sense activity for the satisfaction of the Lord, is called *abhidheya* because it can develop one's original love of Godhead, which is the goal of life. This goal is the living entity's topmost interest and greatest wealth. Thus one attains the platform of transcendental loving service unto the Lord.”

To know the inconceivable nature, the Vedic authority alone should be accepted. There is one other consideration in this regard. The Vedic knowledge received through the *guru-paramparā* is called *āmnāya*. There are so many subjects in the *Vedas*, and there are various instructions for different qualifications. Among all qualifications, the qualification for devotional life is the topmost. By the strength of their devotional service, the previous *mahājanas* have awakened to self-realization and thereby separately written instructions regarding the qualifications for devotional service as mentioned in the *Vedas*. Therefore the Vedic statements ascertained by the previous *mahājanas* as relating to the qualifications for devotion are all called *āmnāya*, and it is necessary to learn them. It is impossible to enter into the inconceivable nature without receiving the full mercy of the spiritual master. The instruction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in this regard is given in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.127-136):

ihāte dr̥ṣṭānta—yaiche daridrera ghare
`sarvajña' āsi' duḥkha dekhi' puchaye tāhāre

“The following example may be given. Once a learned astrologer came to the house of a poor man and, seeing his distressed condition, questioned him.

tumi kene duḥkhī, tomāra āche pitṛ-dhana
tomāre nā kahila, anyatra chāḍila jīvana

“The astrologer asked: Why are you unhappy? Your father was very wealthy, but

he did not disclose his wealth to you because he died elsewhere.

*sarvajñera vākye kare dhanera uddeśe
aiche veda-purāṇa jīve `kṛṣṇa' upadeśe*

“Just as the words of the astrologer Sarvajña gave news of the poor man's treasure, Vedic literatures advise one about Kṛṣṇa consciousness when one is inquisitive to know why he is in a distressed material condition.

*sarvajñera vākye mūla-dhana anubandha
sarva-śāstre upadeśe, `śrī-kṛṣṇa'—sambandha*

“By the words of the astrologer, the poor man's connection with the treasure was established. Similarly, Vedic literature advises us that our real connection is with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

*bāpera dhana āche—jñāne dhana nāhi pāya
tabe sarvajña kahe tāre prāptira upāya*

“Although being assured of his father's treasure, the poor man cannot acquire this treasure by such knowledge alone. Therefore the astrologer had to inform him of the means whereby he could actually find the treasure.

*ei sthāne āche dhana—yadi dakṣiṇe khudibe
`bhīmarula-barul' uṭhibe, dhana nā pāibe*

“The astrologer said: The treasure is in this place, but if you dig toward the southern side, the wasps and drones will rise, and you will not get your treasure.

*`paścime' khudibe, tāhā `yakṣa' eka haya
se vighna karibe,—dhane hāta nā paḍaya*

“If you dig on the western side, there is a ghost who will create such a disturbance that your hands will not even touch the treasure.

*`uttare' khudile āche kṛṣṇa `ajagare'
dhana nāhi pābe, khudite gilibe sabāre*

“If you dig on the northern side, there is a big black snake that will devour you if you attempt to dig up the treasure.

*pūrva-dike tāte māṭī alpa khudite
dhanera jhāri paḍibeka tomāra hātete*

“However, if you dig up a small quantity of dirt on the eastern side, your hands will immediately touch the pot of treasure.

*aiche śāstra kahe,—karma, jñāna, yoga tyaji'
`bhaktye' kṛṣṇa vaśa haya, bhaktye tānre bhaji*

“Revealed scriptures conclude that one should give up fruitive activity, speculative knowledge, and the mystic yoga system and instead take to devotional service, by which Kṛṣṇa can be fully satisfied.”

When a person who desires spiritual perfection hears the conclusions regarding the soul from the spiritual master, then his heart becomes pure and he proceeds towards the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. *Āmnāya* is the only authority regarding the goal of life. One should consider the other nine realities through this authority, and this understanding manifests in the pure heart on the strength of *āmnāya*. This is called

self-realization, and this is the basis of life's goal.

Regarding the first reality, the *āmnāya* says the Supreme Brahman, Śrī Hari, is the only worshipable Lord. His impersonal conception is called Brahman, which is nothing but His bodily effulgence. That Supreme Lord Hari in one of His expansions becomes the Supersoul or controller who creates, maintains, and destroys the universes. Lord Hari is none other than Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul is none other than Viṣṇu, and His bodily effulgence is none other than Brahman. By discussing the truth about the omni-potent Lord Hari, all one's doubts regarding the Supreme Lord are cleared. Until these doubts are cleared, one cultivates knowledge by discussing impersonal Brahman as opposite to material knowledge. Again, in order to understand the Supersoul, the expansion of the Lord, *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* is conceived. Only when one is freed from all doubts does he attain unflinching devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

According to the knowledge of *āmnāya*, the second reality is considered as follows: The Supreme Lord Hari is naturally full of inconceivable potencies. Through one of His potencies He is manifested as indistinct Brahman. This is His impersonal potency. Again, through His unlimited potencies, including Brahman and Paramātmā, He manifests His supremacy as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although the impersonal and personal potencies are contained in Him, the personal potencies are predominant. As stated in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*:

*parāsya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*

“His potencies are multifarious, and thus His deeds are automatically performed as a natural sequence.” The spiritual potencies known as *sandhinī*, *samvit*, and *hlādinī*—the Lord's potencies of eternal existence, cognizance, and bliss—are known by the pure devotees.

About the third reality, the *āmnāya* says that the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is full of spiritual *rasas*, or mellows. By the power of those *rasas*, both the spiritual and material worlds become maddened. That is the constitution of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa has said: “I am the source of Brahman.” Due to the power of those supreme *rasas* there are unlimited varieties in both the spiritual and material worlds. The *rasa* in the spiritual world is pure; the *rasa* of this material world is His shadow. Yet by the Lord's inconceivable potency the unlimited *rasas* of the spiritual world have been manifested in the Vṛndāvana pastimes of this world. The pure spirit soul is eligible for spiritual *rasa*. To attain that supreme *rasa* is the living entity's *dharma*, or duty. A living entity attains that on the strength of his devotional service. Attaining the Supreme Brahman is dry, or devoid of *rasa*. That is never to be strived for. There is no manifestation of *rasa* in the realization of Paramātmā. Only devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is full of *rasa*.

While considering the fourth reality, the *āmnāya* says that the living entities are minute particles of the spiritual sun, Kṛṣṇa, and they are innumerable. As the spiritual world is manifested by Kṛṣṇa's *cit*, or spiritual, potency and as the material world is manifested by the inferior illusory energy, the living entities are similarly manifested by a portion of the spiritual energy. Kṛṣṇa's spiritual form has all qualities in full, and those qualities are naturally present in the living entities in minute quantity. The independent nature of Kṛṣṇa is found insignificantly in the living entities. For this reason the living entities claim to be independent. As a result, all living entities have developed different propensities. By one propensity

the living entity searches for his own happiness, and by another propensity he searches for Kṛṣṇa's happiness. Thus living entities are divided into two groups—those searching for their own happiness and those searching for Kṛṣṇa's happiness. Those who search for Kṛṣṇa's happiness are called *nitya-mukta*, and those who search for their own happiness are called *nitya-baddha*. In this regard, all inconceivable natures are under the subordination of spiritual time. The time factor of the spiritual nature is a state of eternal present. But in the inferior illusory energy there are three states of existence—past, present, and future. So whatever considerations arise in this regard, if related with the spiritual time factor, then no doubts will remain; but if seen otherwise, then doubts will remain. Why did a pure spirit soul search for his own happiness? If one puts forward such a question, then doubts arising from the material time factor will manifest. If one can give up such doubts then he can perform devotional service, otherwise there will only be a series of arguments. If arguments are related to the inconceivable nature, then *anarthas* arise.

The teachings of *āmnāya* regarding the fifth reality is this: The living entities who are searching for their own happiness accept Māyā, who is situated nearby, and thus enjoy happiness and distress under the grip of material time. Karma is nothing but a blind wheel created by Māyā. Those who have not contacted Māyā have no connection with karma. The living entities who are searching for their own pleasure receive from the wheel of Māyā gross and subtle bodies as a means to enjoy. This blind wheel is found in unlimited forms, but just as it was easy for a living entity to enter, it will be easy to leave at the time of liberation.

The living entities who are under the blind wheel of Māyā are called *nitya-baddha*. In this regard, the word *nitya* is applied in regard to material time. When by the touch of spiritual substance the spiritual time factor is awakened, then their conditioned nature is seen as temporary. By the mercy of sadhus, *mahājanas*, and Kṛṣṇa, and by the strength of many lifetimes of pious activities in devotional service, the conditioned soul achieves auspiciousness. As stated in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.45) and the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.51.53):

*kona bhāgye kāro saṁsāra kṣayonmukha haya
sādhu-saṅge tabe kṛṣṇe rati upajaya*

*bhavāpavargo bhramato yadā bhavej
janasya tarhy acyuta sat-samāgamah*

*sat-saṅgamo yarhi tadaiva sad-gatau
parāvareṣe tvayi jāyate ratiḥ*

“By good fortune, one becomes eligible to cross the ocean of nescience, and when one's term of material existence decreases, one may get an opportunity to associate with pure devotees. By such association, one's attraction to Kṛṣṇa is awakened. O my Lord! O infallible Supreme Person! When a person wandering throughout the universes becomes eligible for liberation from material existence, he gets an opportunity to associate with devotees. When he associates with devotees, his attraction for You is awakened. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the highest goal of the supreme devotees and the Lord of the universe.” By the association of sadhus, material distress is vanquished; by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, one attains firm faith. Then by the strength of his devotional service and Kṛṣṇa's

mercy, a living entity cuts the bondage of Māyā and attains Kṛṣṇa's service. By the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, the *baddha-mukta-jīvas* (those who achieve freedom from bondage) easily attain *sālokya*, the abode of Kṛṣṇa, with those who have never entered into Māyā because of searching for Kṛṣṇa's happiness.

The conclusion of *āmnāya* regarding the sixth reality is this: Lord Kṛṣṇa and all other things are connected by a relationship of *acintya bhedābheda*, inconceivably simultaneously one and different. That is why the *Vedas* have many statements supporting oneness and many supporting difference. In the conclusions of those ignorant of the truth, only a portion of the *Vedas* are accepted. In the conclusions of the knowers of the truth, the purport of all the *Vedas* is accepted. Those who have a thirst for worshiping the Lord learn from the teachings of *āmnāya* that Lord Kṛṣṇa is all-pervading and one without a second. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth. That Absolute Truth possesses all energies. Although the living entities and the material world are manifested by His energies, still He remains without a second. The ingredients are constitutionally nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa; but in the material creation, everything other than Kṛṣṇa is a transformation of His energy and therefore eternally separate from Him. This eternal oneness and difference is naturally inconceivable because it is beyond the range of the living entity's material intelligence. When the living entity's spiritual intelligence is awakened, pure knowledge of the inconceivable oneness and difference is aroused. Keeping firm faith in the statements of *āmnāya*, by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa the devotees can clearly see the truth of the inconceivable oneness and difference. If we use material consideration to understand this, it becomes theoretical. When one achieves knowledge of these seven realities through self-realization by the strength of *āmnāya*, then it may be said that one has *sambandha-jñāna*, knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord. In reply to Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's questions, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has elaborately spoken on the science of one's relationship with the Lord. As given in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.102):

*ke āmi, kene āmāya jāre tāpa-traya
ihā nāhi jāni, kemane hita haya*

“Who am I? Why do the threefold miseries always give me trouble? If I do not know this, how can I be benefited?” Those persons who want the greatest benefit, in the form of achieving devotion to Kṛṣṇa, should all ask these questions to their spiritual master. By hearing the proper answers to these questions from the mouth of one's guru, all one's doubts will be cleared and firm faith will awaken. Do not give up deliberation as useless. As stated in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi* 2.117):

*siddhānta baliyā citte nā kara alasa
ihā ha-ite kṛṣṇe lāge sudṛḍha mānasa*

“A sincere student should not neglect the discussion of such conclusions, considering them controversial, for such discussions strengthen the mind. Thus one's mind becomes attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Now see, among ten realities, the first eight are related with the authority and one's relationship with the Lord. One will receive all information from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's answer to Sanātana Gosvāmī.

Regarding authority, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's statement is given in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.124):

veda-sāstra kahe—`sambandha' `abhidheya' `prayojana'

“The Vedic literatures give information about *sambandha*, the conditioned soul's relationship with Kṛṣṇa, *abhidheya*, the regulated activities of the conditioned soul for reviving that relationship, and *prayojana*, the ultimate goal of life.”

Regarding the second basic truth, Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.152, 155, 157):

*kṛṣṇera svarūpa-vicāra śuna, sanātana
advaya-jñāna-tattva, vraje vrajendra-nandana*

*svayaṁ bhagavān kṛṣṇa, `govinda' para nāma
sarvaiśvarya-pūrṇa yānra goloka—nitya-dhāma*

*jñāna, yoga, bhakti,—tina sādhanera vaśe
brahma, ātmā, bhagavān—trividha prakāśe*

“O Sanātana, please hear about the eternal form of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He is the Absolute Truth, devoid of duality, but present in Vṛndāvana as the son of Nanda Mahārāja. The original Supreme Personality of Godhead is Kṛṣṇa. His original name is Govinda. He is full of all opulences, and His eternal abode is known as Goloka Vṛndāvana. There are three kinds of spiritual processes for understanding the Absolute Truth—the processes of speculative knowledge, mystic yoga, and *bhakti-yoga*. According to these three processes, the Absolute Truth is manifested as Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān.”

Regarding Kṛṣṇa's energies, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.111):

*kṛṣṇera svābhāvika tina-śakti-pariṇati
cic-chakti, jīva-śakti, āra māyā-śakti*

“Lord Kṛṣṇa naturally has three energetic transformations, and these are known as the spiritual potency, the living entity potency, and the illusory potency.” Kṛṣṇa is full of *rasa*. As explained by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.153):

*sarva-ādi, sarva-amśī, kiśora-śekhara
cid-ānanda-deha, sarvāśraya, sarveśvara*

“Kṛṣṇa is the original source of everything and the sum total of everything. He appears as the supreme youth, and His whole body is composed of spiritual bliss. He is the shelter of everything and master of everyone.”

The instruction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu regarding the constitutional position of the living entity is given in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.108-109):

*jīvera `svarūpa'—haya kṛṣṇera `nitya-dāsa'
sūryāmśa-kiraṇa, yaiche agni-jvālā-caya*

“The living entity's constitutional position is to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. He is like a molecular particle of sunshine or fire.”

Regarding conditioned living entities, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gives the following description in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.10, 20.117):

*sei vibhinnāmśa jīva—dui ta' prakāra
eka—`nitya-mukta', eka—`nitya-saṁsāra'*

*kṛṣṇa bhuli' sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha
ataeva māyā tāre deya saṁsāra-duḥkha*

“The living entities [jīvas] are divided into two categories. Some are eternally liberated, and others are eternally conditioned. Forgetting Kṛṣṇa, the living entity has been attracted by the external feature from time immemorial. Therefore the illusory energy [māyā] gives him all kinds of misery in his material existence.” Concerning the liberated living entities, the Lord says in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.11):

*`nitya-mukta'—nitya kṛṣṇa-carāṇe unmukha
`kṛṣṇa-pāriṣada' nāma, bhuñje sevā-sukha*

“Those who are eternally liberated are always awake to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and they render transcendental loving service at the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. They are to be considered eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa, and they are eternally enjoying the transcendental bliss of serving Kṛṣṇa.”

Regarding simultaneous oneness and difference, the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.108) says:

kṛṣṇera `taṭasthā-śakti' bhedābheda-prakāśa

“The living entity is the marginal energy of Kṛṣṇa and a manifestation simultaneously one and different from the Lord.”

When the living entities' relationship with the Lord is revived by the association of *āmnāya*, then *abhidheya* is understood. Devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is that *abhidheya*. The purport is that whatever the scriptures specify as one's prime duty is called *abhidheya*. In this regard Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu says in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.17-18):

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti haya abhidheya-pradhāna
bhakti-mukha-nirīkṣaka karma-yoga-jñāna*

*ei saba sādhanera ati tuccha bala
kṛṣṇa-bhakti vinā tāhā dite nāre phala*

“Devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is the chief function of the living entity. There are different methods for the liberation of the conditioned soul—karma, *jñāna*, yoga, and *bhakti*—but all are dependent on *bhakti*. But for devotional service, all other methods for spiritual self-realization are weak and insignificant. Unless one comes to the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, *jñāna* and yoga cannot give the desired results.”

Sādhana-bhakti is called *abhidheya*. That *sādhana-bhakti* is divided into two—*vaidhi* and *rāgānugā*. *Vaidhi-sādhana-bhakti* is of many varieties. In some places sixty-four limbs are given, and in some places nine limbs are given. The preaching of ninefold devotional service is given in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.5.23):

*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam*

“Prahāda Mahārāja said: Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy

name, form, qualities, paraphernalia, and pastimes of Lord Viṣṇu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind, and words) these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service.”

When a conditioned living entity engages in service at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa with his mind, body, and words, that is called *bhakti*. The differences in *bhakti* from karma and *jñāna* are very subtle. The limbs of *bhakti* and karma often appear similar. When those limbs are connected with separate desires, they turn into limbs of karma. When those limbs are connected with dry thoughts of Brahman, they turn into limbs of *jñāna*. In some limbs, neither karma or *jñāna* are involved. The fruits of action that lead one to the service of Kṛṣṇa alone are called limbs of *bhakti*. The fruits of action that lead to one's own enjoyment are called karma. The activities that lead to merging with the Lord are called impersonal *jñāna*. Therefore Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given the symptoms of *bhakti* in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.9) as follows:

anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu- śīlanam bhaktir uttamā

“One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.”

To perform the limbs of devotional service according to the dictation of *vidhi*, or prescribed rules, is called *vaidhi-sādhana-bhakti*. The service performed out of spontaneous attachment to Kṛṣṇa is called *rāga-bhakti*. The devotion of the Vrajavāsīs is called *rāgātmikā*, and imitation of their devotional service is called *rāgānugā-bhakti*. *Vaidhi-bhakti* starts from *śraddhā* and proceeds up to *rati*, when it becomes one with *rāgānugā-bhakti*. *Rāgānugā-bhakti* is always forceful. This is the ninth principle.

According to the statements of *āmnāya*, the tenth principle is that *prema* is the *prayojana*, or supreme goal. The stages from *sādhana-bhakti* up to the attainment of *prema* are described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 23.9-13) by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as follows:

kona bhāgye kona jīvera `śraddhā' yadi haya
tabe sei jīva `sādhu-saṅga' ye karaya

“If, by good fortune, a living entity develops faith in Kṛṣṇa, he begins to associate with devotees.

sādhu-saṅga haite haya `śravaṇa-kīrtana'
sādhana-bhaktye haya `sarvānārtha-nivartana'

“When one is encouraged in devotional service by the association of devotees, one becomes free from all unwanted contamination by following the regulative principles and chanting and hearing.

anārtha-nivṛtti haile bhaktye `niṣṭhā' haya
niṣṭhā haite śravaṇādye `ruci' upajaya

“When one is freed from all unwanted contamination, he advances with firm faith.

When firm faith in devotional service awakens, a taste for hearing and chanting also awakens.

*ruci haite bhaktye haya `āsakti' pracura
āsakti haite citte janme kṛṣṇe prīty-ānkura*

“After taste is awakened, a deep attachment arises, and from that attachment the seed of love for Kṛṣṇa grows in the heart.

*sei `bhāva' gāḍha haile dhare `prema'-nāma
sei premā—`prayojana' sarvānanda-dhāma*

“When that ecstatic emotional stage intensifies, it is called love of Godhead. Such love is life's ultimate goal and the reservoir of all pleasure.”

Those who have doubts in these ten principle teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are not qualified for devotional service. When doubts arise, one's devotional service becomes corrupted, desires are polluted, unwanted results are achieved, and thus everything is ruined. Therefore those who have a desire for pure devotional service should perform devotional service with firm confidence.

Dhairya Patience

For the practitioner of devotional service, *dhairya*, patience, is extremely necessary. Those who possess the quality of *dhairya* are called *dhīra*, sober. Due to lack of this quality, men become restless. Those who are impatient cannot do any work. By the quality of *dhairya*, a practitioner controls first himself and then the whole world. In the first verse of *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* the symptoms of *dhairya* are explained:

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam*

*etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*

“A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger, and the urges of the tongue, belly, and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.”

