



Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

The GREATEST Achievement

Inside: Giving up Material Desires | Divine Tolerance | Analogy
Arena | Verse of the Month | Thematic: Three Kinds of People who
Cannot serve Krishna | Kids Corner: Mood of Appreciation



FROM THE DESK OF
THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA




Giving up Material Desires

What is sinful life?

All desires within this material world are sinful because material desire means sense gratification, which always involves action that is more or less sinful.

How to go beyond sinful life?

Pure bhakti is anyābhilāṣitā-śūnya; in other words, it is free from material desires, which result from karma and jñāna. One who is situated in devotional service no longer has material desires, and therefore he is beyond sinful life.

Material desires should be completely stopped. Otherwise, although one's austerities, penances and charity may free one from sin for the time being, one's desires will reappear because his heart is impure. Thus he will act sinfully and suffer. SB 6.2.17

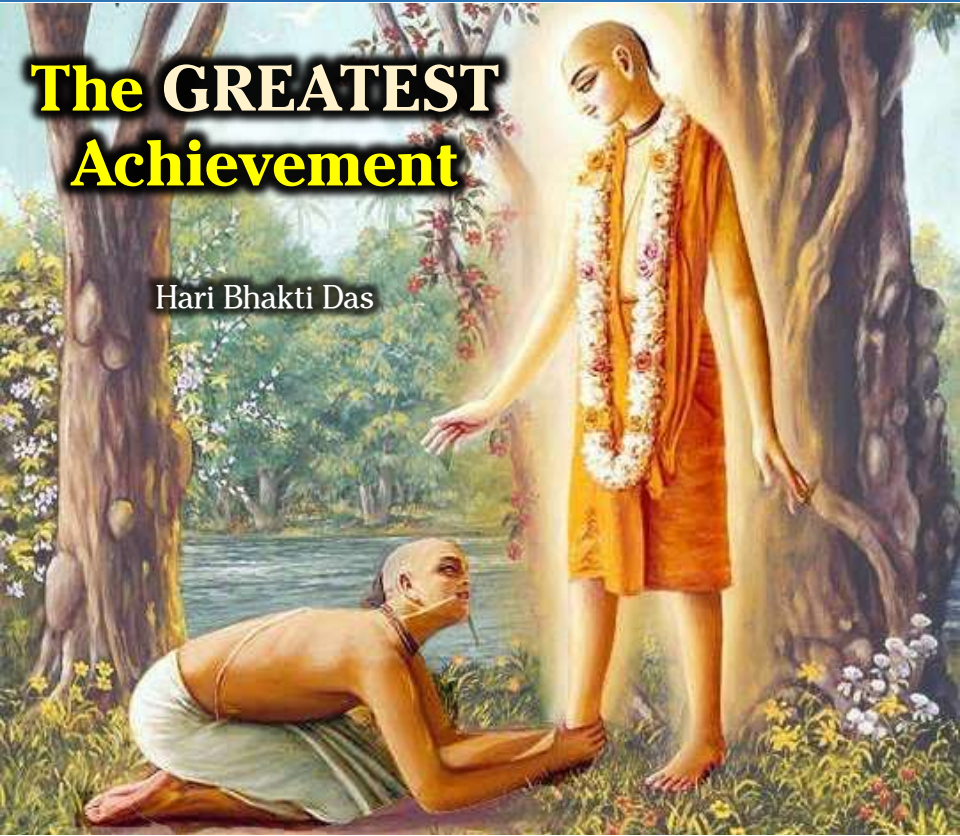
A Nice Alternative for Material Desire:

One should take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord instead of trying unsuccessfully to stop desires for material enjoyment. As long as one is unable to stop the desire for material enjoyment, there is no possibility of becoming liberated from the entanglement of material existence.

It may be argued that the waves of a river are incessantly flowing and that they cannot be stopped, but the waves of the river flow toward the sea. When the tide comes over the river, it overwhelms the flowing of the river, and the river itself becomes overflowed, and the waves from the sea become more prominent than the waves from the river. Similarly, a devotee with intelligence plans so many things for the service of the Lord in Kṛṣṇa consciousness that stagnant material desires become overflowed by the desire to serve the Lord. As confirmed by Yāmunācārya, since he has been engaged in the service of the lotus feet of the Lord, there is always a current of newer and newer desires flowing to serve the Lord, so much so that the stagnant desire of sex life becomes very insignificant. SB 4.22.39

The GREATEST Achievement

Hari Bhakti Das



Success in life varies - some value wealth, others fame, and some prioritize fulfilling relationships. In spiritual life, success is recognizing oneself as a servant of Krishna and devotees.