There are six types of urges: namely, the urges of speech, mind, anger, belly, tongue, and genitals. With a desire to speak more, a person becomes talkative. If speech is not regulated, then enmity arises from talking about others. To speak uselessly is the business of a fool; but out of a desire to unnecessarily engage in speech the materialists always waste time and face so many distresses. Pious people observe *mauna-vrata*, or silence, in order to get rid of this disturbance. That is why the ṛṣis have made provisions for observing various vows like *mauna-vrata*. The practitioners of devotional service should not speak unnecessarily. If you do have to speak unnecessarily, better to keep quiet. Besides topics regarding Kṛṣṇa, all other topics are unnecessary. But to speak about the subjects favorable to devotional service is not unnecessary. Therefore devotees should speak only on topics about Lord Hari or those favorable to such topics. All other topics will be

counted in the category of the urge to speak. One who is able to control the urge to speak is a sober person.

It is the duty of a sober person to tolerate the urge of the mind. Until one is habituated to control the urge of the mind, how can one perform devotional service with attention? A materialist sits in the chariot of the mind and never gets relief from its various urges, except during sleep. Even during sleep many thoughts such as good and bad dreams come. In order to regulate the urges of the mind, ṛṣis have propounded *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* and *rāja-yoga*. But the Lord's prescription is that one should regulate the mind from the inferior tastes by giving it a higher taste. Those who are on the path of devotional service can easily regulate the mind. The mind cannot remain without urges. If urged towards spiritual subjects, the mind is properly engaged and it will not hanker for insignificant subjects. Many people think that without *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* there is no alternative to regulate the mind. But Patañjali Muni has accepted that just as *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* regulates the mind, *bhakti-yoga* can also. Meditation on the Supreme Lord as propounded by Patañjali is not pure devotional service, rather it is *sakāma-bhakti*, or motivated. If devotional service is performed for the purpose of regulating the mind, then it is certainly not devoid of material desires. Favorable cultivation of devotional service in relationship to Kṛṣṇa is the real meaning of pure *bhakti*. Therefore whenever pure devotional service is performed, joyfulness of the mind automatically arises from amongst extraneous fruits. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.1.32) states: *tasmāt kenāpy upāyena manaḥ kṛṣṇe niveśayet*—“Somehow or other, one must consider the form of Kṛṣṇa very seriously.” If one follows this instruction, then the mind will be engaged at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and it will not easily wander into other subjects. For the practitioner, the urge of the mind is regulated by pure cultivation of favorable devotional service in relationship to Kṛṣṇa. By carefully meditating on this subject, one can know the inherent differences between yoga and *bhakti*. To restrain the urge of anger is compulsory for those who are thirsty for devotional service. Anger arises when a man's lust is unfulfilled. When one is angry the result gradually leads one to ruination. It is said in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 19.149): *kṛṣṇa-bhakta—niṣkāma, ataeva `śānta'*—“Because a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is desireless, he is peaceful.” No insignificant lust can remain in the heart of one who relishes pure devotional service. Therefore there is no possibility of anger arising in his mind. Those whose devotional service is motivated cannot conquer anger. It is not possible to conquer anger by intelligence alone. In a very short time attachment for sense enjoyment overcomes the function of the intelligence and gives anger a place in its kingdom. It is seen in the song of the Avanti *brāhmaṇa* from the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.23.33-35, 37, 40) that he was able to quickly control anger.

taṁ vai pravayasam bhikṣum avadhūtam asaj-janāḥ
dr̥ṣṭvā paryabhavan bhadra bahvībhiḥ paribhūtibhiḥ

“O kind Uddhava, seeing him as an old, dirty beggar, rowdy persons would dishonor him with many insults.

kecit tri-veṇum jagṛhur eke pātram kamaṇḍalum
pīṭham caike 'kṣa-sūtram ca kanthām cīrāṇi kecana
pradāya ca punas tāni darśitāny ādadur muneḥ

“Some of these persons would take away his *sannyāsī* rod, and some the waterpot

which he was using as a begging bowl. Some took his deerskin seat, some his chanting beads, and some would steal his torn, ragged clothing. Displaying these things before him, they would pretend to offer them back but would then hide them again.

*annam ca bhaikṣya-sampannam bhuñjānasya sarit-taṭe
mūtrayanti ca pāpiṣṭhāḥ ṣṭhīvanty asya ca mūrdhani*

“When he was sitting on the bank of a river about to partake of the food that he had collected by his begging, such sinful rascals would come and pass urine on it, and they would dare to spit on his head.

*kṣipanty eke 'vajānanta eṣa dharmā-dhvajaḥ śaṭhaḥ
kṣīṇa-vitta imām vṛttim agrahīt sva-janojjhitaḥ*

“They would criticize and insult him, saying: This man is just a hypocrite and a cheat. He makes a business of religion simply because he lost all his wealth and his family threw him out.

*evam sa bhautikaṁ duḥkham daivikaṁ daihikaṁ ca yat
bhoktavyam ātmano diṣṭam prāptam prāptam abudhyata*

“The *brāhmaṇa* understood that all his suffering—from other living beings, from the higher forces of nature, and from his own body—was unavoidable, being allotted him by Providence.”

That Avanti mendicant then spoke the following verse in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.23.57):

*etām sa āsthāya parātma-niṣṭhām
adhyāsitaṁ pūrvatamair mahadbhiḥ*

*ahaṁ tariṣyāmi duranta-pāram
tamo mukundāṅghri-niṣevayaiva*

“I shall cross over the insurmountable ocean of nescience by being firmly fixed in the service of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. This was approved by the previous *ācāryas*, who were fixed in firm devotion to the Lord, Paramātmā, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

This *parātma-niṣṭā*, being firmly fixed in the service of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, is sometimes followed by householders like Janaka and sometimes by *sannyāsīs* like Sanaka and Sanātana. In both circumstances the *parātma-niṣṭā* is the same.

Without this *parātma-niṣṭā* one cannot cross the insurmountable ocean of nescience. Service to Lord Mukunda is the only shelter; one will be delivered by accepting that. We can clearly see from this song of the Avanti *brāhmaṇa* that it is impossible to cross the material ocean by the process of yoga. By unflinching devotion to Kṛṣṇa, everything is achieved. One who can control the urges of speech, mind, and anger by devotional service is called *dhīra*.

It is everyone's duty to subdue the urge of the tongue. Materialistic persons are always busy trying to enjoy the six kinds of tastes by chewing, sucking, and so on. “Today I will enjoy spiced rice with non-veg, today I will endeavor for *kitri*, today I will enjoy the finest drinks.” Hankering like this, the materialist always wanders. The more the tongue eats, the more its hankering increases. For those who wander for the pleasure of the tongue, attaining Kṛṣṇa is very difficult. Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu has said in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 6.225-227):

vairāgī hañā kare jihvāra lālasa
paramārtha yāya, āra haya rasera vaśa

vairāgīra kṛtya—sadā nāma-saṅkīrtana
śāka-patra-phala-mūle udara-bharaṇa

jihvāra lālase yei iti-uti dhāya
śīsnodara-parāyaṇa kṛṣṇa nāhi pāya

“If a renunciate is eager for his tongue to taste different foods, his spiritual life will be lost, and he will be subservient to the tastes of his tongue. The duty of a person in the renounced order is to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra always. He should satisfy his belly with whatever vegetables, leaves, fruits, and roots are available. One who is subservient to the tongue and who thus goes here and there, devoted to the genitals and the belly, cannot attain Kṛṣṇa.”

One should fill his belly with whatever is easily available. By offering Kṛṣṇa foods in the mode of goodness and honoring them as *prasāda*, the tongue is satisfied and service to Kṛṣṇa is cultivated. If palatable *prasāda* is easily available, then the tongue's greed will gradually be controlled rather than increased.

The urge of the belly is a disturbance. The requirement of the stomach is to eat for the maintenance of the life and mitigation of hunger. Those who are thirsty for devotional service should maintain their life by moderate eating. Those who endeavor to overeat are called gluttons. One of the qualities of devotees is *mita-bhuk*, eating what is necessary. By eating less, the body remains healthy and does not disturb one's devotional service. Those who have no strength to tolerate the urge of the stomach are always greedy to eat. Those who are firmly convinced that nothing can be eaten besides *kṛṣṇa-prasāda* are especially able to tolerate the urge of the belly. Restrictions like fasting on prescribed days are also models of instruction for controlling the urge of the stomach.

The urge of the genital is formidable for persons who are averse to the Lord. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.5.11) it is said: *loke vyavāyāmiṣa-madya-sevā nityā hi jantor na hi tatra codanā*—“In this material world the conditioned soul is always inclined to sex, meat-eating, and intoxication. Therefore religious scriptures never actually encourage such activities.” The purport of this statement from the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is confidential. Those who possess a material body made of flesh and blood are always inclined to associate with women. To minimize this inclination, the marriage ceremony is recommended. Those who wish to get free from the codes of marriage are almost like animals. But those who have crossed beyond the rules of this natural inclination by the association of devotees and the strength of their service and have thus attained attraction for spiritual subject matters, for them associating with the opposite sex is very insignificant. Persons who are filled with attachment for material enjoyment can never tolerate the urge of the genital. Many of them engage in illicit activities. Regarding this propensity, those who thirst for devotional service are divided into two groups. Those whose attraction has been purified by the strength of *sādhu-saṅga* give up the association of women altogether and continually engage in devotional service. Persons in this group are known as renounced Vaiṣṇavas. Those whose propensity for associating with women has not been destroyed accept the codes of marriage and remain as

householders while engaging in devotional service. Associating with women as prescribed in the scriptures means to control the urge of the genitals. When one properly tolerates the above mentioned six urges, that is favorable for his devotional service. And when those urges are strong, that is unfavorable for one's devotional service. To subdue these six urges is called *dhairya*. As long as one has a material body these propensities cannot be totally uprooted, but by properly engaging them in their appropriate subjects they no longer remain faulty. Therefore Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has written in his *Prema-bhakti-candrikā* as follows:

*kāma, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, mātsarya, dambha-saha
sthāne sthāne niyukta kariba*

*ānanda kari' hṛdaya, ripu kari' parājaya,
anāyāse govinda bhajiba.*

*ḥkāma' kṛṣṇa-karmārpane, ḥkrodha' bhakta-dveṣi jane,
ḥlobha' sādhu-saṅge hari-kathā*

*ḥmoha' iṣṭa-lābha vine, ḥmada' kṛṣṇa-guṇa-gāne,
niyukta kariba yathā tathā.*

“I will engage lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, envy, and pride in appropriate ways, and by defeating these enemies I will feel happiness in my heart as I peacefully worship Govinda. I will engage lust by offering it in Kṛṣṇa's service. Anger I will direct towards those who are envious of the devotees. I will be greedy to hear the topics of Hari in the association of devotees. I will feel illusioned without achieving my worshipable Lord. I will be maddened while singing the glories of Kṛṣṇa. In this way I will engage these enemies in their proper places.” The confidential meaning of this song is that the duty of an intelligent person is to direct these urges away from their respective subjects and make them favorable to devotional service. That can only be done with patience.

There is another meaning applicable to the word *dhairya*. Those who engage in *sādhana* desire to attain the results. Karmis hope to attain heavenly happiness by fruitive activities; *jñānīs* hope to attain liberation by speculative knowledge, and devotees hope to please Kṛṣṇa by their devotion. Being impatient due to prolonged *sādhana*, some people fall from the path to the ultimate goal; therefore a practicing devotee who desires to achieve his goal attains that result only when he becomes patient. “Kṛṣṇa must be merciful to me either today or after one hundred years or in some other birth. I will take shelter of His lotus feet with determination and never leave.” This type of *dhairya*, patience, is most desirable for the practitioners of devotional service.

Tat-tat-karma-pravartana

Various activities favorable for devotional service

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has enjoined the system of *tat-tat-karma-pravartana*, acting according to the regulative principles, for those aspiring to perform devotional service. In the *Upadeśāmṛta*, activities by which pure devotional service is

cultivated are called *tat-tat-karma*, prescribed duties. Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Uddhava in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.19.20-24):

<i>śraddhāmṛta-kathāyām me</i>	<i>śaśvan mad-anukīrtanam</i>
<i>pariniṣṭhā ca pūjāyām</i>	<i>stutibhiḥ stavanam mama</i>
<i>ādarah paricaryāyām</i>	<i>sarvāṅgair abhivandanam</i>
<i>mad-bhakta-pūjābhyadhikā</i>	<i>sarva-bhūteṣu man-matiḥ</i>
<i>mad-artheṣv aṅga-ceṣṭā ca</i>	<i>vacasā mad-guṇeraṇam</i>
<i>mayy arpaṇam ca manasaḥ</i>	<i>sarva-kāma-vivarjanam</i>
<i>mad-arthe 'rtha-parityāgo</i>	<i>bhogasya ca sukhasya ca</i>
<i>iṣṭam dattam hutam japtam</i>	<i>mad-artham yad vratam tapaḥ</i>
<i>evam dharmair manuṣyāṅām</i>	<i>uddhavātma-nivedinām</i>
<i>mayi sañjāyate bhaktiḥ</i>	<i>ko 'nyo 'rtho 'syāvaśiṣyate</i>

“Firm faith in the blissful narrations of My pastimes, constant chanting of My glories, unwavering attachment to ceremonial worship of Me, praising Me through beautiful hymns, great respect for My devotional service, offering obeisances with the entire body, performing first-class worship of My devotees, consciousness of Me in all living entities, offering of ordinary, bodily activities in My devotional service, offering words to describe My qualities, offering the mind to Me, rejection of all material desires, giving up wealth for My devotional service, renouncing material sense gratification and happiness, and performing all desirable activities such as charity, sacrifice, chanting, vows, and austerities with the purpose of achieving Me—these constitute actual religious principles, by which those human beings who have actually surrendered themselves to Me automatically develop love for Me. What other purpose or goal could remain for My devotee?”

Based on these instructions of the Lord, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has divided these activities into sixty-four items in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has written about those activities in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.115-129) as follows:

guru-pādāśraya, dīkṣā, gurura sevana
sad-dharma-śikṣā, prcchā, sādhu-mārgānugamana

“On the path of regulative devotional service, one must observe the following items: (1) One must accept a bona fide spiritual master. (2) Accept initiation from him. (3) Serve him. (4) Receive instructions from the spiritual master and make inquiries in order to learn devotional service. (5) Follow in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas* and follow the directions given by the spiritual master.

kṛṣṇa-prītye bhoga-tyāga, kṛṣṇa-tīrthe vāsa
yāvan-nirvāha-pratigraha, ekādaśy-upavāsa

“The next steps are as follows: (6) One should be prepared to give up everything for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction, and one should also accept everything for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction. (7) One must live in a place where Kṛṣṇa is present—a city like Vṛndāvana or Mathurā or a Kṛṣṇa temple. (8) One should acquire a livelihood that is just sufficient to keep body and soul together. (9) One must fast on Ekādaśī day.

*dhātry-aśvattha-go-vipra-vaiṣṇava-pūjana
sevā-nāmāparādhādi dūre visarjana*

“One should worship *dhātrī* trees, banyan trees, cows, *brāhmaṇas*, and devotees of Lord Viṣṇu. One should avoid offenses against devotional service and the holy name.

*avaiṣṇava-saṅga-tyāga, bahu-śiṣya nā kariba
bahu-grantha-kalābhyāsa-vyākhyāna varjiba*

“The twelfth item is to give up the company of nondevotees. (13) One should not accept an unlimited number of disciples. (14) One should not partially study many scriptures just to be able to give references and expand explanations.

*hāni-lābhe sama, śokādīra vaśa nā ha-iba
anya-deva, anya-śāstra nindā nā kariba*

“Fifteen: The devotee should treat loss and gain equally. (16) The devotee should not be overwhelmed by lamentation. (17) The devotee should not worship demigods, nor should he disrespect them. Similarly, the devotee should not study or criticize other scriptures.

*viṣṇu-vaiṣṇava-nindā, grāmya-vārtā nā śuniba
prāṇi-mātre manovākye udvega nā diba*

“Eighteen: The devotee should not hear Lord Viṣṇu or His devotees blasphemed. (19) The devotee should avoid reading or hearing newspapers or mundane books that contain stories of love affairs between men and women or subjects palatable to the senses. (20) Neither by mind nor words should the devotee cause anxiety to any living entity, regardless how insignificant he may be.

*śravaṇa, kīrtana, smarāṇa, pūjana, vandana
paricaryā, dāsya, sakhya, ātma-nivedana*

“After one is established in devotional service, the positive actions are (1) hearing, (2) chanting, (3) remembering, (4) worshiping, (5) praying, (6) serving, (7) accepting servitorship, (8) becoming a friend, and (9) surrendering fully.

*agre nṛtya, gīta, vijñapti, daṇḍavan-nati
abhyūthāna, anuvraja, tīrtha-grhe gati*

“One should also (10) dance before the Deity, (11) sing before the Deity, (12) open one's mind to the Deity, (13) offer obeisances to the Deity, (14) stand up before the Deity and the spiritual master just to show them respect, (15) follow the Deity or the spiritual master, and (16) visit different places of pilgrimage or go see the Deity in the temple.

*parikramā, stava-pāṭha, japa, saṅkīrtana
dhūpa-mālya-gandha-mahāprasāda-bhojana*

“One should (17) circumambulate the temple, (18) recite various prayers, (19) chant softly, (20) chant congregationally, (21) smell the incense and flower garlands offered to the Deity, and (22) eat the remnants of food offered to the Deity.

ārātrika-mahotsava-śrīmūrti-darśana

nija-priya-dāna, dhyāna, tadīya-sevana

“One should (23) attend *ārati* and festivals, (24) see the Deity, (25) present what is very dear to oneself to the Deity, (26) meditate, and (27) serve those related to the Lord.

*‘tadīya’—tulasī, vaiṣṇava, mathurā, bhāgavata
ei cārira sevā haya kṛṣṇera abhimata*

“*Tadīya* means the *tulasī* leaves, the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, the birthplace of Kṛṣṇa, Mathurā, and the Vedic literature *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. Kṛṣṇa is very eager to see His devotee serve *tulasī*, Vaiṣṇavas, Mathurā, and *Bhāgavatam*.

*kṛṣṇārthe akhila-ceṣṭā, tat-kṛpāvalokana
janma-dinādi-mahotsava lañā bhakta-gaṇa*

“Thirty-one: One should perform all endeavors for Kṛṣṇa. (32) One should look forward to His mercy. (33) One should partake of various ceremonies with devotees, ceremonies like Lord Kṛṣṇa's birthday or Rāmacandra's birthday.

*sarvathā śaraṇāpatti, kārtikādi-vrata
‘catuḥ-ṣaṣṭi aṅga’ ei parama-mahattva*

“Thirty-four: One should surrender to Kṛṣṇa in all respects. (35) One should observe particular vows like *kārtika-vrata*. These are some of the sixty-four important items of devotional service.

*sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana*

“One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, reside at Mathurā, and worship the Deity with faith and veneration.

*sakala-sādhana-śreṣṭha ei pañca aṅga
kṛṣṇa-prema janmāya ei pāñcera alpa saṅga*

“These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of these five awakens love for Kṛṣṇa.”

Aspiring devotees should first take shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide guru. Without taking shelter of a guru, one cannot achieve anything auspicious. There are two types of people—one has developed intelligence and one has undeveloped intelligence. Those whose intelligence is undeveloped are absorbed in the so-called happiness of this world. If by chance they get the association of a *mahājana*, then they also become intelligent. Then they consider, “How unfortunate I am! I'm always engaged in sense gratification. I'm passing my days hankering for material enjoyment.” This initial association with a great soul is also called association with the guru by hearing. By good fortune, at this time faith is awakened. When faith is awakened, one endeavors for devotional service. Then it is essential for one to take shelter of the lotus feet of a guru. In this way by good fortune persons with undeveloped intelligence become intelligent and take shelter of the lotus feet of a guru.

What type of guru one should take shelter of is explained in the *śāstras*. One who has conquered the six enemies beginning with lust, one who is pure, one who performs devotional service on the path of *rāga*, one who is brahminical, one who

knows the clear path of the *Vedas*, one who sadhus can respect as guru, one who is able to control the senses, one who is merciful to all living entities, one who is cultured, one who is without duplicity, and one who is truthful—this type of householder is fit to be a guru. All these qualities are considered in two ways. The principle quality of a guru is attachment to Kṛṣṇa and detachment for what is not related with Kṛṣṇa. All other qualities are secondary. That is why Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 8.127):

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei `guru' haya*

“Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī*, or a *śūdra*—regardless of what he is—he can become a spiritual master if he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa.”

If one possess this principle symptom of a guru, then he is eligible to be guru even though he lacks one or two secondary symptoms. Being a *brāhmaṇa* and being a householder are counted as secondary symptoms. It is good if a person possesses these two secondary symptoms along with the principle qualification. But those who are defective in the principle symptom are unqualified to be guru even though they possess the other two. As stated in *Śrī Padma Purāṇa*:

<i>mahābhāgavata śreṣṭho sarveṣāṃ eva lokānām</i>	<i>brāhmaṇo vai gurur nṛnām asau pūjyo yathā hariḥ</i>
<i>mahākula prasūto `pi sahasraśākhādhyāyī ca</i>	<i>sarva yajñeṣu dīkṣitah na guruḥ syād avaiṣṇavaḥ</i>

“Among all human beings the *brāhmaṇa* who is a *mahā-bhāgavata*, or great devotee, is topmost and qualified as guru. He is as worshipable as Lord Hari. A non-Vaiṣṇava is never fit to be guru even if he has taken birth in a great family, performed all sacrifices, and studied many branches of the *Vedas*.” After finding a qualified guru, a faithful disciple should serve him with firm conviction and without duplicity. One should accept initiation and *kṛṣṇa-mantra* after pleasing the guru. Those who are averse to taking initiation and only make a drama of pseudo-*kīrtana* while advertising themselves as Vaiṣṇavas certainly cheat themselves. It is not the duty of materialistic persons to renounce the process of initiation because a few great souls like Jaḍa Bharata did not take initiation. Initiation is a constitutional injunction for every birth of the living entity. If initiation is not seen in the life of a perfected soul, it should not be taken as an example. General rules are not changed because something happens to a particular person in a special situation. Śrī Dhruva Mahārāja went to Dhruvaloka in his material body; seeing that, should one waste time hoping for the same? The general rule is a living entity gives up his material body and goes to Vaikuṅṭha in his spiritual body. General rules should be accepted by people in general. Whenever and whatever is desired by the Lord, who is full of inconceivable potencies, that only happens. Therefore we should never transgress the general rules. After pleasing the guru by serving him without duplicity, one should receive from him instructions on the Absolute Truth and initiation into chanting the holy name of the Lord.

After receiving initiation and instructions from a bona fide guru, a fortunate disciple should follow the path of the previous sadhus. Those who are proud neglect the previous *mahājanas* and create new paths. As a result, they soon proceed on their inauspicious path and ruin themselves. It is said in the *Skanda*

Purāṇa:

*sa mṛgyaḥ śreyasām hetuḥ panthāḥ santāpa-varjitah
anavāpta-śramaṁ pūrve yena santaḥ pratasthire*

“One should strictly follow the easy path which the previous *mahājanas* have accepted. That path bestows great auspiciousness and is devoid of all misery.” By discussing the path of the previous sadhus, one gets determination, courage, and satisfaction. When we discuss the path of devotional service exhibited by Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana, Śrī Raghunātha, and Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura, then we feel such happiness that it cannot be described. When the miscreant Mohammedans tortured Haridāsa Ṭhākura, he said:

*khaṇḍa khaṇḍa hai' deha yāya yadi prāṇa
tabu āmi vadane nā chāḍi hari-nāma*

*e saba jīvere kṛṣṇa! karaha prasāda
mora drohe nahu e sabāra aparādha*

“Even if my body is cut into pieces and I loose my life, I will never give up chanting the Lord's holy name. O Kṛṣṇa, please be merciful upon these poor souls, kindly excuse them for their offense of torturing me.”

Maintaining this type of determination and being compassionate to all living entities while always chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is the path of devotional service exhibited by the previous *mahājanas*. A path cannot be manufactured. Whatever path is there should be accepted by sadhus. Those who are proud and want fame try vigorously to discover new paths. Those who have good fortune from past lives give up pride and respect the established path. Those who are unfortunate promenade on a new path and thus cheat the world. Regarding such persons the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.46-47) quotes the *Brahma-yāmala* as follows:

*śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi- pañcarātra-vidhiṁ vinā
aikāntikī harer bhaktir utpātāyaiva kalpate*

*bhaktir aikāntikīveyam avicārāt pratiyate
vastu tastu tathā naiva yad aśāstrīyateksyate*

“Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas*, and *Nārada-pañcarātra* is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society. Such activities are born out of speculation and therefore they only superficially resemble unalloyed devotion because they are disrespectful to the Vedic injunctions. Disrespecting Vedic injunctions falls in the category of atheism. Whenever there is disrespect for the scriptures, which are the Lord's instructions, that cannot be devotional service.”

The purport is that although the path of devotion is of two kinds—*vaidhi* and *rāgānugā*—the previous *mahājanas* have clearly prescribed them according to one's qualification. These paths are explained in the scriptures such as the *śruti*, *smṛti*, and *pañcarātra*. Rejecting these paths, the new paths discovered by Lord Buddha and Dattatreya ultimately create disturbance. Due to improper consideration these new paths are advertised as unalloyed devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, although they are not actually so. The proper path is exhibited in the Vedic literatures. Nowadays

many new paths are discovered, and they ultimately disappear along with their propounder.

Inquiring about *sad-dharma*, eternal religious principles, is one of the disciple's devotional duties. Therefore *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.47) quotes the following statement from the *Śrī Nāradiya Purāṇa*:

sad-dharmasyāvabodhāya yeṣāṃ nirbandhinī matiḥ
acirād eva sarvārthaḥ sidhyaty eṣāṃ abhīpsitaḥ

“Those who are anxious to awaken their spiritual consciousness, who have unflinching intelligence, and who are not deviated, certainly attain the desired goal of life.” As fortunate persons wish to follow the characteristics of the sadhus' devotional service, they similarly desire to know their duty. Unfortunate proud persons act just the opposite. As they search paths different from those of the sadhus, they disrespect the sadhus' determined conclusions while respecting their own. They do not care to preach the teachings of Mahāprabhu to the people of this world, rather they preach doctrines contradictory to those of Mahāprabhu. They do not know how much misfortune they are creating by this. Those who are simple endeavor to properly learn the teachings of the Lord from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. The Lord's teachings are our only life. *Sad-dharma* lies in this alone. The bona fide disciple especially tries to understand *sad-dharma*. If he cannot understand on his own, then he prays at the feet of his *sikṣa-guru* and learns from him. Those who have this kind of determination to know *sad-dharma* quickly achieve their desired goal. The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.9) says:

anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu- śīlanam bhaktir uttamā

“One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.” As long as this pure devotional symptom, in the form of understanding *sad-dharma*, has not clearly manifest in the heart of an inquisitive person, his heart remains covered with darkness and he cannot know what is pure devotional service. If one depends on his own speculation, then unalloyed devotional service will not manifest in his heart. We meet many so-called *paṇḍitas* who think they have understood the constitution of *bhakti* by their knowledge and intelligence. Some of them have concluded that devotional service mixed with *jñāna* is pure *bhakti*, and some of them have concluded that devotional service mixed with karma is pure *bhakti*. They are so proud that if they hear the teachings of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, they say, “Everyone can make their own conclusion. What is the need for taking the conclusion of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*?” These people never come in touch with *sad-dharma* because they have no desire to know it. The result of performing their own concocted new process of devotional service is they can never relish pure devotion. It is the duty of a *sādhaka* to give up personal enjoyment for the sake of Kṛṣṇa. Sense gratification is called enjoyment. Dovetailing one's lust for sense gratification in the service of Kṛṣṇa is renunciation of enjoyment. When one converts his world of enjoyment into what is favorable for devotional service, thus giving up the spirit of enjoying those objects and accepting everything as *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*, then this is called renunciation of enjoyment.

To reside in a holy place related with Kṛṣṇa is also a limb of *sādhana*. If one resides

in Śrī Dvārakā, Śrī Mathurā, on the bank of the Ganges, or at pastimes sites of the Lord, then one naturally remembers Kṛṣṇa. What greater gain can there be than this?

At every stage of life one should accept only as much wealth as needed for the practice of devotional service. By desiring more than needed, *bhakti* will disappear. If wealth is not accepted according to one's need, however, then the practice of devotional service will be hampered.

One should carefully respect *śrī hari-vāsara*, Ekādaśī. By observing Ekādaśī all the supporting principles of devotional service are practiced. The practice of devotional service becomes continuous by giving up all enjoyment and practicing devotional service once every fortnight.

For one who worships and meditates on the earth, banyan trees, *tulasī*, cows, *brāhmaṇas*, and Vaiṣṇavas, all his sinful reactions are diminished. By these activities one can please Kṛṣṇa, because these objects are auspicious for the world. These ten limbs of devotional service are the preliminary activities for worshiping the Lord. For those who neglect these ten limbs, attaining devotional service and Kṛṣṇa is very difficult.

Therefore those who are aspiring for devotional service should first take shelter of Śrī Guru, take initiation and instruction from him, and serve him. They should also follow the behavior of the sadhus and learn the conclusions taught by the sadhus. In order to make one's life Kṛṣṇa conscious, one should reside in a sacred place related to Kṛṣṇa and give up the enjoyment of sense gratification for the service of Kṛṣṇa. In one's ordinary dealings one should only accept the wealth that is necessary to favorably maintain Kṛṣṇa's business. To practice devotional service one should observe fast days like Ekādaśī and Janmāṣṭamī. One should respect banyan trees in order to maintain the glories of this world, which is one of the Lord's opulences. These ten rules must be followed. And the following ten rules must be rejected, otherwise the practice of devotional service cannot be steady. One should not associate with persons who are averse to the Lord's service. One will have to meet such people in his ordinary dealings, but one should deal with them only until the work is finished. After the work is finished one should not deal with them. Those who have not had loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa awakened in their heart are always proud of remaining under the shelter of *jñāna* and karma. Therefore they are called *bhagavad-bahirmukha*, averse to Kṛṣṇa. Those who worship many gods, those who are Māyāvādīs and thirsty for impersonal *jñāna*, and those atheists who defy Vedic literatures are all *bhagavad-bahirmukha*, averse to Kṛṣṇa.

One whose faith in pure devotional service has not developed should not be accepted as a disciple, otherwise the disciplic chain of devotional service will be polluted. One should give up the endeavor for starting new big projects, because it diminishes one's devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

One should not read or explain various types of books, except those which lead to the advancement of devotional service. One should discuss those scriptures wherein devotional service is instructed and explained, such as the *Vedas*, *smṛtis*, *Purāṇas*, *Pañcarātra*, and the writings of the *mahājanas*. From books with other opinions, only useless arguments are learned.

The endeavor for food and clothing must always remain, either in household life or in renounced life. Therefore there is a need of generosity in such dealings.

According to the *Padma Purāṇa*:

alabdhe vā vinaṣṭe vā bhakṣyācchādāna-sādhane
aviklava-matir bhūtvā harim eva dhiyā smaret

“The mind of one who has taken shelter of the holy name is undisturbed even if food and clothes are not easily obtained or if they are obtained but then lost. Leaving behind all material attachments, he takes complete shelter of Govinda.” The purport is that whether a *sādhaka* stays at home or in the forest, he will have to endeavor for food and clothing. A householder should find out his food and clothing through agriculture or business, protecting the citizens, or by serving others. A renunciate should accomplish this by begging alms. In those activities a devotee should not be agitated if food and clothing are not obtained or if they are obtained and then lost. He should peacefully remember Kṛṣṇa.

Householders lament if they lose their wife, children, etc. But a practitioner of devotional service should not maintain this lamentation very long. They should quickly give up their lamentation and engage in the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A renunciate should not lament if he does not possess a quilt, a waterpot, or other alms, or if these things are stolen by man or animal. A practicing Vaiṣṇava should give up all urges like lamentation and anger, otherwise there will be obstacles in his constant remembrance of Kṛṣṇa. It is explained in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

śokāmarśādibhir bhāvair ākrāntaṁ yasya mānasam
kathaṁ tasya mukundasya sphūrttiḥ sambhāvanā bhavet

“Within the heart of one who is full of anger or pride, or lamentation on the state of his wife or sons, there is no possibility of Kṛṣṇa being manifest.”

Those who endeavor for devotional service should only worship Kṛṣṇa. They should not worship various demigods. But they should not also disrespect the demigods or the scriptures. When coming before a demigod, one should offer respect, knowing them to be Kṛṣṇa's servant. In the *Padma Purāṇa* it is said:

harir eva sadārādhyāḥ sarva-deveśvareśvaraḥ
itare brahma-rudrādyā nāvajñeyāḥ kadācana

“Kṛṣṇa, or Hari, is the master of all demigods, and therefore He is always worshipable. But this does not mean that one should not offer respect to the demigods headed by Brahmā and Śiva.” The purport is that the Supreme Lord is one, and others (Brahmā and Śiva) are His qualitative incarnations (*guṇāvataras*). Particular demigods are worshiped by people according to their qualifications. But Lord Viṣṇu is the only worshipable Lord for people who are in the mode of goodness. After worshiping various demigods for many lifetimes, one's life becomes auspicious when he comes to the point of accepting Viṣṇu as the only Supreme Lord. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the topmost manifestation of *viṣṇu-tattva*. When a living entity transcends the three modes by worshiping in the mode of goodness, he attains the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

One should be merciful and not cause anxiety to any living entity. The heart should always be filled with compassion for others. Exhibiting mercy to all living entities is one of the limbs of devotional service. A person aspiring for devotional service should carefully practice this characteristic.

It is most essential for an aspiring devotee to give up the ten offenses in chanting

and the offenses in the matter of serving the Lord. For ordinary devotees there is some consideration of offenses in serving the Deity of the Lord. It is not possible to give up all the offenses in serving the Lord, but one must give up some of the offenses before entering the temple room. The ten offenses in chanting have been discussed in many places. The practitioner should carefully give up those offenses. For those who are negligent in this regard, endeavoring for devotional service becomes useless. It is written in the *Padma Purāna*:

sarvāparādha kṛd api mucyate hari samśrayaḥ
harer apy aparādhān yaḥ kuryād dvi-pada pāmsanaḥ

nāmāśrayaḥ kadācit syāt taraty eva sa nāmataḥ
nāmno hi sarva suhṛdo hy aparādhāt pataty adhaḥ

The purport is that if one takes shelter of Lord Hari, then all his offenses are vanquished. All offenses committed in the service of the Lord are destroyed by taking shelter of the holy names. The holy name alone delivers the Vaiṣṇavas. But those who have taken shelter of the holy names must give up the ten offenses in chanting. Otherwise they will surely fall down even though they have taken shelter of the holy names.

A practitioner should not allow blasphemy of Kṛṣṇa or the Vaiṣṇavas to enter his ears. Wherever such blasphemy is taking place, he should leave. Those with weak hearts who tarry out of social etiquette to hear blasphemy of Kṛṣṇa or the Vaiṣṇavas are gradually distracted from devotional service.

By careful practice of the above mentioned twenty limbs one's *bhāva*, devotional sentiment, is awakened. The mercy of Kṛṣṇa is the root cause of awakening *bhāva*. Without *sādhu-saṅga*, one cannot achieve the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. The principle forms of *sādhu-saṅga* are taking shelter of the lotus feet of the spiritual master, taking initiation from him, and serving him.

Among the other limbs of devotional service mentioned after these, accepting the symbols of a Vaiṣṇava up to meditation come under the category of *arcana*. One should practice all these limbs of *bhakti* to the best of one's capacity after receiving them from the spiritual master. Servitude, friendship, and complete surrender are the activities for awakening *bhāva*. In reality, these activities themselves become *bhāva*. Only in the stage of *sādhana* are they counted as *sādhana-bhakti*.

Whatever one's most cherished items are in this world and whatever is very dear should be offered to Kṛṣṇa—this statement has several meanings. The purport is that one should not enjoy anything just because it is very dear to oneself, but one should offer it to Kṛṣṇa and enjoy it as His *prasāda*.

Whatever ordinary and spiritual endeavors are there, when done for the sake of Kṛṣṇa, they become auspicious. It is said in the *Nārada Pañcarātra* and quoted in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*:

laukikī vaidikī vāpi yā kriyā kriyate mune
hari-sevānukūlaiva sa kāryā bhaktim icchatā

“One should perform only those activities, either worldly or prescribed by Vedic rules and regulations, which are favorable for the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Marriage and other purificatory ceremonies of the *smārtas* are *vaidikī*, or prescribed Vedic regulations, and social and bodily activities performed to

maintain one's status quo are *laukikī*, or worldly. Marriage is for the establishment of Kṛṣṇa's family; producing children is for increasing Kṛṣṇa's servants; offering oblations to the forefathers is for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa's servants; feasting is for the gratification of Kṛṣṇa's living entities—all these activities should be dovetailed in the favorable service of Kṛṣṇa. Then one will not fall into the grip of unfavorable fruitive activities. The body, house, and everything else belongs to Kṛṣṇa—thinking in this way one should protect the body, the house, and the community. This is called Kṛṣṇa's family.

The whole life of a practitioner should be decorated with full surrender. Six types of surrender are explained in many places in the devotional scriptures. The life of a living entity is useless without surrender. The living entity should always worship Kṛṣṇa with full surrender.

Items that are related to Kṛṣṇa are called *tadīya*. Serving *tulasī* is the primary form of *tadīya-sevā*. It is said in the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

<i>ḍṛṣṭā sprṣṭā tathā dhātā</i>	<i>kīrtitā manitā śrutā</i>
<i>ropitā sevitā nityam</i>	<i>pūjitā tulasī subhā</i>
<i>navadhā tulasīm devīm</i>	<i>ye bhajanti dine dine</i>
<i>yuga koṭi sahasrāṇi</i>	<i>te vasanti harer grhe</i>

“*Tulasī* is auspicious in all respects. Simply by seeing, simply by touching, simply by remembering, simply by praying to, simply by bowing before, simply by hearing about, simply by sowing, simply by offering water to, or simply by worshiping *tulasī* there is always auspiciousness. Anyone who comes in touch with the *tulasī* tree in the above-mentioned nine ways lives eternally in the Vaikuṅṭha world.”

Literatures that substantiate devotion to Kṛṣṇa are counted among *tadīya*. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is the topmost amongst them. In the same way, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* commands similar respect. Those who regularly read and hear these devotional scriptures are glorious.

Holy places associated with Lord Kṛṣṇa, such as Mathurā, are appropriate residences for a practitioner. Among such places, residence in Mathurā is the topmost. Residing in Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa is as good. It is written in *Śrī Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*:

<i>śrutā smṛtā kīrtitā ca</i>	<i>vāñcitā prekṣitā gatā</i>
<i>sprṣṭāśritā sevitā ca</i>	<i>mathurābhīṣṭadāyini</i>

“One who hears about, remembers, glorifies, desires to achieve, sees from a distance, comes near, touches, accepts as one's shelter, and serves Mathurā achieves fulfillment of all desires.”

The devotees of Kṛṣṇa are also counted among *tadīya*. It is written in the *Ādi Purāṇa*:

<i>ye me bhakta-janāḥ pārtha</i>	<i>na me bhaktās ca te janāḥ</i>
<i>mad-bhaktānām ca ye bhaktās</i>	<i>te me bhakta-tamā matāḥ</i>

“Lord Kṛṣṇa said to Arjuna: Those who are My direct devotees are actually not My devotees, but those who are the devotees of My devotees are factually My devotees.”

In regard to serving devotees, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has quoted the following verse

from the *Ādi Purāṇa* in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*:

*yāvanti bhagavad bhakter aṅgāni kathitāniha
prāyastāvanti tad bhakta bhakter api budhā vidhuḥ*

The purport is that almost all the above mentioned limbs of serving Kṛṣṇa are accepted in the service of His devotees. The reason for the use of the word “almost” is that the devotees should be worshiped by offering them *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*. All other limbs such as offering obeisances remain the same.

The practitioner should hold festivals according to his capacity. Organizing festivals in the association of devotees is a prominent activity. However, one should be careful not to associate with nondevotees in the course of holding such festivals.

There is a need of organizing festivals on the occasion of the Lord's appearance day. One should maintain love and devotion while serving the Deity. Being attached to the impersonal aspect of the Lord, foolish people without proper consideration disrespect the Deity. But if they associate with devotees and properly consider, then they will see the need for serving the Deity.

One should relish devotional scriptures like *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* with advanced devotees. If one relishes devotional scriptures with rationalists, people fond of argument, and dry speculators, then one's heart becomes dry and the awakening of transcendental mellows does not take place.