Lord Caitanya reveals his inner heart in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta. He states the true identification that one must have in order to clear off all bewilderingments of the mind and heart.

He says, 'I am not a brāhmaṇa, I am not a kṣatriya, I am not a vaiśya or a śūdra. Nor am I a brahmacārī, a householder, a vānaprastha or a sannyāsī. I identify Myself only as the servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the maintainer of the gopīs. He is like an ocean of nectar, and He is the cause of universal transcendental bliss. He is always existing with brilliance.' CC Madhya 13.80

Lord Caitanya, through his life and teachings, and also through his disciples, showed how to be the servant of servant is the topmost achievement in all the three worlds.

Lord Caitanya heartily appreciated Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī for their humility. When Rupa came to Jagannatha Puri, Lord Caitanya was once walking with his two servants Rāmānanda Rāya and Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya. On the way, he was describing the glories of Rūpa Gosvāmī to them. And he was carefully observing their faces to see if they are having any kind of envy in their hearts. When he saw they were pleased, He was pleased to see them taking happiness in the achievements of Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Lord Caitanya got conquered even by the king of Orrisa named Pratap Rudra just by the king taking a humble and menial position of sweeping the street before Lord Jagannatha. He was totally defiant of meeting the king even after being requested by the other devotees to do so. But the menial service of the king attracted Lord's grace.

Pratap Rudra was also desperate to get an audience of Mahāprabhu. After being repeatedly denied the same, he was even ready to forgo his kingdom and become a beggar. Finally, due to the grace of Rāmānanda Rāya and Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, Pratap Rudra got the opportunity to massage the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya during the Ratha Yatra festival. By the grace of devotees one gets the grace of the Lord. And by the grace of the Lord, one gets the opportunity to serve the devotees.

Pratap Rudra began singing the Gopī-gīta prayers from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam for Mahāprabhu. When he recited the verse beginning with *tava kathamrtam*, Mahāprabhu immediately got up and embraced the king. He asked the king, "Who are you? You have done so much for me. You have all of a sudden come here and made me drink the nectar of pastimes of Krishna."

The King replied, "My Lord, I am the most obedient servant of Your servants. It is my ambition that You will accept me as the servant of Your servants." CC Madhya 14.18

*rājā kahe,—āmi tomāra dāsera anudāsa
bhṛtyera bhṛtya kara,-ei mora āśa*

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes a very beautiful purport to this verse. He says,

"The greatest achievement for a devotee is to become a servant of the servants of the Lord. Actually, no one should desire to become the direct servant of the Lord. That is not a very good idea."

"When Prahāda Mahārāja was offered a benediction by Nṛsimha-deva, Prahāda rejected all kinds of material benedictions, but he prayed to become the servant of the servants of the Lord."

"When Dhruva Mahārāja was offered a benediction by Kuvera, the treasurer of the demigods, Dhruva could have asked for unlimited material opulence, but he simply asked for the benediction of becoming the servant of the servants of the Lord."

"Kholāvecā Śrīdhara was a very poor man, but when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to give him a benediction, he also prayed to the Lord to be allowed to remain a servant of the servants of the Lord."

The conclusion is that being the servant of the servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the highest benediction one can desire."

At that time, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu displayed some of His divine opulences to the King, and He forbade him to disclose this to anyone.

The lower one considers oneself, the higher one can go in spiritual life. In material life, one needs to show one's resume even for getting a small job. In spiritual circles, a little pride can make one lose the association of Lord Himself. Even Krishna left the gopis when He sensed them becoming proud of their exclusive association with Him.

Mahāprabhu is very easily pleased by one who tries to be a servant. In fact, to be a servant is easier. How much hard work, power, strength, energy it takes to become someone big!! But to be small, it doesn't require much endeavor.

To attain great name, fame, prestige, a lot of endeavors are needed. But to become a menial servant, any person can easily do it.

This is one of the major aspects of the teachings of Lord Caitanya.

And therefore, in the purport to the verse SB 6.11.24 wherein Citraketu reveals his aspirations of wanting to be the servant of the servant, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "This verse gives the sum and substance of devotional life. One must first become a servant of the servant of the servant of the Lord (dāsānudāsa)."