It is necessary to associate with devotees. *Jñānīs* and *karmīs* are not counted amongst devotees due to their illicit desires. A practitioner of devotional service should associate with more advanced persons who are affectionate and on the same path. Otherwise his heart will not take shelter of pure devotional service. In the *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* (8.51) it is written:

*yasya yat saṅgatiḥ puṁso maṇivat syāt sa tad guṇaḥ
svakularddhyai tato dhimān svayūthāny eva samśrayet*

“As the qualities of a nearby object are reflected in a crystal, one similarly takes on the qualities of a person with whom he associates. Therefore, in order to increase one's devotional sentiment in his own line, a wise person should take shelter of those who have the same temperament.” One should be particularly careful in this regard. Association with *sahajiyās* and *bāulas* yields unfavorable results. But if one associates with pure Vaiṣṇavas who are followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, then pure love for Kṛṣṇa is awakened. Among all limbs of devotional service, association with devotees is one of the main limbs.

Among all the above mentioned limbs of devotional service, the following five principle items are the best of all: worshiping the Deity, relishing the purport of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* with advanced devotees, associating with more advanced devotees who are affectionate and in the same line, congregational chanting of the holy names, and residing in Mathurā. If we further summarize, then chanting the holy names and serving the Vaiṣṇavas are the topmost. It is written in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*yena janma-sahasrāṇi vāsudevo niṣevitaḥ
tan mukhe hari-nāmāni sadā tiṣṭhanti bhārata*

“O descendant of Bhārata! One who has worshiped the Deity of the Lord for thousands of lifetimes can always chant the holy name of Hari.” Also from the

Padma Purāṇa and quoted in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.108-109):

nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ

ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ

“The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Kṛṣṇa's name is complete, and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Kṛṣṇa Himself. Since Kṛṣṇa's name is not contaminated by the material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with *māyā*. Kṛṣṇa's name is always liberated and spiritual; it is never conditioned by the laws of material nature. This is because the name of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa Himself are identical. Therefore material senses cannot appreciate Kṛṣṇa's holy name, form, qualities, and pastimes. When a conditioned soul is awakened to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and renders service by using his tongue to chant the Lord's holy name and taste the remnants of the Lord's food, the tongue is purified, and one gradually comes to understand who Kṛṣṇa really is.” This is the independent mercy of the Absolute Truth.

Śrī Mathurā-maṇḍala, the holy names of the Lord, devotional scriptures like *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, pure devotees, and Deities—these five items are transcendental. By associating with them, a devotee quickly attains *bhāva*, transcendental emotions, and Kṛṣṇa.

In the process of *sādhana-bhakti*, these types of *vaidhi-bhakti* are explained. Again, *rāgānugā-sādhana-bhakti* is very powerful in the process of *sādhana*. When one practices devotional service by following the footsteps of the residents of Vṛndāvana, that is called *rāgānugā-bhakti*. Persons who are endeavoring for devotional service should follow the activities of the Vrajavāsīs with their body, mind, and speech. According to his qualification, a practitioner should engage in whatever activities are mentioned in either the process of *vaidhi-sādhana-bhakti* or *rāgānugā-sādhana-bhakti*.

Someone may attain the highest result by practicing one of the limbs, and someone may attain the highest result by practicing several limbs. The unalloyed devotion of those who have exclusively taken shelter of the service of the holy names and the Vaiṣṇavas does not find taste in other limbs. Therefore the practitioner should work in devotion with full surrender, enthusiasm, firm confidence, and patience.

Saṅga-tyāga

Giving up the association of nondevotees

In his *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that one's devotion is enhanced by *utsāhā*, *niścayā*, *dhairya*, *tat-tat-karma-pravartana*, *saṅga-tyāga*, and *sad-vṛtti* (the devotee's lifestyle or propensities). Out of these items, *utsāhā*, *niścayā*, *dhairya*, and *tat-tat-karma-pravartana* have already been separately discussed in the previous essays. Now I will try to discuss the meaning of the word *saṅga-tyāga*.

There are two types of *saṅga*—association and attachment. Association is of two

types—with nondevotees and with women. Similarly, attachment is also of two types—attachment for prejudices and attachment for assets. Those mahatmas who wish to attain perfection in devotional service should carefully give up *saṅga* in the form of association and attachment. Otherwise this *saṅga* will gradually and surely ruin everything. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.62-63):

saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmahaḥ kāmāt krodho 'bhijāyate
krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ sammohāt smṛti-vibhramahaḥ
smṛti-bhramśād buddhi-nāśo buddhi-nāśāt praṇāsyati

“From attachment lust develops, and from lust anger arises. From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost one falls down again into the material pool.” A practitioner should always remember this instruction of the Lord. If a practitioner engages in prohibited association, then gradually his attachment increases. The more this attachment increases, the more his firm faith in the supreme goal diminishes. The purport is that the living entity is spiritual; being conditioned by *māyā* and falsely proud due to ignorance, the living entity has forgotten his constitutional position. In his pure state the living entity does not associate with *māyā*, rather he remains fully spiritual. In the spiritual world all the association of the living entity is spiritual, therefore the eternal *saṅga* of the living entities in that state is desirable. The *saṅga* in the conditioned state of a living entity is polluted. That *saṅga*, being polluted with nescience in the form of association with nondevotees and women and attachment for family and assets, is unfavorable for one's advancement. Spiritual *saṅga* of the living entities is compatible, and mundane *saṅga* is incompatible. To get free from this incompatible *saṅga* is the living entity's liberation. Now we will be considering incompatible *saṅga*.

First we will consider the association of nondevotees. Who is a nondevotee? Those who are not subordinate to the Lord are called nondevotees. The *jñānīs* are never subordinate to the Lord. They think that they can become one with the Lord on the strength of their knowledge. They think, “*Jñāna* is the topmost object; the Lord cannot keep one who attains *jñāna* under His control; the Lord became Supreme by the strength of this *jñāna*, and I too will become Supreme.” Therefore all the endeavors of the *jñānīs* are to become independent of the Lord. The Lord's power does not act on one who achieves liberation in the form of merging with the Lord, which is attained by *jñāna*. This is the attempt of the *jñānīs*! The *jñānīs* and mundane scholars do not depend on the mercy of the Lord. They try to achieve everything on the strength of their knowledge and reasoning, they do not care for the Lord's mercy. Therefore *jñānīs* are nondevotees. Although some *jñānīs* accept devotional service as their process of *sādhana*, at the time of perfection they discard it. In all their activities there are no symptoms of eternal serving mood or subordination to the Lord. Such are the symptoms of the *jñānī-sampradāya*, or philosophical speculators. They only get a glimpse of real knowledge. That real knowledge is only a different aspect of pure devotional service. Only pure devotees, by the mercy of the Lord, can attain that. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructs Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.29) as follows:

*jñānī jīvan-mukta-daśā pāinu kari' māne
vastutaḥ buddhi `suddha' nahe kṛṣṇa-bhakti vine*

“There are many philosophical speculators [*jñānīs*] belonging to the Māyāvāda school who consider themselves liberated and call themselves Nārāyaṇa. However, their intelligence is not purified unless they engage in Kṛṣṇa's devotional service.” Therefore those who are attached to philosophical speculation are counted amongst the nondevotees. There is a fruit called *mukti*, and that is the supreme goal of their *sādhana*. It is not the purpose of their life to attain the Lord's mercy through His service. People who have faith in fruitive rituals are not devotees. Therefore they are also nondevotees. If anyone performs karma in order to achieve the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, then that karma is called *bhakti*. That karma which yields mundane results or mundane knowledge is adverse to the Lord. Karmis do not exclusively search for the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Although they respect Kṛṣṇa, their main purpose is to attain some kind of happiness. Karma is nothing but selfish activities, therefore karmis are also called nondevotees. Yogis sometimes search for liberation, the fruit of *jñāna*, and sometimes they search for *vibhūti*, or opulence, the fruit of karma. Hence, they too are called nondevotees. Due to lack of full surrender, worshipers of the demigods are also called nondevotees. Those who are attached to discussing dry logic are also adverse to the Lord. And what to speak of those who conclude that the Lord is only a figment of the imagination. Those who are attached to sense gratification and thus have no opportunity to remember the Lord are also counted among the nondevotees. If one associates with these nondevotees, then in a very short time one's intelligence is polluted and one's heart is overcome by their propensities. If anyone desires to attain pure devotional service, then he should carefully give up the association of nondevotees. Second is association of women. Association with women is detrimental. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.87) Śrī Caitanya instructs Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī as follows:

*asat-saṅga-tyāga,—ei vaiṣṇava-ācāra
`strī-saṅgī'—eka asādhu, `kṛṣṇābhakta' āra*

“A Vaiṣṇava should always avoid the association of ordinary people. Common people are very much materially attached, especially to women. Vaiṣṇavas should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa.” There are two types of Vaiṣṇavas—the householders and the renunciates. Renunciates are forbidden from speaking with any woman. By the instruction to give up the association with women, they have been forbidden from conversing with women. As stated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 2.120):

*kṣudra-jīva saba markṭa-vairāgya kariyā
indriya carānā bule `prakṛti' sambhāṣiyā*

“There are many persons with little in their possession who accept the renounced order of life like monkeys. They go here and there engaging in sense gratification and speaking intimately with women.”

Regarding Vaiṣṇavīs, the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 12.42) says:

pūrvavat prabhu kailā sabāra milana

strī-saba dūra ha-ite kailā prabhura daraśana

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu received them all, just as He had in previous years. The women, however, saw the Lord from a distance.” This is the prescription in regard to householder Vaiṣṇavas. Householders should not associate with others' wives or prostitutes. They should not indulge in any association other than with their own wives according to religious scriptures. One should give up the uxorious mentality of being excessively fond of one's wife. The instructions of the scriptures regarding the *smārtas* are given in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 15.27) as follows:

*na grham grham ity āhur grhiṇī grham ucyate
tayā hi sahitaḥ sarvān puruṣārthān samaśnute*

“Merely a house is not a home, for it is a wife who gives a home its meaning. If one lives at home with his wife, together they can fulfill all the interests of human life.” There are four kinds of human interests for people in general—religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation. The prescriptions of the scriptures regarding *varṇa* and *āśrama* are called religion. Whatever is prohibited in the scriptures is called irreligion. With the help of his wife, a householder should follow whatever is prescribed and give up whatever is prohibited. Whatever is achieved by following religious principles is called *artha*, or economic development. Assets like house, sons, daughters, cows, and animals are all *artha*. For enjoying those objects there is *kāma*. *Dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma*—these three are called *trivarga*, the pursuits of human life. Practicing these three *vargas* is the life of a conditioned living entity who is wandering in the cycle of fruitive activities. It is the duty of the *smārta* householder to practice *trivarga* with one's wife. A householder should practice *trivarga* with his wife day and night. The wife can accompany one while visiting holy places. Until one endeavors for the supreme goal of life, what else is there except pursuing *trivarga*? Liberation is the living entities' fourth human interest. There are two types of liberation—relief from extreme distress and attaining spiritual happiness. For those whose religious lives are regulated by dry knowledge or impersonalism, relief from extreme distress is the prime goal. But those whose hearts are filled with pure knowledge ultimately search for transcendental happiness and do not remain bound in simply gaining relief from extreme distress. A Vaiṣṇava, whether a householder or a renunciate, is desirous of transcendental happiness. A householder Vaiṣṇava always works together with his wife for the purpose of achieving transcendental happiness. Although engaged in all kinds of work in this way, he never becomes uxorious. In this way he remains free from women's association throughout his life. He totally gives up illicit intimate speaking with women and the mundane uxorious mood in licit association with his wife. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.2.9-10, 13-14), Sūta Gosvāmī has briefly explained the rules for a *grhastha* Vaiṣṇava as follows:

*dharmasya hy āpavargyasya nārtho 'rthāyopakalpate
nārthasya dharmaikāntasya kāmo lābhāya hi smṛtaḥ*

“All occupational engagements are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain. Furthermore, according to sages, one who is engaged in the ultimate occupational service should never use material gain to cultivate sense gratification.

*kāmasya nendriya-prītir lābho jīveta yāvatā
jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā nārtho yaś ceha karmabhiḥ*

“Life's desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's works.

*ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśaḥ
svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya samsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*

“O best among the twice-born, it is therefore concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one's own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead.

*tasmād ekena manasā bhagavān sātvatām patiḥ
śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca dhyeyaḥ pūjyaś ca nityadā*

“Therefore, with one-pointed attention, one should constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the Personality of Godhead, who is the protector of the devotees.” The purport is that in twenty religious scriptures there are mainly instructions about *trivarga*. For the welfare of the karmis, the merciful sages have composed twenty religious scriptures that are suitable for karmis. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.20.9) it is said:

*tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate*

“As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions.” For the karmis mentioned by the Lord in this verse, *trivarga* is the only prescribed occupation. Those who have become indifferent and attained *jñāna*, for them there is no longer a need for *trivarga* activities. They give up those activities and become eligible for *sannyāsa* with dry knowledge. Those who are faithful in hearing the topics of the Lord after receiving His mercy on the strength of their accumulated pious activities from many lifetimes are no longer attached to karma. They are called Vaiṣṇavas. Among them, those who are *grhasthas* enjoy whatever *artha* they obtain while practicing *dharma* for the purpose of liberation, not for the purpose of sense gratification; rather, this *artha* helps them purely maintain their lives in the favorable cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the purpose of understanding the Absolute Truth. In this, the difference between karma and spiritual activities can be seen. Therefore, to attain the mercy of the Lord, a *grhastha* Vaiṣṇava should accept the divisions of *varṇāśrama* and along with his wife practice *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa* in order to maintain his life. Whenever his house becomes unfavorable for this purpose, he should give it up out of disgust. Thus by properly performing the activities of *trivarga*, the *grhastha* Vaiṣṇava's character becomes pure. With such pure characteristics, he should hear, chant, and remember the names, forms, qualities, and pastimes of the Lord with full surrender. The wife should also always endeavor for spiritual perfection with the help of subordinate women such as her sister and daughter. There is no illicit conduct in this, so there will not be any association with women. Therefore, whether one is a householder or a

renunciate—all practitioners should totally give up the association with women. The devotees should carefully give up the above mentioned *saṅga* in the form of association.

Now let us consider *saṅga* in the form of attachment. Attachments are of two kinds—attachment for prejudices and attachment for assets. First I will discuss the attachment for prejudices. There are two types of prejudice—ancient and current. The conditioned living entity has been performing fruitive activities and endeavoring for knowledge since time immemorial, and the prejudices that have developed in his subtle body as a result are called ancient prejudices. Those prejudices are known as one's nature. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.14):

na kartṛtvam na karmāṇi lokasya sṛjati prabhuḥ
na karma-phala-saṁyogaṁ svabhāvas tu pravartate

“The embodied spirit, master of the city of his body, does not create activities, nor does he induce people to act, nor does he create the fruits of action. All this is enacted by the modes of material nature.” Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments: *anādi pravṛttā pradhāna vāsanātra svabhāva śabdenokta-prādhānika dehādīmān jīvaḥ kārayitā karttā ceti na viviktasya tattvam iti*—“The primordial material desire that is active since time immemorial is called one's nature. Due to such a desire the living entity is supplied with material bodies and other paraphenelia. False identification with the bodies causes one to act and causes others to act, although this is not the pure soul's real constitution or nature.”

Again from the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.60):

svabhāva-jena kaunteya nibaddhaḥ svena karmaṇā
kartum necchasi yan mohāt kariṣyasi avaśo 'pi tat

“Under illusion you are now declining to act according to My direction. But, compelled by the work born of your own nature, you will act all the same, O son of Kuntī.”

Regarding the bondage of the prejudice of knowledge, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.6) says:

tatra sattvaṁ nirmalatvāt prakāśakam anāmayam
sukha-saṅgena badhnāti jñāna-saṅgena cānagha

“O sinless one, the mode of goodness, being purer than the others, is illuminating, and it frees one from all sinful reactions. Those situated in that mode become conditioned by a sense of happiness and knowledge.” Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments: *jñāny aham, 'sukhy aham' ity abhimānas tena puruṣaṁ nibadhnati*—“I am wise. 'I am happy.' By this pride, the living entity is bound by goodness.”

People's association with karma and *jñāna* is the result of attachment born from the prejudices of one's nature that are produced from past karma and *jñāna*. In the previous verse, the Māyāvādī's bondage of *jñāna* is displayed. Regarding the karmis, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.26) says:

na buddhi-bhedaṁ janayed ajñānām karma-saṅginām
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi vidvān yuktaḥ samācaran

“So as not to disrupt the minds of ignorant men attached to the fruitive results of prescribed duties, a learned person should not induce them to stop work. Rather, by working in the spirit of devotion, he should engage them in all sorts of

activities [for the gradual development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness].”

From ancient prejudices one develops association with karma and *jñāna*.

Association with these ancient prejudices is inevitable. Despite all attempts, up to suicide, one cannot give up one's prejudices.

The prejudices or attachments for good and bad attained in this life due to association are called modern prejudices. Everyone in the world is under the control of these two kinds of prejudices. When a living entity is not bound by *māyā*, then by nature he is a servant of Kṛṣṇa. Being bound by *māyā*, a living entity cannot give up ancient and modern wicked prejudices. At that time ancient wicked prejudices become his second nature. Only *sādhu-saṅga* can reform the attachment to prejudices. *Sādhu-saṅga* is the only remedy for this disease. Unless one reforms his attachment to prejudices, one cannot attain perfection in devotional service by any means. As stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (3.23.55):

*saṅgo yaḥ saṁsṛter hetur asatsu vihito 'dhiyā
sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto niḥsaṅgatvāya kalpate*

“Association for sense gratification is certainly the path of bondage. But the same type of association, performed with a saintly person, leads to the path of liberation, even if performed without knowledge.”

Due to association with materialistic people, the living entity is bound in the cycle of birth and death. Even if one unknowingly associates with a materialist, the result must come. And if one unknowingly associates with a real sadhu, he attains freedom from material association. Again in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.12.1-2) it says:

*no rodhayati mām yogo na sāṅkhyam dharmā eva ca
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo neṣṭā-pūrtam na dakṣiṇā*

*vratāni yajñās chandāmsi tīrthāni niyamā yamāḥ
yathāvarundhe sat-saṅgaḥ sarva-saṅgāpaho hi mām*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, by associating with My pure devotees one can destroy one's attachment for all objects of material sense gratification. Such purifying association brings Me under the control of My devotee. One may perform the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system, engage in philosophical analysis of the elements of material nature, practice nonviolence and other ordinary principles of piety, chant the *Vedas*, perform penances, take to the renounced order of life, execute sacrificial performances and dig wells, plant trees and perform other public welfare activities, give in charity, carry out severe vows, worship the demigods, chant confidential mantras, visit holy places, or accept major and minor disciplinary injunctions, but even by performing such activities one does not bring Me under his control.”

Association with prejudices is very dangerous. By affectionately associating with pure devotees of the Lord, one's association with prejudices, in the form of karma and *jñāna*, is destroyed. Due to this association with prejudices a living entity's propensity for ignorance and passion becomes stronger. Whatever propensities for goodness, passion, and ignorance are seen in people's eating, sleeping, and sensual activities are all due to association with prejudices. Karmis and *jñānīs* disrespect Vaiṣṇavas only due to their attachment for prejudices. Until one's attachment to prejudices is destroyed, the ten offenses in chanting will not be uprooted. Offenses

at the feet of sadhus is due to being proud of one's karma and *jñāna*. The offense in chanting in the form of blaspheming devotees enters the heart of the nondevotee and takes up residence there. Worldly attachment is contrary to acceptance of Kṛṣṇa's undisputed supremacy, and it therefore does not allow the unfortunate living entity to fully surrender to the Lord. Thus disobeying the spiritual master, blaspheming the Vedic literatures, interpreting the holy name, considering the chanting of the holy names as equal to the pious activities offered in the *Vedas*, committing sinful activities while pretending to chant the holy name, aversion due to conceptions of I and mine, selling the holy names to unfit persons—all these offenses against the holy names continue. In such a condition, how can one be benefitted? Therefore it is said:

asadbhiḥ saha saṅgas tu na kartavyaḥ kadācana
yasmāt sarvārtha hāniḥ syād adhaḥ pātaś ca jāyate

“One should never associate with materialistic persons, for by doing so all one's assets are lost and he falls from his position.”

It has been seen that many fortunate souls have given up attachment for prejudices by the association of pure Vaiṣṇavas. From the scriptures it is well known that by the association of Śrī Nārada Muni the hunter (Mṛgāri) and Ratnākara (Vālmiki) attained auspiciousness. The foremost instruction of Śrī Rāmānujācārya is this: “If you cannot purify yourself by any endeavor whatsoever, then just go sit with the Vaiṣṇavas and you will achieve all auspiciousness.” By observing the pure characteristics of a devotee, in a very short time a person's mind is changed, his attachment for sense enjoyment decreases, and the seedling of *bhakti* sprouts in the heart. One even gradually develops a taste for the Vaiṣṇavas' food and behavior. We have seen how by associating with Vaiṣṇavas, people have given up many *anarthas*—taste for associating with women, thirst for wealth, desire for sense enjoyment and liberation, inclination for karma and *jñāna*, eating meat and fish, drinking wine, smoking tobacco, and the desire to chew pan. By observing a Vaiṣṇava's quality of not uselessly wasting time, many people have easily given up *anarthas* such as laziness, oversleeping, useless talk, urge of speech, etc. We have also seen that by associating with Vaiṣṇavas for some time someone's cheating propensity and desire for fame have been destroyed. We have seen with our own eyes that by associating with Vaiṣṇavas with a little affection all other association, such as attachment for prejudices, has been vanquished. Those who are attached to winning fights, those who are expert at attaining dominion, those who are eager to accumulate great wealth—all such types of people have attained devotional service by being purified in the association of Vaiṣṇavas. Even the hearts of persons who think, “I will defeat the world by my arguments and attain supremacy,” have been pacified. Without the association of Vaiṣṇavas there is no alternative for rectifying the attachment for prejudices.

One should carefully give up attachment for material assets. People in general have spontaneous attachment for house, household paraphernalia, clothes, ornaments, wealth, wife and children's health, their own health, eatables, trees, and animals. Some people are so addicted to smoking, chewing pan, eating fish and meat, and drinking alcohol that their practice of spiritual life is obstructed. Many people do not respect the Lord's remnants out of great attachment to eating things like fish. Because of the desire to constantly smoke, many people's study of devotional scriptures, relish for hearing and chanting, and remaining long in temples is

obstructed. Attachment for these things is averse to the constant practice of devotional service. If one does not carefully give up these things then he cannot get happiness from his devotional service. Attachment for these things is easily destroyed by the association of devotees. Still, one should try to destroy these petty attachments by fully engaging in devotional service. By observing vows approved in devotional service, those attachments are vanquished.

By properly observing *hari-vāsara*, *Ekādaśī*, and appearance days of the Lord, those attachments are vanquished. The rules of such vows are the provisions for diminishing one's attachments. There are prescriptions for practicing devotional service while giving up all types of enjoyment on those days. There are two types of eatables—those which sustain one's life and those which gratify the senses.

Eating grains and drinking are life sustaining. Fish, meat, pan, intoxicants, and smoking are all for gratifying the senses. On days of vows, unless one totally gives up sense gratifying items, it is not a vow. As far as possible, life sustaining items should also be given up. According to the prescribed needs of one's bodily condition one must try as far as possible to reduce the acceptance of life sustaining eatables. There is no prescription for acceptance of sense gratifying items, the only prescription is to reject them. One of the limbs of a *vrata* is to diminish the devotee's propensity for enjoyment. If one thinks, “Today somehow or other I will renounce, but tomorrow I will enjoy profusely,” then the purpose of the vow will not be successful. The reason is that vows have been prescribed to give up the association of such items by gradual practice. Vows are usually for three days. First by practicing vows for three days, then by practicing for one month, then by practicing for four months (*Cāturmāsya*)—in this way gradually one should completely uproot the attachment for sense gratifying items and leave them forever. For those who cannot remember the statements of *Bhagavad-gītā*: *kṣīpram bhavati dharmātmā*—“He quickly becomes righteous,” in regard to the observance of vows, their renunciation is temporary like the bathing of an elephant.

For those who desire to attain pure devotional service, the association of nondevotees and women is meant to be given up. It is extremely necessary for them to associate with sadhus in order to give up the attachment for prejudices. They must follow all vows meant for Vaiṣṇavas in order to give up the attachment for material objects. One should not be negligent in these practices. One should follow these instructions with great care and respect. If one does not follow carefully, then cheating in the form of duplicity renders the whole endeavor useless. For those who do not have respect in this regard, attaining devotion to Śrī Hari becomes very rare, even after hearing for many births.

What is association and giving up association? Many people have doubts about this. Doubts may be there, because if just by coming close to a materialist or material object is consider associating with them, then there is no way to give up this association. As long as the material body is there, how can one give up the proximity of these things? How can a *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇava give up his family members? One cannot give up the association of deceitful persons, even if they are renunciates. One will have to come across materialists in one's life, whether one is a *gṛhastha* or a renunciate. Therefore the limit for giving up the association of materialists is prescribed in *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* as follows:

dadāti pratigrhṇāti guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhūṅkte bhojayate caiva śaḍ-vidhaṁ prīti-lakṣaṇam

“Offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasāda* and offering *prasāda* are the six symptoms of love shared by one devotee and another.”

O *sādhakas*! One must accept proximity with both bad and good people as one passes his life. This equally applies to householders and renunciates. Proximity must be there, nevertheless one should not engage in bad association. Giving in charity, accepting charity, revealing one's mind, hearing one's mind, accepting foods, and giving foods—if done with love, these are called *saṅga*, or association. Giving some foodstuffs to a hungry person and accepting some charity from a pious man is done out of duty, not out of love. Even if they are materialists, this type of engagement is not considered association. But if they are pure devotees, then such activities are performed out of love. When acts are performed out of love, then it is association. Therefore giving charity to pure Vaiṣṇavas and accepting items or wealth from them becomes *sat-saṅga*. Giving charity to a materialist or accepting charity from one, if done out of love, becomes *asat-saṅga*. When a materialist approaches you, whatever is required to be done should be done only out of duty. One should not speak confidentially with a materialist. Generally there is some love involved in confidential speaking, therefore it is association. While meeting a materialistic friend, one should speak only what is extremely necessary. At that time it is better not to exhibit heartfelt love. But if that friend is a proper Vaiṣṇava, then one should accept his association by speaking to him with love. This type of behavior with relatives and friends creates no hostility. There is no association in ordinary talk. One should behave with ordinary people as one externally behaves with a stranger while buying something in the market. The same dealings with a pure devotee of the Lord should be done out of love. If one is obliged to feed hungry people, needy people, and teachers, he should do so as a host dutifully cares for his guest, there is no need to exhibit love. Care for them, but not out of love. One should feed pure Vaiṣṇavas with love, and when required accept the remnants given by them with love. If one can behave in this way while giving in charity, accepting charity, speaking confidentially, hearing confidentially, feeding, and accepting food with one's wife, children, servants, maidservants, strangers, and whoever else one meets, there will be no unholy association, only good association. There is no hope of achieving devotion to Kṛṣṇa until one gives up unholy association in this way. A renunciate Vaiṣṇava should accept whatever alms he receives by *mādhukarī*, or begging, at the house of a honest householder with the above mentioned consideration. He should always remember the difference between gross begging and *mādhukarī*. A *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇava should accept *prasāda*—grains and drinks—in the house of another *gṛhastha* who has pure character. One should always be cautious about taking *prasāda* in the house of a nondevotee and one with bad character. There is no need to speak further about this. Due to their pious activities, those who have developed faith in devotional service have a little intelligence by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Due to that intelligence they can easily understand the essence of the *ācāryas'* instructions. Therefore only a few words are needed to instruct them. Those who have no pious credits have no faith. Even if they are given volumes of instruction, they will not understand a thing. Therefore Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given only a few words of instruction in *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*.

Sādhu-vṛtti
Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

I have already written separate essays regarding *utsāhā*, *niścayā*, *dhairya*, *tat-tat-karma-pravartana*, and *saṅga-tyāga*. Now I am writing this essay on *sādhu-vṛtti*. There are two kinds of sadhus—householders and renunciates. I will separately describe the *vṛtti*, or occupation, of each. Although householders and renunciates have different occupations, there are some they have in common. These will be discussed separately. There are two meanings of the word occupation—propensity and lifestyle. Propensity means one's nature, or *svabhāva*. Those natural propensities are the living entity's *dharma*. It is said in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.11.31):

prāyaḥ sva-bhāva-vihito nṛṇām dharmo yuge yuge
veda-dṛgbhiḥ smṛto rājan pretya ceha ca śarma-kṛt

“My dear King, *brāhmaṇas* well conversant in Vedic knowledge have given their verdict that in every age [*yuga*] the conduct of different sections of people according to their material modes of nature is auspicious both in this life and after death.”

By passing life in one's natural occupation, one can attain devotional service free from the modes of nature. Otherwise one will fall into irreligion and be unable to make gradual advancement. It is said in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.11.32):

vṛttyā sva-bhāva-kṛtayā vartamānaḥ sva-karma-kṛt
hitvā sva-bhāva-jam karma śanair nirguṇatām iyāt

“If one acts in his profession according to his position in the modes of nature and gradually gives up these activities, he attains the transcendental position.” *Nirguṇatā*, or the transcendental position, means devotion to Kṛṣṇa. As stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.25.33):

tasmād deham imaṁ labdhvā jñāna-vijñāna-sambhavam
guṇa-saṅgam vinirdhūya mām bhajantu vicakṣaṇāḥ

“Therefore, having achieved this human form of life, which allows one to develop full knowledge, those who are intelligent should free themselves from all contamination of the modes of nature and engage exclusively in My loving service.” It has been ascertained by the Lord's use of the two words *nirguṇam* and *mad upāśrayam*³ that whatever is performed out of devotion is called *nirguṇa*, or transcendental. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.25.34-35) states:

rajas tamaś cābhijayet sattva-samsevayā muniḥ
sattvaṁ cābhijayed yukto nairapekṣyeṇa śānta-dhīḥ

“He should conquer the modes of passion and ignorance by engaging himself only with things in the mode of goodness. Then, being fixed in devotional service, the sage should also conquer the material mode of goodness by indifference toward the modes.” Therefore people can become free from the modes of nature if they pass their lives dovetailing everything—*sāttvika* objects, activities, time, and place—with the devotional service of the Lord. Only human beings are eligible for propensities in the mode of goodness, and remaining in that state they gradually

become free from the modes. The general propensities of human beings in the mode of goodness are described in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.11.8-12) as follows: *satya*—speaking the truth without distortion or deviation; *dayā*—sympathy to everyone suffering; *tapah*—austerities (such as observing fasts at least twice in a month on the day of Ekādaśī); *śauca*—cleanliness (bathing regularly at least twice a day—morning and evening—and remembering to chant the holy name of God); *titikṣā*—toleration (being unagitated by seasonal changes or inconvenient circumstances); *ikṣā*—distinguishing between good and bad; *śama*—control of the mind (not allowing the mind to act whimsically); *dama*—control of the senses (not allowing the senses to act without control); *ahimsā*—nonviolence (not subjecting any living entity to the threefold miseries); *brahmacarya*—continence or abstaining from misuse of one's semen (not indulging in sex with women other than one's own wife and not having sex with one's own wife when sex is forbidden, like during the period of menstruation); *tyāga*—giving in charity at least fifty percent of one's income; *svādhyāya*—reading of transcendental literatures like *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*; *saralatā*—simplicity (freedom from mental duplicity); *santoṣa*—being satisfied with that which is available without severe endeavor; *samadarśi-janera-sevā*—rendering service to saintly persons who make no distinctions between one living being and another and who see every living being as a spirit soul; *grāmya-ceṣṭā haite nivṛtti*—not taking part in so-called philanthropic activities; *viparyayeheksā*—distinguishing unnecessary activities; *vṛthālāpa-nivṛtti (maunam)*—being grave and silent; *ātma-vimarśana*—research into the self (as to whether one is the body or the soul); *annādira-vibhāga*—equal distribution of food and drink; *sakala-loke bhagavat-sambandha-buddhi*—accepting all living entities as related to the Lord; as well as *śravaṇa*—hearing; *kīrtana*—chanting; *smaraṇa*—remembering (His words and activities); *sevā*—service; *ijyā*—worship; *nati*—offering obeisances; *dāsya*—accepting the service; *sakhyam*—to consider as a friend; *ātma-nivedana*—surrendering one's whole self. According to the differentiations of these thirty characteristics, the four *varṇas*—*brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, and *śūdra*—and the four *āśramas*—*brahmacārī*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha*, and *sannyāsa*—are born. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.18.42) it is said:

*bhikṣor dharmah śamo 'himsā tapa ikṣā vanaukasah
gṛhiṇo bhūta-rakṣejyā dvijasyācārya-sevanam*

“The main religious duties of a *sannyāsī* are equanimity and nonviolence, whereas for the *vānaprastha* austerity and philosophical understanding of the difference between the body and soul are prominent. The main duties of a householder are to give shelter to all living entities and perform sacrifice, and the *brahmacārī* is mainly engaged in serving the spiritual master.” The life occupations of the four *varṇas* are stated as follows: Study, teaching, worship, teaching worship, giving charity, and accepting charity—these six are the *brāhmaṇas'* occupations; out of these they should maintain their life by teaching, teaching worship, and accepting worship. The *kṣatriyas'* occupations are protecting the *prajā* by punishing miscreants and maintaining the life by taxation. Farming, protecting cows, and business are the *vaiśyas'* occupations; only serving *brāhmaṇas* is the livelihood of the *śūdras*. The traditional occupation of those who are lower than *śūdras* are their means of livelihood.

From all these conclusions of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* it should be understood that

performing devotional service to Śrī Hari is the only purpose of life, there is no other purpose. Unless one makes the gross and subtle bodies favorable for devotional service, one cannot engage in such. There is a need for some arrangements in order to attain a favorable condition in those two bodies. First in order to maintain the gross body there is a need to accumulate a house, household items, grains, and drinks. For the prosperity of the subtle body one needs proper knowledge and a proper occupation. In order to make the bodies completely favorable for devotional service, there is a need to situate them above the modes of nature. Due to the results of fruitive activities from time immemorial, whatever nature and desires a living entity develops is certainly a mixture of goodness, passion, and ignorance. By first enriching the mode of goodness, one should diminish and defeat passion and ignorance and make goodness prominent. When the mode of goodness is completely under the control of devotional service, then it becomes *nirguṇa*. By following this gradual process one's body, mind, and environment become fit for devotional service.

There is a need for *varṇāśrama-dharma* while a human remains in the stage of piety and impiety that are born of his nature. The main purpose of *varṇāśrama-dharma* is this: By gradually following *varṇāśrama-dharma* a human being will become eligible to perform devotional service. Śrīman Mahāprabhu has quoted the following verses from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.5.2-3) to Sanātana Gosvāmī:

mukha-bāhūru-pādebhyaḥ puruṣasyāśramaiḥ saha
catvāro jajñire varṇā guṇair viprādayaḥ pṛthak

ya eṣāṃ puruṣaṃ sākṣād- ātma-prabhavam īśvaram
na bhajanty avajānanti sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ

“From the mouth of Brahmā, the brahminical order has come into existence. Similarly, from his arms the *kṣatriyas* have come, from his waist the *vaiśyas* have come, and from his legs the *śūdras* have come. These four orders and their spiritual counterparts [*brahmacarya*, *gr̥hastha*, *vānaprastha*, and *sannyāsa*] combine to make human society complete. If one simply maintains an official position in the four *varṇas* and *āśramas* but does not worship the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, he falls down from his puffed-up position into a hellish condition.” Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya said that the process for achieving the supreme goal of life is given in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* as follows:

varṇāśramācāravatā puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam

“One can worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, by proper discharge of the principles of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. There is no alternative to pacifying the Lord by execution of the principles of the *varṇāśrama* system.” Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, however, rejected this process as external and requested him to give a higher conclusion. The purport of Śrī Caitanya's statement is this: “O Rāmānanda! *Varṇāśrama-dharma* is meant to regulate the gross and subtle bodies. If someone is satisfied only in that, without engaging in devotional service of Kṛṣṇa, then what is his gain? Therefore, although the process of *varṇāśrama* is the only means of purification for a conditioned soul, still it is external.” As stated in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.2.8):

*dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ pumsām viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratim śrama eva hi kevalam*

“The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.” From this one should not conclude that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has ordered us to discard *varṇāśrama-dharma*. If that would have been the case, then He would not have instructed all living entities through His pastimes of completely following the orders of *gṛhastha* and *sannyāsa*. As long as one has a material body the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma* must be followed, but it should remain under the full control and domination of *bhakti*. *Varṇāśrama-dharma* is like the foundation of one's supreme occupational duty. When one's supreme occupational duty is matured and one achieves his goal, then the process is gradually neglected. Again, it is also abandoned at the time of death.

In the last half of the verse quoted by Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, it says: *viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*—“One should know that without following the process of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, a materialist has no alternative to pass his life favorably for the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu.” This is the only way to achieve the life of a devotee.

Human beings are divided according to their nature into the following divisions: *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, *śūdra*, *saṅkara*, and *antyaja*. Even though the system of *varṇāśrama* is not clearly present in some countries, still it exists in a seedling form. According to one's nature, he develops his occupation and, accordingly, his means of livelihood. By accepting the livelihood and occupation of others, one meets with misfortune. What to speak of misfortune, it especially obstructs one's devotional service. Birth is not the only criteria; the only criteria is one's nature. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.11.35) it is stated:

*yasya yal lakṣaṇam proktam puṁso varṇābhivyañjakam
yad anyatrāpi dṛśyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiśet*

“If one shows the symptoms of being a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, or *śūdra*, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification.” In his commentary, Śrīdhara Swami has written: *samādibhir eva brāhmaṇādi vyavahāro mukhyaḥ, na jāti mātrād ity āha—yasyeti. yad yadi anyatra varṇāntare 'pi dṛśyeta tad varṇāntaram tenaiva lakṣaṇa nimittenaiva varṇena vinirdiśet, na tu jāti nimittenety arthaḥ*—“The *brāhmaṇas*' main characteristics are qualities such as peacefulness, not birth. If these main characteristics are seen in persons other than those born as *brāhmaṇas*, then such persons should be considered *brāhmaṇas*. They should not be considered according to their caste by birth.” This kind of eternal *varṇāśrama-dharma* is always to be followed. It is often useful for devotional service. Members of the four *varṇas* and the lower castes should be eager to progress their *sāttvic* nature. If an outcaste becomes fortunate due to his pious deeds, then he should progress his cultivation of goodness while following the conduct of a *śūdra*. Everyone should give prominence to devotional service and progress the cultivation of goodness to the platform of *nirguṇa*, transcendence, by the mercy of the devotees. These are the stages of *sanātana-dharma*. With devotion, the member of any *varṇa* is considered the best of the *brāhmaṇas*; without devotion, the life of a *brāhmaṇa* fixed in goodness is useless.

For example, let us consider the statement: Some mahatma has said (Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura from *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*): *mahājanera yei patha, tā 'te ha 'ba anurata, pūrvāpara kariyā vicāra*—“I will be attached to the path chalked out by the previous and later *mahājanas*.” The ṛṣis and mahatmas who have taught conduct before the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are counted among the previous *mahājanas*. The conduct seen in the *mahājanas* after the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the conduct of later *mahājanas*. The conduct of the later *mahājanas* is superior and should be adopted. The conduct of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His followers is meant to teach people, so that conduct should be followed in all respects.

What is proper occupation? To know this, one should see the behavior of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's followers. As far as possible I will try to briefly compile them in this essay. First I will write about the behavior and occupation of the *gṛhastha*, as found in the character of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His devotees. As a support for his devotional service, a householder should find a suitable wife. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 15.26-27) the Lord says:

*gṛhastha ha-ilāma, ebe cāhi gṛha-dharma
gṛhiṇī vinā gṛha-dharma nā haya śobhana*

“Since I am remaining at home it is My duty to act as a *gṛhastha*. Without a wife, there is no meaning to householder life.”

While living with one's wife and maintaining religious family life, Kṛṣṇa's servants and maidservants are born in the form of sons and daughters. Nourishing them is called maintaining the family. The pious acquisition of wealth is required in these activities. In this regard Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Antya 5.41) and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 15.96):

*prabhu bale,—parivāra aneka tomāra
nirvāha kemate tabe haibe sabāra?*

*'gṛhastha' hayena inho, cāhiye sañcaya
sañcaya nā kaile kuṭumba-bharaṇa nāhi haya*

“The Lord said: There are so many members in your family. How will you maintain everyone? Being a householder, one needs to save some money. Because he is not doing so, it is very difficult for him to maintain his family.”