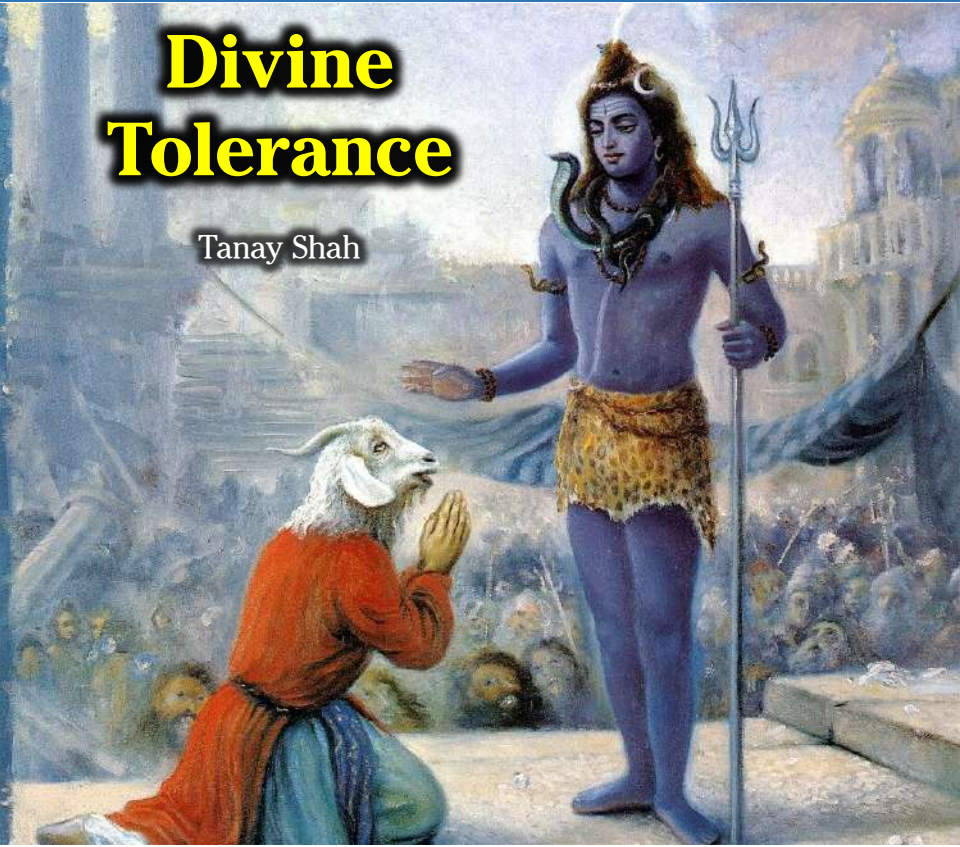
This is the greatest achievement in life. Even Kṛṣṇa is ever eager to take the position of serving His own devotees. He mentions to Durvasa,

*ahaṁ bhakta-parādhīno
hy asvatantra iva dvija*

"I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent."

Divine Tolerance

Tanay Shah



Lord Caitanya, the concealed incarnation of divinity, advocated everyone to wear a Sanskrit verse on their neck that glorifies the virtue of tolerance alongside other qualities. Yet, what does true tolerance entail? Is it a virtue reserved for the meek? Or is it an asset of the strong? Let's delve into these inquiries and unravel the essence of tolerance through the captivating narrative of Lord Śiva, the epitome of all virtuous attributes.

The Saga of Lord Śiva and Dakṣa

Dakṣa, a highly respected leader, felt insulted when Lord Śiva, deeply engrossed in meditation, did not rise in respect during a grand ceremony. Enraged, Dakṣa publicly insulted Śiva, thereby triggering a clash of curses between Śiva's disciple Nandi and his associates. In the midst of chaos, preferring silence over retaliation, Lord Śiva departed to diffuse the escalating tension.

- *Tolerance to personal insults is the hallmark of the truly devoted.*

Soon, proud Dakṣa organized another sacrifice and deliberately excluded Śiva. Seeing her father's splendid sacrifice, Sati longed to attend it.

However, Śiva feared that her proud father would humiliate Sati at the sacrifice because of her connection with him. Despite Śiva's warning, Sati was emotionally torn and chose to go. As anticipated, Dakṣa insulted both Sati and Śiva at the ceremony. Distraught by her father's behaviour, Sati immolated herself in a blazing fire. Upon learning of his wife's demise, an enraged Śiva unleashed Virabhadra, who slew Dakṣa. While Śiva remained tolerant when he was insulted, he chose to take action against Dakṣa when he crossed a line by causing the death of Sati.