One must be educated at a proper age. But he should not study atheistic literatures. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 12.49 and *Madhya* 9.241-242) the Lord says:

*paḍe kene loka?—kṛṣṇa bhakti jānibāre
se yadi nahila, tabe vidyāya ki kare?*

*viṣaya-madāndha saba kichui nā jāne
vidyā-made, dhana-made vaiṣṇava nā cine*

bhāgavata paḍiyāo kā 'ro buddhi nāsa

“Why do people study? Education is only for understanding devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. If you miss this point, then what is the use of your education? Everyone is blinded by pride and sense gratification. Being proud of their

education and wealth, they fail to recognize a Vaiṣṇava. If one studies *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* improperly his intelligence is polluted.”
 Serving guests is the principle duty of a *gṛhastha*—this is the Lord's instruction. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 14.21, 26) it is stated:

*gṛhasthere mahāprabhu śikhāyena dharma
 atithira sevā—gṛhasthera mūla-karma*

*akaitave citta-sukhe yā 'ra yena śakti
 tāhā karilei bali atithite bhakti*

“In this way the Lord satisfied all His guests and taught the world how to behave as a perfect householder. The foremost duty of a householder is to serve his guests. If a householder happily serves his guests without duplicity and according to his ability he is considered hospitable.”

A *gṛhastha* should act with simplicity in his dealings with people; he should not allow any kind of cheating or duplicity in his heart. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 14.142) the Lord says:

*ataeva gṛhe tumi kṛṣṇa bhaja giyā
 kuṭināṭī parihari' ekānta haiyā*

“Therefore go back to your home and worship Lord Kṛṣṇa with full attention, giving up all duplicity.”

It is the principle duty of a *gṛhastha* to serve senior persons. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 15.21) the Lord says:

*gṛhastha ha-iyā kariba pitā-mātāra sevana
 ihāte-i tuṣṭa habena lakṣmī-nārāyaṇa*

“Later I shall become a householder and thus serve My parents, for this action will very much satisfy Lord Nārāyaṇa and His wife, the goddess of fortune.”

A householder should take the principles of renunciation to heart; but he should not simply dress as a renunciate. As stated by the Lord in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 16.237-239):

*sthira hañā ghare yāo, nā hao vātula
 krame krame pāya loka bhava-sindhu-kūla*

*markaṭa-vairāgya nā kara loka dekhāñā
 yathā-yogya viṣaya bhuñja' anāsakta hañā*

*antare niṣṭhā kara, bāhye loka-vyavahāra
 acirāt kṛṣṇa tomāya karibe uddhāra*

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said: Be patient and return home. Don't be a crazy fellow. By and by you will be able to cross the ocean of material existence. You should not make yourself a showbottle devotee and become a false renunciate. For the time being, enjoy the material world in a befitting way and do not become attached to it. Within your heart, you should keep yourself very faithful, but externally you may behave like an ordinary man. Thus Kṛṣṇa will soon be very pleased and deliver you from the clutches of *māyā*.”

A householder is duty-bound to work for the benefit of everyone. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 9.41, 7.92) the Lord said:

*bhārata-bhūmite haila manuṣya-janma yāra
janma sārthaka kari' kara para-upakāra*

*nāca, gāo, bhakta-saṅge kara saṅkīrtana
kṛṣṇa-nāma upadeśi' tāra' sarva-jana*

“One who has taken his birth as a human being in the land of India (Bhārata-varṣa) should make his life successful and work for the benefit of all other people. My dear child, continue dancing, chanting, and performing *saṅkīrtana* in association with devotees. Furthermore, go out and preach the value of chanting *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, for by this process You will be able to deliver all fallen souls.” In this practice of devotional service, duplicitous association has been prohibited. Even in street *saṅkīrtana* one should chant and dance in the association of pure devotees. One should not chant in the association of nondevotees. A householder should fully depend on the will of the Lord in all his activities. The Lord says in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 28.55):

*śuna mātā, īśvarera adhīna saṁsāra
svatantra haite śakti nāhika kāhāra*

“Listen, dear mother, the whole world is under the control of the Lord. No one has the power to become independent.”

A householder should cautiously give up the association of nondevotees, women, and uxorious people. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.87) the Lord said:

*asat-saṅga-tyāga,—ei vaiṣṇava-ācāra
`strī-saṅgī'—eka asādhu, `kṛṣṇābhakta' āra*

“A Vaiṣṇava should always avoid the association of ordinary people. Common people are very much materially attached, especially to women. Vaiṣṇavas should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa.”

By following his prescribed duties a *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇava should accumulate wealth for his maintenance. He should not accumulate wealth by sinful means. Lord Nityānanda Prabhu has stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Antya* 5.685-688):

*śuna dvija, yateka pātaka kaili tui
āra yadi nā karis, saba nimu muṇi*

*parahimsā, dākā, curi—saba anācāra
chāḍa giyā, ihā tumi nā kariha āra*

*dharma pathe giyā tumi laha hari-nāma
tabe tumi anyere karibā paritrāṇa*

*yata saba dasyu, cora ḍākiyā āniyā
dharma-pathe sabāre laoyāo tumi giyā*

“Now listen carefully, O *brāhmaṇa*. I will take responsibility for all your previous misdeeds if you do not repeat them. No more aggression, violence, looting, or murder; give them up forever. Lead a religious life and chant the holy names of the Supreme Lord. Then later you can also save others. Go and meet other dacoits and murderers and bring them to the path of pure religious life.”

A householder should not hanker for another's wife or prostitutes. This is

exhibited in the Lord's dealings with Kṛṣṇadāsa in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 9.227-228):

gosāñira sañge rahe kṛṣṇadāsa brāhmaṇa
bhaṭṭathāri-saha tāhāñ haila daraśana

strī-dhana dekhāñā tāñra lobha janmāila
ārya sarala viprera buddhi-nāśa kaila

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was accompanied by His servant, Kṛṣṇadāsa. He was a *brāhmaṇa*, but he met with the Bhaṭṭathāris there. With women the Bhaṭṭathāris allured the *brāhmaṇa* Kṛṣṇadāsa, who was simple and gentle. By virtue of their bad association, they polluted his intelligence.”

The Lord protected that *brāhmaṇa* from the women's clutches by pulling him by the hair. The words *sarala vipra* mean a weak-hearted young *brāhmaṇa*.

He is a real householder who chants one hundred thousand names every day. Pure devotees should accept *prasāda* in the houses of such *gṛhasthas*. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (9.121-2) the Lord said:

prabhu bale,—jāna, `lakṣeśvara' bali kāre?
prati-dina lakṣa-nāma ye grahaṇa kare

se janera nāma āmi bali `lakṣeśvara'
tathā bhikṣā āmāra, nā yāi anya ghara

“The Lord replied: Do you know who is a *lakṣeśvara*? He is someone who chants one *lakṣa*, or one hundred thousand, holy names everyday. I call such a person a *lakṣeśvara*. I only take meals in that person's house, no one else.”

There is no difference between *smārtas* and Vaiṣṇavas regarding following the codes of religion. The Lord has said in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Antya* 9.388-9):

adhama janera ye ācāra, yena dharma
adhikāri vaiṣṇaveo kare sei karma

kṛṣṇa kṛpāye se ihā jāñibāre pāre
e saba sañkate keha mare, keha tare

“Sometimes an exalted Vaiṣṇava exhibits the same activities as a materialistic person. One can understand this by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa; otherwise in this dilemma one may be liberated or destroyed.”

The purport is that the conviction in the heart of a Vaiṣṇava is independent. If one is a Vaiṣṇava, then he can understand the conviction in the heart of another Vaiṣṇava who is engaged in the same activities as those of the *smārtas*. One who cannot understand this cannot respect Vaiṣṇavas, and he thereby goes to hell.

The Lord has explained the duties of householders in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 15.104):

prabhu kahena—`kṛṣṇa-sevā', `vaiṣṇava-sevana'
`nirantara kara kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana'

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied: Without cessation continue chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Whenever possible, serve Him and His devotees, the Vaiṣṇavas.”

It is the duty of a *gṛhastha* to constantly chant the holy names of the Lord and

serve the Vaiṣṇavas and the Lord with the help of his relatives and by the wealth he has earned through his pious life. Regarding serving the Vaiṣṇavas, one should know that there are three types of nonduplicious devotees. Serving such Vaiṣṇavas is called *vaiṣṇava-sevā*. There is no need to gather many Vaiṣṇavas by invitation. Whenever a Vaiṣṇava comes for any purpose he should be properly served with care. By gathering many Vaiṣṇavas, one may commit offenses. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 15.198):

*bahuta sannyāsī yadi āise eka thāñi
sammāna karite nāri, aparādha pāi*

“If all the *sannyāsīs* come together, it would not be possible for me to pay them proper respects. Therefore I would be an offender.”

It is the duty of a *grhastha* Vaiṣṇava to show mercy on the poor and fallen. As stated in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 3.238):

dīne dayā kare,—ei sādhu-svabhāva haya

“It is a characteristic of all saintly persons to be kind toward the poor and fallen.” A *grhastha* Vaiṣṇava should not desire to give up his body merely out of some sentiment or anger. As stated by the Lord in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 4.57):

*deha-tyāgādi yata, saba—tamo-dharma
tamo-rajo-dharme kṛṣṇera nā pāiye marma*

“Acts such as suicide are influenced by the mode of ignorance, and in ignorance and passion one cannot understand who Kṛṣṇa is.”

There is no consideration of superior or inferior status due to social position in regard to worshiping Kṛṣṇa. In worldly occupations there are different activities according to the different social divisions, which are due to superior and inferior grades of intelligence. There are no such distinctions in the process of devotional service. As confirmed by the Lord in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 4.66-67):

*nīca-jāti nahe kṛṣṇa-bhajane ayogya
sat-kula-vipra nahe bhajanera yogya*

*yei bhaje sei baḍa, abhakta—hīna, chāra
kṛṣṇa-bhajane nāhi jāti-kulādi-vicāra*

“A person born in a low family is not unfit for discharging devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, nor is one fit for devotional service simply because he is born in an aristocratic family of *brāhmaṇas*. Anyone who takes to devotional service is exalted, whereas a nondevotee is always condemned and abominable. Therefore in the discharge of devotional service to the Lord, there is no consideration of the status of one's family.”

Also in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 5.84) it is said:

*sannyāsī paṇḍita-gaṇera karite garva nāśa
nīca-śūdra-dvārā karena dharmera prakāśa*

“To vanquish the false pride of so-called renunciates and learned scholars, He spreads real religious principles, even through a *śūdra*, or lowborn fourth-class man.”

A *grhastha* Vaiṣṇava should feel satisfied with whatever food and clothing he gets

without difficulty. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Antya 4.293):

*sabā' haite bhāgyavanta—śrī śāka, vyañjana
punaḥ punaḥ yāhā prabhu karena grahaṇa*

“The spinach and vegetables are the most fortunate of all, for the Lord accepts them again and again.”

A *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇava should perform devotional service with undeviated attention, knowing Kṛṣṇa as the Lord of all. He should not disrespect the demigods worshiped by the *smārta-sampradāya*. As stated in *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Antya 2.243):

*nā māne' caitanya-patha, bolāya `vaiṣṇava'
śivere amānya kare vyartha tā 'ra saba*

“If one claims to be a Vaiṣṇava, but he disrespects Lord Siva and does not strictly follow the path exhibited by Lord Caitanya, all his efforts are futile.”

It is the duty of a *gṛhastha* to work for the benefit of others even by giving up his own self-interest. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Antya 3.365) it is said:

*āpanāra bhāla hau yete jana dekhe
sujana āpanā chāḍiyāo para rākhe*

“Some people expect only benefits for themselves, but a gentleman cares for others while giving up his own interest.”

A *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇava should respect and worship *tulasī*. As stated in *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Antya 8.159-160):

*saṅkhyā nāma laite ye sthāne prabhu vaise
tathāi rākhena tulasīre prabhu pāse*

*tulasīre dekhena, japena saṅkhyā-nāma
e bhakti-yogera tattva ke bujhibe āna?*

“Wherever the Lord sits to chant His rounds, He keeps *tulasī* before Him. He gazes at *tulasī* while He chants His rounds. Who can understand the science of devotional service?”

A householder with devotion is glorious, while a householder without devotion is insignificant. Whatever social dealings a householder has to perform should be done while taking shelter of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Regarding the character of the *mahājana* Śrī Kalidāsa, the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 16.6-7) states:

*mahā-bhāgavata teṅho sarala udāra
kṛṣṇa-nāma-`saṅkete' cālāya vyavahāra*

*kautukete teṅho yadi pāsaka khelāya
`hare kṛṣṇa' `kṛṣṇa' kari' pāsaka cālāya*

“Kālidāsa was a very advanced devotee, yet he was simple and liberal. He would chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa while performing all his ordinary dealings. When he used to throw dice in jest, he would throw the dice while chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.”

Everyone is prohibited from corrupt earning or spending, and workers are prohibited from accepting bribes. As stated by the Lord in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 9.90, 142-144):

rājāra vartana khāya, āra curi kare
rāja-daṇḍya haya sei śāstrera vicāre

vyaya nā kariha kichu rājāra mūla-dhana'

rājāra mūla-dhana diyā ye kichu labhya haya
sei dhana kariha nānā dharme-karme vyaya

asad-vyaya nā kariha,—yāte dui-loka yāya

“One who serves the government but misappropriates the government's revenue is liable to be punished by the king. That is the verdict of all revealed scriptures. Do not spend any of the King's revenue. First you should pay the revenue due the King, and then you may spend the balance for religious and fruitive activities. Don't spend a farthing for sinful activities for which you will be the loser both in this life and the next.”

A *gṛhastha* should accept a spiritual master who is full of devotion and of pure character. As stated in *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Madhya 21.65)*:

guru yathā bhakti-sūnya, tathā śiṣyagaṇa

“As the guru is without devotion, so are the disciples.”

A householder should be particularly careful not to commit offenses against the Vaiṣṇavas. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata (Madhya 22.33)* the Lord says:

ye vaiṣṇava-sthāne aparādha haya yā 'ra
punaḥ sei kṣamile se ghuce, nahe āra

“When someone offends a Vaiṣṇava, he is not relieved until he is forgiven by that same Vaiṣṇava.”

Serving devotees is a householder's main duty. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 16.57, 60)*:

vaiṣṇavera śeṣa-bhakṣaṇera eteka mahimā
kālidāse pāoyāila prabhura kṛpā-sīmā

bhakta-pada-dhūli āra bhakta-pada-jala
bhakta-bhukta-avaśeṣa—tina mahā-bala

“Taking the remnants of the Vaiṣṇavas' food is so valuable that it induced Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to offer Kālidāsa His supreme mercy. The dust of the feet of a devotee, the water that has washed the feet of a devotee, and the remnants of food left by a devotee are three very powerful substances.”

In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (11.20.27-8)* Lord Kṛṣṇa describes how a householder should act until his natural propensity for enjoying sense objects is overcome and he fully attains the characteristics of a pure devotee:

jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu
veda duḥkhātmaṅ kāmān parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ

tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayaḥ
juṣamāṇas ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan

“Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all

material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee remains happy and worships Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities.”

When a householder has faith, he should take initiation into the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.64):

*śraddhāvān jana haya bhakti-adhikārī
`uttama', `madhyama', `kaniṣṭha'—śraddhā-anusārī*

“A faithful devotee is a truly eligible candidate for the loving service of the Lord. According to one's faith, one is classified as a topmost devotee, an intermediate devotee, or an inferior devotee.”

A *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇava must gradually acquire all the qualities mentioned in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.78-80):

*kṛpālu, akṛta-droha, satya-sāra sama
nidoṣa, vadānya, mṛdu, śuci, akiñcana*

*sarvopakāraka, śānta, kṛṣṇaika-śaraṇa
akāma, anīha, sthira, vijita-ṣaḍ-guṇa*

*mita-bhuk, apramatta, mānada, amānī
gambhīra, karuṇa, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, maunī*

“Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild, and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities—lust, anger, greed, and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate, and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert, and silent.”

A *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇava should be eager to associate with advanced devotees. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.83) it is stated:

kṛṣṇa-bhakti-janma-mūla haya `sādhu-saṅga'

“The root cause of devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is association with advanced devotees.”

Out of all the processes of devotional service, one should give earnest attention to the five limbs mentioned in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.128-129) as follows:

*sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana*

*sakala-sādhana-śreṣṭha ei pañca aṅga
kṛṣṇa-prema janmāya ei pāñcera alpa saṅga*

“One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, reside at Mathurā, and worship the Deity with faith and veneration. These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of these five awakens love for Kṛṣṇa.”

Gradually one should diminish the following of prescribed rules out of obligation and cultivate spontaneous attachment. When spontaneous attachment to the Lord is awakened, many prescriptions are automatically discarded and atonement becomes needless. The difference is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.140, 142-143) as follows:

*kāma tyaji' kṛṣṇa bhaje śāstra-ājñā māni'
deva-ṛṣi-pitrādikera kabhu nahe ṛṇi*

*vidhi-dharma chāḍi' bhaje kṛṣṇera caraṇa
niṣiddha pāpācāre tāra kabhu nahe mana*

*ajñāne vā haya yadi `pāpa' upasthita
kṛṣṇa tānre śuddha kare, nā karāya prāyaścitta*

“If a person gives up all material desires and completely engages in the transcendental loving service of Kṛṣṇa, as enjoined in revealed scriptures, he is never indebted to demigods, sages, or forefathers. Although the pure devotee does not follow all the regulative principles of *varṇāśrama*, he worships the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore he naturally has no tendency to commit sin. If, however, a devotee accidentally becomes involved in a sinful activity, Kṛṣṇa purifies him. He does not have to undergo the regulative form of atonement.”

A *gṛhastha* Vaiṣṇava should not endeavor for any knowledge or renunciation other than knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord in devotional service and renunciation born from devotional service. If one begins the worship of Kṛṣṇa with special care and eagerness, then he achieves all auspiciousness. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.145):

*jñāna-vairāgyādi—bhaktira kabhu nahe `aṅga'
ahiṁsā-yama-niyamādi bule kṛṣṇa-bhakta-saṅga*

“The path of speculative knowledge and renunciation is not very essential for devotional service. Indeed, good qualities such as nonviolence and mind and sense control automatically accompany a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.”

The gradations of devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa are stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 23.10-13). One should cultivate them as follows:

*sādhu-saṅga haite haya `śravaṇa-kīrtana'
sādhana-bhaktye haya `sarvānārtha-nivartana'*

*anārtha-nivṛtti haile bhaktye `niṣṭhā' haya
niṣṭhā haite śravaṇādye `ruci' upajaya*

*ruci haite bhaktye haya `āsakti' pracura
āsakti haite citte janme kṛṣṇe prīty-aṅkura*

*sei `bhāva' gādha haile dhare `prema'-nāma
sei premā—`prayojana' sarvānanda-dhāma*

“When one is encouraged in devotional service by the association of devotees, one becomes free from all unwanted contamination by following the regulative principles and chanting and hearing. When one is freed from all unwanted contamination, he advances with firm faith. When firm faith in devotional service

awakens, a taste for hearing and chanting also awakens. After taste is awakened, a deep attachment arises, and from that attachment the seed of love for Kṛṣṇa grows in the heart. When that ecstatic emotional stage intensifies, it is called love of Godhead. Such love is life's ultimate goal and the reservoir of all pleasure.”
 A *gr̥hastha* Vaiṣṇava should constantly chant the holy names while carefully giving up the ten offenses. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 4.70-71):

*bhajanera madhye śreṣṭha nava-vidhā bhakti
 `kṛṣṇa-prema', `kṛṣṇa' dite dhare mahā-śakti*

*tāra madhye sarva-śreṣṭha nāma-saṅkīrtana
 niraparādhe nāma laile pāya prema-dhana*

“Among the ways of executing devotional service, the nine prescribed methods are the best, for these processes have great potency to deliver Kṛṣṇa and ecstatic love for Him. Of the nine processes of devotional service, the most important is to always chant the holy name of the Lord. If one does so, avoiding the ten kinds of offenses, one very easily obtains the most valuable love of Godhead.”

A householder should accept pure devotional service that is not based simply on religious sentiments. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 23.41) the Lord states:

*mora nṛtya dekhite uhāra kon śakti?
 payaḥ pān karile ki mote haya bhakti?*

“What qualification does he have to watch My dancing? By drinking milk can one attain devotion for Me?”