Soon, Brahma intervened and requested Śiva to forgive Dakṣa by reviving his lifeless body. Lord Śiva graciously agreed, clarifying that he hadn't taken the insult seriously but had punished Dakṣa to help him recognize his error.

- Punish not to unleash your rage, but to inspire the best behaviour in others, thereby fostering their growth and accountability.

- A famous quote says, "To forgive others mistakes is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."

With conflicts resolved, a grand ceremony commenced anew. The sacrifice culminated in the divine presence of Lord Vishnu, who heartily blessed everyone there. This outcome was attributed to Lord Śiva's magnanimous personality, characterized by tolerance and forgiveness.

Lord Śiva exemplifies how unwavering devotion, paired with an exemplary character, transforms the greatest adversities into divine opportunities.

Now that we've skimmed through the story, let's delve into the mechanics of tolerance by first understanding how it enhances our lives.

Why be Tolerant?

Just like Dakṣa insulted Śiva, it's not uncommon for strangers to hurl insults our way; whether it's a colleague at work, a fellow driver on the road, or someone intentionally provoking us with harsh words. In such situations, exercising tolerance like Lord Śiva is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of our intelligence and demonstration of our commitment to a higher purpose. Let's explore this more deeply:

1. It's futile to engage with nonsensical comments: Just as a majestic elephant calmly walks down the street with a king on its back, unperturbed by the barking of a dog, we too should remain undisturbed by trivial disturbances. Like the elephant, we carry something far more significant within us – the presence of the Divine. When we allow ourselves to be swayed by the petty insults of others, we lose our focus on the Lord and get carried away by comments that anyways don't make sense. *Our self-worth is like a precious gem, shining brightly regardless of the*

shadows cast upon it by passing clouds of criticism or insult. Therefore, let's refrain from countering senseless comments and attempting to prove our worth to those whose sole purpose is to find fault in others.

2. It's pointless to lose our composure and inner peace over someone's harsh words: Reacting with anger only taints our own consciousness with negativity. Rather than retaliating to insults, it's in our best interest to maintain our calm and simply tolerate. By choosing this path, we safeguard our own well-being and preserve a positive state of mind. *Let us not entrust the key to our happiness & peace to the capricious mouths of others, when we hold the master key of tolerance within our own hearts.*

3. Saving Time & Developing Humility: *Sometimes a composed demeanour accompanied by a confident smile serves as the most effective response to insults.* Such a response not only preserves our invaluable time but also prevents unnecessary escalation. Time, once lost, cannot be reclaimed even with vast wealth. With myriad important tasks demanding our attention, why squander such a precious resource on someone's useless comments? Furthermore, when we choose to tolerate trivial insults, we open the door to cultivating humility. Embracing someone's outburst as an opportunity to exercise patience and humility not only enriches our character but also fosters a deeper connection with the Divine.

Considering these factors, it becomes evident that nurturing tolerance in our daily interactions is paramount to our personal growth and spiritual well-being.

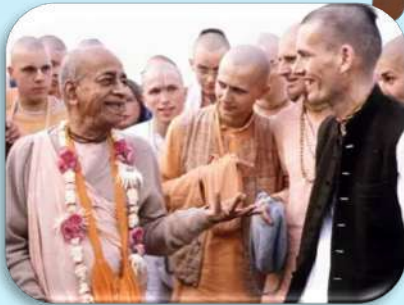
When should we not be tolerant?

In the story mentioned earlier, we witnessed how Śiva manifested Virabhadra and ended Dakṣa's life. Similarly, in the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Kṛṣṇa counselled Arjuna to embrace tolerance yet also instructed him to confront and defeat his own relatives. Does this suggest hypocrisy on the part of these revered figures? Not at all! Instead, they grasped the true essence of tolerance: while it urges us to overlook personal affronts, it also compels us to raise our voices against exploitation, whether it affects ourselves or others. Being constantly subjected to exploitation does not necessitate submissive acquiescence. We must possess the strength to advocate for ourselves and stand firm in our own defence.

True tolerance isn't about enduring injustice silently, but about finding the courage to stand against exploitation, both for ourselves and for others.