The mood of servitude is proper for a living entity, and the mood of being lord is detrimental. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 23.480, 482):

*udara-bharaṇa lāgi' ebe pāpī saba
 laoyāya `īśvara āmi'—mūle jaradgava*

*kukkurera bhakṣya deha—ihāre laiya
 balaye `īśvara' viṣṇu-māyā mugdha haiya*

“All sinful persons claim to be God in order to fill their bellies, although factually they are idiots. Accepting the material body, which is meant to be eaten by the dogs, they call themselves God under the influence by Lord Viṣṇu's external energy.”

A *gr̥hastha* Vaiṣṇava should model his character after that of Lord Caitanya and His followers. A householder should follow the ways of life and obtain his means of livelihood as exhibited by Lord Caitanya and His followers. If one desires Kṛṣṇa in all his activities, then those activities are auspicious. By endeavoring to gratify one's senses and attain irrelevant fruits, one becomes a materialist. For a devotee, to remain a householder or to become a renunciate is the same thing. Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Śrī Śivānanda Sena, Śrī Satyarāja Khān, and Śrī Advaita Prabhu were all *gr̥hasthas* and have shown us the way of faultless living. The difference between a householder and a renunciate is due to their different means of livelihood. If the home is favorable for a devotee's devotional service, then he should not leave. It is his duty to remain a *gr̥hastha* with detachment. But when the home becomes unfavorable for his service, he then becomes eligible to leave home. At that time the detachment he

develops for his house through his devotional service is accepted. For this reason, Śrīvasa Paṇḍita did not leave home. For this reason, Svarūpa Dāmodara took *sannyāsa*. All genuine devotees have remained either at home or in the forest due to this consideration. Whoever has left home due to this consideration is called a genuine renunciate. He is always careful not to commit offenses against the holy name. Now let us consider the occupation of a renunciate. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 6.222-227, 236-237) Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu spoke to the renunciate Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī as follows:

bhāla kaila, vairāgīra dharma ācarila

“Raghunātha dāsa has done well, he has acted suitably for a person in the renounced order.

*vairāgī karibe sadā nāma-saṅkīrtana
māgiyā khāṇā kare jīvana rakṣaṇa*

“A person in the renounced order should always chant the holy name of the Lord. He should beg some alms to eat, and he should sustain his life in this way.

*vairāgī haṇā yebā kare parāpeksā
kārya-siddhi nahe, kṛṣṇa karena upekṣā*

“A *vairāgī* [a person in the renounced order] should not depend on others. If he does so, he will be unsuccessful, and he will be neglected by Kṛṣṇa.

*vairāgī haṇā kare jihvāra lālasa
paramārtha yāya, āra haya rasera vaśa*

“If a renunciate is eager for his tongue to taste different foods, his spiritual life will be lost, and he will be subservient to the tastes of his tongue.

*vairāgīra kṛtya—sadā nāma-saṅkīrtana
śāka-patra-phala-mūle udara-bharaṇa*

“The duty of a person in the renounced order is to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra always. He should satisfy his belly with whatever vegetables, leaves, fruits, and roots are available.

*jihvāra lālase yei iti-uti dhāya
śīśnodara-parāyaṇa kṛṣṇa nāhi pāya”*

“One who is subservient to the tongue and who thus goes here and there, devoted to the genitals and the belly, cannot attain Kṛṣṇa.

*grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe
bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe*

“Do not talk like people in general or hear what they say. You should not eat very palatable food, nor should you dress very nicely.

*amānī mānada haṇā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la'be
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā mānase karibe*

“Do not expect honor, but offer all respect to others. Always chant the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and within your mind render service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

A *sannyāsī* or a renunciate should not live in his village with his relatives. As stated

in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 3.177):

*sannyāsīra dharmā nahe—sannyāsa kariṇā
nija janma-sthāne rahe kuṭumba laṇā*

“After accepting *sannyāsa*, it is not the duty of a *sannyāsī* to remain at his birthplace, encircled by relatives.”

A renunciate should not meet a king or woman. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 11.7) the Lord said:

*virakta sannyāsī āmāra rāja-darśana
strī-darśana-sama viṣera bhakṣaṇa*

“Since I am in the renounced order, it is as dangerous for Me to meet a king as to meet a woman. To meet either would be just like drinking poison.”

A renunciate should remain faultless. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 12.51, 53):

*śukla-vastre masi-bindu yaiche nā lukāya
sannyāsīra alpa chidra sarva-loke gāya*

*prabhu kahe,—pūrṇa yaiche dugdhera kalasa
surā-bindu-pāte keha nā kare paraśa*

“As soon as the general public finds a little fault in the behavior of a *sannyāsī*, they advertise it like wildfire. A black spot of ink cannot be hidden on a white cloth. It is always very prominent. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu then said: There may be much milk in a big pot, but if it is contaminated by a drop of liquor, it is untouchable.” The behavior of a renunciate is explained in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 17.229):

*preme garagara mana rātri-divase
snāna-bhikṣādi-nirvāha karena abhyāse*

“His mind was absorbed in great ecstatic love day and night. He ate and bathed simply out of habit.”

The symptoms of a pseudo-renunciate are stated by the Lord in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 2.117-118, 120, 124, 5.35-36):

*prabhu kahe,—vairāgī kare prakṛti sambhāṣaṇa
dekhite nā pāron āmi tāhāra vadana*

*durvāra indriya kare viṣaya-grahaṇa
dāravī prakṛti hare muner api mana*

*kṣudra-jīva saba markāṭa-vairāgya kariyā
indriya carāṇā bule `prakṛti' sambhāṣiyā*

*prabhu kahe,—mora vaśa nahe mora mana
prakṛti-sambhāṣī vairāgī nā kare darśana*

*āmi ta' sannyāsī, āpanāre virakta kari' māni
darśana rahu dūre, `prakṛtira' nāma yadi śuni*

tabahiṅ vikāra pāya mora tanu-mana

prakṛti-darśane sthira haya kon jana?

“The Lord replied: I cannot tolerate seeing the face of a person who has accepted the renounced order of life but who still talks intimately with a woman. So strongly do the senses adhere to the objects of their enjoyment that indeed a wooden statue of a woman attracts the mind of even a great saintly person. There are many persons with little in their possession who accept the renounced order of life like monkeys. They go here and there engaging in sense gratification and speaking intimately with women. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said: My mind is not under My control. It does not like to see anyone in the renounced order who talks intimately with women. I am a *sannyāsī*, and I certainly consider Myself renounced. But not to speak of seeing a woman, if I even hear the name of a woman, I feel changes in My mind and body. Therefore who could remain unmoved by the sight of a woman? It is very difficult.”

Again, detachment in the heart of a householder is greatly appreciated. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 5.80) the Lord says:

*ḡr̥hastha' hañā nahe rāya ṣaḍ-vargera vaṣe
ḡviṣayi' hañā sannyāsire upadeṣe*

“Although Rāmānanda Rāya was a householder, he was not under the control of the six kinds of bodily change. Although apparently a pounds-and-shillings man, he advised even persons in the renounced order.”

A renunciate should not eat foods or accept goods from materialistic people, nor should he invite other renunciates to eat foods or accept goods from such people. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 6.274-275) Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī concludes as follows:

*viṣayīra dravya lañā kari nimantraṇa
prasanna nā haya ihāya jāni prabhura mana

mora citta dravya la-ite nā haya nirmala
ei nimantraṇe dekhi,—ḡpratiṣṭhā'-mātra phala*

“I invite Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu by accepting goods from materialistic people. I know that the Lord's mind is not satisfied by this. My consciousness is impure because I accept all these goods from people who are interested only in pounds, shillings, and pence. Therefore by this kind of invitation I only get some material reputation.”

The Lord replied in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 6.278-279):

*viṣayīra anna khāile malina haya mana
malina mana haile nahe kṛṣṇera smaraṇa

viṣayīra anna haya ḡrājasa' nimantraṇa
dātā, bhoktā—duñhāra malina haya mana*

“When one eats food offered by a materialistic man, one's mind becomes contaminated, and when the mind is contaminated, one is unable to think of Kṛṣṇa properly. When one accepts an invitation from a person contaminated by the material mode of passion, the person who offers the food and the person who accepts it are both mentally contaminated.”

It is not proper for a renunciate to expect unasked for charity. In the *Caitanya-*

caritāmṛta (Antya 6.284, 286) it says:

*prabhu kahe,—bhāla kaila, chāḍila śimha-dvāra
śimha-dvāre bhikṣā-vṛtti—veśyāra ācāra*

*chatre yāi yathā-lābha udara-bharaṇa
anya kathā nāhi, sukhe kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana”*

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said: He has done very well by no longer standing at the Śimha-dvāra gate. Such begging of alms resembles the behavior of a prostitute. If one goes to the booth where free food is distributed and fills his belly with whatever he obtains, there is no chance of further unwanted talk and one can very peacefully chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.”

A renunciate should not construct big temples or residences. By doing so, he becomes entangled in household activities. He should meditate on the service of worshiping *govardhana-śilā*. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 6.296-297) it is stated:

*eka kuñja jala ara tulasī-mañjarī
sattvika-seva ei—suddha-bhave kari*

*dui-dike dui-patra madhye komala mañjarī
ei-mata aṣṭa-mañjarī dibe śraddhā kari'*

“For such worship, one needs a jug of water and a few flowers from a *tulasī* tree. This is worship in complete goodness when performed in complete purity. With faith and love, you should offer eight soft *tulasī* flowers, each with two *tulasī* leaves, one on each side of each flower.”

Devotees accept the *sannyāsa* order of life only in special situations; it is not always required. A Vaiṣṇava born in a *brāhmaṇa*'s family can take such *sannyāsa* when he leaves home, but he should not accept the limbs that are averse to his devotional service. Regarding the characteristics of Svarūpa Dāmodara Prabhu, it is stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 10.107-108):

*niścinte kṛṣṇa bhajiba' ei ta' kāraṇe
unmāde karila teṅha sannyāsa grahaṇe*

*sannyāsa karila śikhā-sūtra-tyāga-rūpa
yoga-paṭṭa nā nila, nāma haila `svarūpa'*

“He was very enthusiastic to worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa without disturbance; therefore it was almost in madness that he accepted the *sannyāsa* order. Upon accepting *sannyāsa*, Puruṣottama Ācārya followed the regulative principles by giving up his tuft of hair and sacred thread, but he did not accept the saffron colored dress. Also, he did not accept a *sannyāsī* title but remained as a *naiṣṭhika-brahmacārī*.”

Someone may accept *sannyāsa* in the form of minimizing his needs. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 20.78, 81) there is the following statement regarding the character of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī:

*tabe miśra purātana eka dhuti dilā
teṅho dui bahirvāsa-kaupīna karilā*

sanātana kahe,—ami mādhuakarī kariba

brāhmaṇera ghare kene ekatra bhikṣā laba?

“When Tapana Miśra gave Sanātana Gosvami a used *dhoti*, Sanātana immediately tore it in pieces to make two sets of outer cloth and underwear. Sanātana replied: I shall practice the process of *mādhukarī*. Why should I accept full meals in the house of a *brāhmaṇa*?”

The Lord's response is found in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.92):

*tina mudrāra bhoṭa gāya, mādhukarī grāsa
dharma-hāni haya, loka kare upahāsa*

“It is contradictory to practice *mādhukarī* and at the same time wear a valuable blanket. One loses his spiritual strength by doing this, and one will also become an object for jokes.”

Regarding the association of a Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī*, the character of Śrī Madhavendra Puri is described in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Antya* 4.419-421, 423-424, 426, 428):

*viṣṇu-māyā vaṣe loka kuchui nā jāne
sakala jagat baddha mahā tamo-guṇe*

“People were conditioned by the mode of ignorance and had lost all knowledge due to the influence of *viṣṇu-māyā*.

*loka dekhi' duḥkha bhāve śrī mādhavapurī
hena nāhi, tilārdha sambhāṣā yā're kari*

“Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī was deeply pained by the godlessness of the people, and he found no one to speak to.

*sannyāsīra sane vā karena sambhāṣaṇa
seha āpanāre mātra bale `nārāyaṇa'*

“Sometimes he would speak to the *sannyāsīs*, but to his dismay he found that they claimed to be *Nārāyaṇa*.

*jñānī, yogī, tapasvī, sannyāsī' khyāti yā'ra
kā'ra mukhe nāhi dāsya mahimā pracāra*

“*Jñānīs*, *yogis*, *tapasvīs*, and famous *sannāyīs* never spoke about the glories of serving the Supreme Lord.

*yata adhyāpaka saba tarka se vākhāne
tā'rā saba kṛṣṇera vighraha nāhi māne'*

“All the teachers and professors were only interested in logic and argument. They refused to accept the spiritual form of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

*loka madhye bhrami kene vaiṣṇava dekhite
kothāo `vaiṣṇava' nāma nā śuni jagate*

“Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī thought: Why am I roaming amongst people searching for a Vaiṣṇava? Wherever I go I don't even hear the word `Vaiṣṇava'.

*eteke se, vana bhāla e saba haite
vane kathā nahe avaiṣṇavera sahite*

“Therefore he considered it better to stay in the forest where he did not have to speak with nondevotees.”

A Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī* should give up the use of Māyāvādī markings. Concerning the character of Śrī Brahmananda Bharati, the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 10.154) says:

*brahmānanda pariyāche mṛga-carmāmbara
tāhā dekhi' prabhu duḥkha pāilā antara*

“When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His devotees approached him, they saw that he was covered with a deerskin. Seeing this, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu became very unhappy.”

Regarding the pure *grhastha* Vaiṣṇavīs, the lady devotees, the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 12.42) describes the procedure for seeing a *sannyāsī*:

*pūrvavat prabhu kailā sabāra milana
strī-saba dūra ha-ite kailā prabhura daraśana*

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu received them all, just as He had in previous years. The women, however, saw the Lord from a distance.”

A renunciate Vaiṣṇava is prohibited from all kinds of enjoyment. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 12.108):

*prabhu kahe,—sannyāsīra nāhi taile adhikāra
tāhāte sugandhi taila—parama dhikkāra!*

“The Lord replied: A *sannyāsī* has no use for oil, especially perfumed oil such as this. Take it out immediately.”

A renunciate Vaiṣṇava is forbidden from hearing the singing of a woman. As described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 13.78, 80, 83-85):

*eka-dina prabhu yameśvara-ṭoṭā yāite
sei-kāle deva-dāsī lāgilā gāite*

*dūre gāna śuni' prabhura ha-ila āveśa
strī, puruṣa, ke gāya—nā jāne viśeṣa*

strī gāya' bali' govinda prabhure kailā kole

strī-nāma śuni' prabhura bāhya ha-ilā

*prabhu kahe,—govinda, āji rākhilā jīvana
strī-paraśa haile āmāra ha-ita maraṇa*

“One day when the Lord was going to the temple of Yameśvara, a female singer began to sing in the Jagannātha temple. Hearing the song from a distance, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu immediately became ecstatic. He did not know whether it was a man or a woman singing. Just then Govinda caught the Lord in his arms and cried: It is a woman singing! As soon as He heard the word ‘woman,’ the Lord became externally conscious. My dear Govinda, He said, you have saved My life. If I had touched the body of a woman, I would certainly have died.”

Concerning a renunciate's bedding, the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 13.5-7, 10, 12, 14-15, 17-19) states as follows:

kalāra śaralāte, śayana, ati kṣiṇa kāya

sahite nāre jagadānanda, sṛjilā upāya
sūkṣma vastra āni' gaurika diyā rāngāilā
śimulira tulā diyā tāhā pūrāilā
tūli-bālisa dekhi' prabhu krodhāviṣṭa ha-ilā
govindere kahi' sei tūli dūra kailā
prabhu kahena,—khāṭa eka ānaha pādite
jagadānanda cāhe āmāya viṣaya bhujāite
sannyāsī mānuṣa āmāra bhūmite śayana
āmāre khāṭa-tūli-bālisa mastaka-muṇḍana
svarūpa-gosāñi tabe sṛjilā prakāra
kadalīra śuṣka-patra ānilā apāra
nakhe ciri' ciri' tāhā ati sūkṣma kailā
prabhura bahirvāsa duite se saba bharilā
ei-mata dui kailā oḍana-pāḍane
aṅgikāra kailā prabhu aneka yatane

“The Lord was very thin, and He would lay down to rest on the dry bark of plantain trees. Jagadānanda could not tolerate this, so he devised a remedy. He acquired some fine cloth and colored it with red oxide. Then he filled it with cotton from a śimula tree. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu saw the quilt and pillow, He was immediately very angry. The Lord asked Govinda to put aside the quilt and pillow. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said: You should bring a bedstead here for Me to lie on. Jagadānanda wants Me to enjoy material happiness. I am in the renounced order, and therefore I must lie on the floor. For Me to use a bedstead, quilt, or pillow would be very shameful. Then Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī devised another method. First he secured a large quantity of dry banana leaves. He then tore the leaves into very fine fibers with his nails and filled two of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's outer garments with the fibers. In this way, Svarūpa Dāmodara made some bedding and a pillow, and after much endeavor by the devotees, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted them.”

Regarding a renunciate's food, the Lord has said in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 8.84-85):

prabhu kahe,—sabe kene purīre kara roṣa?
śahaja' dharma kahe teṅho, tānra kibā doṣa?
yati hañā jihvā-lāmpaṭya—atyanta anyāya
yatira dharma,—prāṇa rākhite āhāra-mātra khāya

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied: Why are all of you angry at Rāmacandra Purī? He is expounding the natural principles of *sannyāsa* life. Why are you accusing him? For a *sannyāsī* to indulge in satisfying the tongue is a great offense. The duty of a *sannyāsī* is to eat only as much as needed to keep body and soul together.”

All the above mentioned items are accepted as the proper occupations of renunciate Vaiṣṇavas.

Now the proper occupations for all Vaiṣṇavas—householders and renunciates—will be explained. There is no duty in the age Kali other than chanting the holy names and mantras of Kṛṣṇa. It is necessary for everyone to take initiation into the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 7.73-74, 97 and 17.30, 75):

*kṛṣṇa-mantra haite habe saṁsāra-mocana
kṛṣṇa-nāma haite pābe kṛṣṇera caraṇa*

“Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord.

*nāma vinu kali-kāle nāhi āra dharma
sarva-mantra-sāra nāma, ei śāstra-marma*

“In this Age of Kali there is no religious principle other than the chanting of the holy name, which is the essence of all Vedic hymns. This is the purport of all scriptures.

*kṛṣṇa-nāme ye ānanda-sindhu-āsvādana
brahmānanda tāra āge khātodaka-sama*

“Compared to the ocean of transcendental bliss that is tasted by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, the pleasure derived from impersonal Brahman realization [*brahmānanda*] is like the shallow water in a canal.

*sadā nāma la-iba, yathā-lābhetē santoṣa
eita ācāra kare bhakti-dharma-poṣa*

“One should strictly follow the principle of always chanting the holy name, and one should be satisfied with whatever he gets easily. Such devotional behavior solidly maintains one's devotional service.

*jñāna-karma-yoga-dharme nahe kṛṣṇa vaśa
kṛṣṇa-vaśa-hetu eka—prema-bhakti-rasa*

“By following the paths of speculative philosophical knowledge, fruitive activity, or mystic yoga to control the senses, one cannot satisfy Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. Unalloyed devotional love for Kṛṣṇa is the only cause for the Lord's satisfaction.” The proper procedure and proper instruction for accepting a spiritual master is given in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 8.128, 221, 229) as follows:

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei `guru' haya*

*rāgānuga-mārge tānre bhaje yei jana
sei-jana pāya vraje vrajendra-nandana*

*siddha-dehe cinti' kare tāhāññi sevana
sakhī-bhāve pāya rādhā-kṛṣṇera caraṇa*

“Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī*, or a *śūdra*—regardless of what he is—he can become a spiritual master if he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa. If one worships the

Lord on the path of spontaneous love and goes to Vṛndāvana, he receives the shelter of Vrajendra-nandana, the son of Nanda Mahārāja. After thinking of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their pastimes for a long time and after getting completely free from material contamination, one is transferred to the spiritual world. There the devotee attains an opportunity to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa as one of the *gopīs*.” One needs to always associate with devotees. One should associate with affectionate devotees who are more advanced, yet of the same temperament. As explained in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 8.251):

*śreyo-madhye kona śreyah jīvera haya sāra?
kṛṣṇa-bhakta-saṅga vinā śreyah nāhi āra*

“Out of all auspicious and beneficial activities, which is best for the living entity? Rāmānanda Rāya replied: The only auspicious activity is association with the devotees of Kṛṣṇa.”

Although a Vaiṣṇava comes from a bona fide *sampradāya*, his association should be considered according to the Lord's statements in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 9.276-277):

*prabhu kahe,—karmī, jñānī,—dui bhakti-hīna
tomāra sampradāye dekhi sei dui cihna*

*sabe, eka guṇa dekhi tomāra sampradāye
satya-vigraha kari' īśvare karaha niścaye*

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said: Both the fruitive worker and the speculative philosopher are considered nondevotees. We see both elements present in your *sampradāya*. The only qualification that I see in your *sampradāya* is that you accept the form of the Lord as truth.”

One should not remain in a place where incompatible mixtures of mellows or contradictions in the conclusions of devotional service are presented. The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 10.113) has the following statement:

*bhakti-siddhānta-viruddha, āra rasābhāsa
sunite nā haya prabhura cittera ullāsa*

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was never pleased to hear books or verses opposed to the conclusive statements of devotional service. The Lord did not like hearing *rasābhāsa*, the overlapping of transcendental mellows.”

One should carefully gather the good qualities needed for devotional service. The nature of a devotee is described in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 7.72) as follows:

*mahānubhāvera cittera svabhāva ei haya
puṣpa-sama komala, kaṭhina vajra-maya*

“This is the nature of the mind of an uncommon personality. Sometimes it is soft like a flower, but sometimes it is as hard as a thunderbolt.”

The welfare activities of a devotee are described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 8.39) as follows:

*mahānta-svabhāva ei tārite pāmara
nija kārya nāhi tabu yāna tāra ghara*

“It is the general practice of all saintly people to deliver the fallen. Therefore they

go to people's houses, although they have no personal business there.”
In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 11.4) the Lord gives an example of how a devotee should pledge:

*prabhu kahe,—kaha tumi, nāhi kichu bhaya
yogyā haile kariba, ayogyā haile naya*

“The Lord gave the Bhattācārya assurance that he could speak without fear, but added that if his statement was suitable He would accept it, and if it were not, He would reject it.”

The benefits of dealing affectionately with a devotee are described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 11.26) as follows:

*prabhu kahe,—tumi kṛṣṇa-bhakata-pradhāna
tomāke ye pṛīti kare, sei bhāgyavān*

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu then said: My dear Rāmānanda Rāya, you are the foremost of all the devotees of Kṛṣṇa; therefore whoever loves you is certainly a very fortunate person.”

Firm determination for one's attachment is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 12.31) as follows:

*kintu anurāgī lokera svabhāva eka haya
iṣṭa nā pāile nija prāṇa se chādaya*

“Still, isn't it the nature of an attached man to give up his life if he does not attain his desired object?”

Teaching others by one's good example is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 12.117) as follows:

*tumi bhāla kariyācha, śikhāha anyere
ei-mata bhāla karma seho yena kare*

“The Lord would say: You have done well. Please teach this to others so that they may act in the same way.”

The need for care and eagerness in the execution of devotional service is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 24.171) as follows:

yatnāgraha vinā bhakti nā janmāya preme

“Without sincere endeavor in devotional service, one cannot attain love of Godhead.” The need for giving up the association of logicians is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 12.183) as follows:

*tārkika-śṛgāla-saṅge bheu-bheu kari
sei mukhe ebe sadā kahi `kṛṣṇa' `hari'*

“In the association of the jackals known as logicians, I simply continued to bark a resounding `bheu bheu.' Now, from the same mouth I am chanting the holy names Kṛṣṇa and Hari.”

An example of unhappiness by seeing the distress of others is given in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 15.162-163) as follows:

*jīvera duḥkha dekhi' mora hṛdaya bidare
sarva-jīvera pāpa prabhu deha' mora śire*

*jīvera pāpa lañā muñi karoṇ naraka bhoga
sakala jīvera, prabhu, ghucāha bhava-roga*

“My Lord, my heart breaks to see the sufferings of all conditioned souls; therefore I request You to transfer the karma of their sinful lives upon my head. My dear Lord, let me suffer perpetually in a hellish condition, accepting all the sinful reactions of all living entities. Please finish their diseased material life.”

The need for a pure heart is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 15.274) as follows:

*sahaje nirmala ei `brāhmaṇa'-hṛdaya
kṛṣṇera vasite ei yogya-sthāna haya*

“The heart of a *brāhmaṇa* is by nature very clean; therefore it is a proper place for Kṛṣṇa to sit.”

One must give up envy, or the distress arising from seeing other's prosperity. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 15.275) this is described as follows:

*`mātsarya'-caṇḍāla kene ihān vasāile
parama pavitra sthāna apavitra kaile*

“Why have you allowed jealousy to sit here also? Because of this, you have become like a *caṇḍāla*, the lowest of men, and you have also contaminated a most purified place—your heart.”

One must be a staunch follower of Lord Caitanya. As described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 16.148):

*prabhu lāgi' dharma-karma chāḍe bhakta-gaṇa
bhakta-dharma-hāni prabhura nā haya sahana*

“All the devotees would abandon all kinds of duties for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's sake, yet the Lord did not like the devotees' giving up their promised duties.”

The need to completely abandon faults is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.91) as follows:

*se kene rākhibe tomāra śeṣa viṣaya-bhoga?
roga khaṇḍi' sad-vaidyā nā rākhe śeṣa roga*

“Why should Kṛṣṇa allow you to maintain a last bit of material attachment? After vanquishing a disease, a good physician does not allow any of the disease to remain.”

The devotee's faith in the conclusions of devotional service is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.62) as follows:

*`śraddhā'-śabde—viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niścaya
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*

“By rendering transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa, one automatically performs all subsidiary activities. This confident, firm faith, favorable to the discharge of devotional service, is called *śraddhā*.”

The need for total surrender is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.102) as follows:

*śaraṇa lañā kare kṛṣṇe ātma-samarpaṇa
kṛṣṇa tāre kare tat-kāle ātma-sama*

“When a devotee thus fully surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, Kṛṣṇa accepts him as one of His confidential associates.

One must give up atheistic philosophies with repentance as described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 25.43):

paramārtha-vicāra gela, kari mātra `vāda'
kāhān mukti pāba, kāhān kṛṣṇera prasāda

“The atheists, headed by the Māyāvādī philosophers, do not care for liberation or Kṛṣṇa's mercy. They simply continue to put forward false arguments and counter-theories to atheistic philosophy, not considering or engaging in spiritual matters.” A devotee should always be neutral. As described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 3.23):

`nirapekṣa' nahile `dharma' nā yāya rakṣaṇe

“Without being neutral one cannot protect religious principles.”

The devotee should be afraid of insulting other Vaiṣṇavas. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 3.164):

mahāntera apamāna ye deśa-grāme haya
eka janāra doṣe saba deśa ujādaya

“Wherever an advanced devotee is insulted, for one man's fault the entire town or place is afflicted.”

The devotees' duty is to practice forgiveness and show mercy. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 3.213, 237) and the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Ādi* 13.182):

bhakta-svabhāva,—ajña-doṣa kṣamā kare
dīne dayā kare,—ei sādhu-svabhāva haya
prabhu bole,—vipra saba danta parihari'
bhaja giyā kṛṣṇa, sarvabhūte dayā kari'

“A characteristic of a pure devotee is that he excuses any offense by an ignorant rascal. It is a characteristic of all saintly persons to be kind toward the poor and fallen. The Lord said: O *brāhmaṇa*! Give up all pride and serve Kṛṣṇa by showing mercy to all.”

The devotee's duty is to preach by setting a good example. As explained in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 4.103):

`ācāra', `pracāra',—nāmera karaha `dui' kārya
tumi—sarva-guru, tumi jagatera ārya

“You simultaneously perform both duties in relation to the holy name by your personal behavior and by your preaching. Therefore you are the spiritual master of the entire world, for you are the most advanced devotee in the world.”

The devotee's duty is to follow Vaiṣṇava etiquette. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 4.130):

tathāpi bhakta-svabhāva—maryādā-rakṣaṇa
maryādā-pālana haya sādhu bhūṣaṇa

“Still, it is the characteristic of a devotee to observe and protect Vaiṣṇava etiquette. Maintenance of Vaiṣṇava etiquette is the ornament of a devotee.”

One should consider a Vaiṣṇava's body spiritual. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 4.191) it is said:

*prabhu kahe,—vaiṣṇava-deha `prākṛta' kabhu naya
`aprākṛta' deha bhaktera `cid-ānanda-maya'*

“Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said: The body of a devotee is never material. It is considered to be transcendental, full of spiritual bliss.”

There is a need for worshiping Kṛṣṇa in a solitary place after completing one's activities of household life and sense gratification. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 4.214-216) it is described:

*eka-vatsara rūpa-gosānira gaude vilamba haila
kuṭumbera `sthiti'-artha vibhāga kari' dila*

*gaude ye artha chila, tāhā ānailā
kuṭumba-brāhmaṇa-devālaye bāñṭi' dilā*

*saba manaḥ-kathā gosāni kari' nirvāhaṇa
niścinta hañā śighra āilā vṛndāvana*

“Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī was delayed in Bengal for a year because he was dividing his money among his relatives to situate them in their proper positions. He collected whatever money he had accumulated in Bengal and divided it among his relatives, the *brāhmaṇas*, and the temples. Thus after finishing all the tasks he had on his mind, he returned to Vṛndāvana fully satisfied.”

The devotee must give up the desire for fame. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 5.78):

*mahānubhavera ei sahaja `svabhāva' haya
āpanāra guṇa nāhi āpane kahaya*

“This is a natural characteristic of those advanced in devotional service. They do not personally speak of their own good qualities.”

A devotee should have no faith in worldly poetry. As described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 5.107):

*grāmya-kavira kavitva śunite haya `duḥkha'
vidagdha-ātmīya-vākya śunite haya `sukha'*

“Hearing the poetry of a person who has no transcendental knowledge and who writes about the relationships between man and woman simply causes unhappiness, whereas hearing the words of a devotee fully absorbed in ecstatic love causes great happiness.”

It is an offense to disobey the order of the spiritual master. The result is described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 8.99):

*guru upekṣā kaile, aiche phala haya
krame īśvara-paryanta aparādhe thekaya*

“If one's spiritual master rejects him, one becomes so fallen that he, like Rāmacandra Purī, commits offenses even to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” A devotee should give up the desire for liberation and pride of learning. As described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 13.109-110):

*rāmadāsa yadi prathama prabhure mililā
mahāprabhu adhika tānre kṛpā nā karilā*

antare mumukṣu teṅho, vidyā-garvavān

“When Rāmadāsa Viśvāsa met Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Lord did not show him any special mercy, although this was their first meeting. Within his heart, Rāmadāsa Viśvāsa was an impersonalist who desired to merge into the existence of the Lord, and he was very proud of his learning.”

Humility is essential for a devotee. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 20.28) it is described:

*premera svabhāva—yāhān premera sambandha
sei māne,—kṛṣṇe mora nāhi prema-gandha'*

“Wherever there is a relationship of love of Godhead, the natural symptoms are that the devotee does not think himself a devotee, but always thinks that he has not even a drop of love for Kṛṣṇa.”

A devotee should give up the desire for conquest. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 13.173):

*ḍig-vijaya kariba'—vidyāra kārya nahe
īśvare bhajile, sei vidyā `satya' kahe*

“Conquering the world by means of material education is not desirable. If one engages himself in devotional service, his education is perfected.”

A devotee should know the Lord is one without a second and understand His relationship with all living entities. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 16.76-78, 80-81) it is said:

śuna, bāpa, sabārai ekai īśvara

*nāma-matra bheda kare hinduye yavane
paramārthe `eka' kahe korāṇe purāṇe*

*eka śuddha nitya-vastu akhaṇḍa avyaya
paripūrṇa hañā vaise sabāra hṛdaya*

*se prabhura nāma-guṇa sakala jagate
balena sakale mātra nija-śāstra mate*

*ye īśvara, se punaḥ sabāra bhāva laya
himsā karilei se, tāhāna himsā haya*

“My dear Sir, there is only one God for all living entities. The difference between the Moslem God and the Hindu God is in name only. According to all scriptures—*Koran* or *Purāṇa*—God is one. He is the nondual, eternal, transcendental Absolute Truth, infallible and perfectly complete, and in that capacity He resides in everyone's heart. The Supreme Lord's transcendental name and qualities are glorified throughout the world according to the respective scriptures. The Lord accepts everyone's individual mood of surrender. By committing violence to others, you commit violence to Him.”

How a devotee should be always firmly fixed on the path of devotional service is

seen in the following verse from *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 16.94):

*khaṇḍa khaṇḍa hai' deha yāya yadi prāṇa
tabu āmi vadane nā chāḍi hari-nāma*

“Even if my body is cut into pieces and I lose my life, I will never give up chanting the Lord's holy name.”

How a devotee should deal with an enemy is described in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 16.113):

*e saba jīvere kṛṣṇa! karaha prasāda
mora drohe nahu e sabāra aparādha*

“O Kṛṣṇa! Be merciful on these living entities! Forgive their offense of torturing me.”

A devotee must give up the symptoms of pride such as desire for fame and cheating. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 16.228-229) it is said:

*baḍa loka kari' loka jānuka āmāre
āpanāre prakatāi dharma-karma kare*

*e sakala dāmbhikera kṛṣṇe prīti nāi
akaitava haile se kṛṣṇa-bhakti pāi*

“He is presenting himself as an important person by imitating some religious sentiments. Actually this arrogant and deceitful *brāhmaṇa* has no love for Kṛṣṇa. To achieve the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa one has to be free from duplicity.” A devotee must reject caste consciousness in his spiritual life. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 16.238-239) it is stated:

*adhama kulete yadi viṣṇu-bhakti haya
tathāpi se-i se pūjya—sarva-śāstre kaya*

*uttama kulete janmi' śrī kṛṣṇe nā bhaje
kule tāra ki karibe, narakete maje*

“If a devotee of the Lord is born in a low-class family, he is still worthy of worship; that is the injunction of the scriptures. And if someone is born in a high-class family but does not worship the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then his high birth is useless and he falls to hell.”

The benefits of loud congregational chanting of the holy names is described in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 16.284-286) as follows:

*japa karttā haite ucca-saṅkīrtana-kārī
śata-guṇa adhika se purāṇete dhari*

*śuna vipra! mana diyā ihāra kārāṇa
japi' āpanāre sabe karaye poṣaṇa*

*ucca kari' karile govinda saṅkīrtana
jantu-mātra śuniñāi pāya vimocana*

“The *Purāṇas* say that a person who chants the Lord's name loudly is a hundred times more pious than the person who chants to himself. O *brāhmaṇa*, listen carefully to the reason behind this. One who chants softly liberates only himself,

but one who loudly chants the names of Govinda liberates himself along with all living entities who hear him.”

A devotee should not carry the burden of the scriptures like an ass; rather, he should understand their purport. The *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 1.158) confirms this in the following words:

*śāstrera nā jāne marma, adhyāpanā kare
garddabhera prāya yena śāstra bahi' mare*

“One who teaches the scriptures without knowing their purport is like an ass carrying the load of all the scriptures.”

How a devotee should give up enviousness is explained in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 1.240) as follows:

*bhakti-hīna karma kona phala nāhi pāya
sei karma bhakti-hīna—parahimsā yāya*

“Activities that are devoid of *bhakti* produce no result. Such activities result in violence to others.”

A devotee should give up *sevā-aparādhas*, or offenses in serving the Deity. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 5.121):

*sevā-vigrahera prati anādara yā `ra
viṣṇu-sthāne aparādha sarvathā tāhāra*

“One who has no respect for the Deity form of the Lord is constantly committing offenses at the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu.”

If a person is internally situated as a Vaiṣṇava even though externally he maintains attachment for sense gratification, then he is counted as a devotee. As described in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 7.22, 38):

*viṣayīra prāya tān `ra paricchada saba
cinite nā pāre keha tiṅho ye vaiṣṇava*

*āsiyā rahila navadvīpe gūḍharūpe
parama bhogīra prāya sarvaloke dekhe*

“Puṅḍarīka Vidyānidhi dressed like a materialistic. No one was able to recognise that he was a great Vaiṣṇava. He came to Nabadvīpa and remained there incognito. Everyone saw him as a grossly materialistic person.”

A devotee should not maintain false pride due to material education and so on. In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 9.234) it is explained:

*ki karibe vidyā, dhana, rūpa, yaśa, kule
ahaṅkāra bāḍi' saba paḍaye nirmūle*

“What is the use of education, wealth, beauty, fame, and high birth? They only increase one's pride to the point of his falldown.”

A devotee should remain fixed in the principles of Vaiṣṇavism, he should not support various opinions for social reasons. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 10.185, 188, 192):

*kṣane dante tṛṇa laya, kṣane jāṭhi māre
o khaḍa jāṭhiyā veṭā nā dekhibe more*

*prabhu bale,—o vetā yakhana yathā yāya
sei mata kathā kahi' tathāi misāya*

*bhakti-sthāne uhāra haila aparādha
etake uhāra haila daraśana bādha*

“Sometimes he takes straw in his mouth, and sometimes he beats Me with a stick. Therefore he is not fit to see Me. The Lord continued: Wherever he goes, he mixes with those people and talks like them. He is an offender at the feet of Bhakti, that is why he is forbidden to see Me.”

The fault of taking sides against a Vaiṣṇava is described in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 13.160) as follows:

*ye pāpiṣṭha eka vaiṣṇavera pakṣa haya
anya vaiṣṇavere ninde, sei yāya kṣaya*

“A sinful person who takes the side of one Vaiṣṇava and condemns another is vanquished.”

A devotee should not commit sinful activities after accepting the holy name of the Lord. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 13.225):

*prabhu bale,—torā āra nā karis pāpa
jagāi mādhai bale,—āra nāre bāpa*

“The Lord said: Do not commit further sins. Jagai and Madhai replied: Never again, O Lord.”

How a devotee should remain aloof from the rules and regulations is explained in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 16.144, 147):

*yata vidhi, niṣedha—sakalai bhakti dāsa
ihāte yāhāra duhkha, sei yāya nāsa*

*viṣaya madāndha saba e marma nā jāne
suta dhana kula-made vaiṣṇava nā cine*

“All the rules and regulations are servants of Bhakti. One who has trouble accepting this is destroyed. One who is blinded by false pride can never understand this secret. Being proud of his children, wealth, and high birth, he fails to recognize a Vaiṣṇava.”

A devotee should avoid conversing with an atheist. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 17.19):

*nagare haila kibā pāṣaṇḍi sambhāṣa
ei vā kāraṇe nahe prema parakāśa*

“Did I speak with an atheist in town? Is that why love of God is not manifesting today?”

Giving up relationships with nondevotees is most essential; Śrīla Advaita Prabhu gives the following statement in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 19.175):

*yadi mora putra haya, haya vā kiṅkara
vaiṣṇavāparādhī muṇi nā dekhoṅ gocara*

“Even if he is My son or servant, I will never see the face of a person who offends Vaiṣṇavas.”

There is no comparison between *bhakti* and pious activities. As explained in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Madhya 23.54):

*prabhu bale,—tapaḥ kari nā karaha bala
viṣṇu-bhakti sarva-śreṣṭha jānaha kevala*

“The Lord said: Don't think you have become powerful by performing austerities. Know for certain that devotion to Lord Viṣṇu is the highest goal.”
The hypocrites and cheaters sometimes advertise themselves as incarnations and thus increase their pride. A devotee should cautiously avoid their company. As stated in the *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 14.82-83):

*madhye madhye mātra kata pāpi-gaṇa giyā
loka naṣṭa kare āpanāre laoyāiyā*

*udara bharāṇa lāgi' pāpiṣṭha sakale
`raghunātha' kari' āpanāre keha bale*

“Sometimes a group of evil persons would try to mislead people in general from the spiritual path with wrong advice. These sinners simply cheat people in order to fill their bellies by claiming to be Lord Rāma.”
Devotees should constantly take shelter of the holy names while passing their lives without duplicity or sin. There is no greater religious principle than this. The *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (Ādi 14.139-140) gives the following conclusion:

*ataeva kali-yuga nāma-yajña sāra
āra kona dharma kaile nāhi haya pāra*

*rātri dina nāma laya khāite suite
tāhāra mahimā vede nāhi pāre dite*

“Therefore, in Kali-yuga chanting the holy name is the essential religious principle; no other religious practice can help one cross the material ocean of nescience. Even the *Vedas* are unable to sufficiently glorify one who chants the Lord's holy name day and night in all situations.”
Human beings should worship Kṛṣṇa by considering the natural qualities and accepting the livelihoods of the previous and later *mahājanas*. Pure devotional service is proportionately enhanced by following a proper occupation, otherwise it is never achieved.