Thus, learning from the life of Lord Śiva, let us imbibe this invaluable quality of tolerance and ride gracefully over life's turbulences.

Kids Corner



The Mood of Appreciating Others



Siya, Grade VII

Aanya, Grade III

A good mood to give appreciation is to truly appreciate the efforts of the other person and not to flatter them to get something for yourself. Also, we should not praise others just to please them. For example Let's just say that there are two classmates. For example one day I was chanting and my mom said "Oh Aanya I like the way you were chanting. I can hear the holy names of Krishna and Radharani and I can also feel that you were enjoying your chanting." My mom's words really motivated me to do even nicer chanting next time. She could have also said, "Oh Aanya you always do the best chanting!"

Now that would have made me feel so proud of myself that I wouldn't put so much effort in my chanting next time. So now we know that we should not appreciate the person himself, we should appreciate the efforts that the person did.

- Aanya, Grade III, Seattle

When we appreciate others, it means that we have recognized a quality that they have, or an effort that they have made and want to honor it. Often, you can find people complimenting others, with the mindset of getting something in return, like a task. This isn't appreciating others, but flattery, where you are only buttering someone up for your benefit. People also sometimes over-compliment others, which most of the time isn't beneficial for them. Over-complimenting someone can boost their self-esteem, which could lead to an arrogant personality. The purpose of appreciating others should be so that they know that their efforts are being recognized, and use it as motivation to work harder and grow more as a person. The effects of appreciation are beneficial not only to the receiver but also to the one who gives it since they can learn from a good example and inherit that trait. My English teacher is someone not easy to impress, but recently she complimented my friend about the effort and detail she puts into her essays. My teacher's honest appreciation for my friend's work not only encouraged my friend to work hard but indirectly helped students like me get the motivation to grow as well. The benefits of appreciating others in the right mood can help many people grow and learn while keeping a positive and humble mindset.

VERSE OF THE MONTH



The Golden Avatar

SB 11.5.32

*ṛṣṇa-varṇaṁ tviṣākṛṣṇaṁ
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair
yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ*

In the Age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Kṛṣṇa. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions. (Śrī Karabhājana to Nimi Maharaja)

ANALOGY ARENA



The hand is the hand, and the leg is the leg, but when both of them engage in the service of the whole body, there is no such distinction as "hands" and "legs," for all of them belong to the whole body, and all the parts working together constitute the whole body. Similarly, when the living entities are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no such distinction as "I" and "you" because everyone is engaged in the service of the Lord. SB 4.12.4 P

By moving the dry coconut, one can hear that the pulp within is no longer attached to the shell or to the covering. Similarly, when one is fully absorbed in devotional service, he is completely disconnected from the two material coverings, the subtle and gross bodies. SB 4.12.18



In modern electronics, a mechanic may, by pushing only one button, set off an electronic chain-reaction, by which so many actions are carried out one after another. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead pushes the button of creation, and different energies create the material elements and various controllers of the physical elements, and their subsequent interactions follow the inconceivable plan of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. SB 4.17.33 P



THEMATIC STUDY

Three Types of People who CANNOT serve Krishna

Based on Srila Sanatana Goswami's Commentary on SB 10.60.54:

First Category: Khalah - *Those who find fault with others:*

Srila Sanatana Goswami says that those who find faults with others, they cannot serve the Lord. It is but natural to find faults with others in Kali yuga. The problem with finding fault with others is:

1] It doesn't please Krishna:

Lord Kapila mentions in SB 3.29.24, O mother! I am not pleased with the person who criticizes other beings while worshipping my deity form with rites using various materials.

2] The consciousness is absorbed simply to see and find faults and not in service!

Why could Ramachandra Puri not serve? Because while serving also, his main intention was to find faults.

Why did Rupa Kaviraja get angry even while doing such a great service as speaking Srimad Bhagavatam? Because he found fault in Krishnapriya. He stopped his lecture and started criticizing her. He became so envious!



Second Category: Duskarasu - *Those absorbed in sense gratification:*

For such people, it is **more difficult** to serve Krishna.

The great poet Vidyapati says,
*nīdhuvane ramaṇī rasa range mātala
tohe bhajabo kon belā*

I have been intoxicated by the pleasure of sharing romantic adventures with beautiful young women. When will I ever get a chance to worship You?

When one's only desire is to exploit, how can one serve?

Third Category: Durasisah - *Those who are wicked:*

For them, it is the **MOST** difficult to serve Krishna.

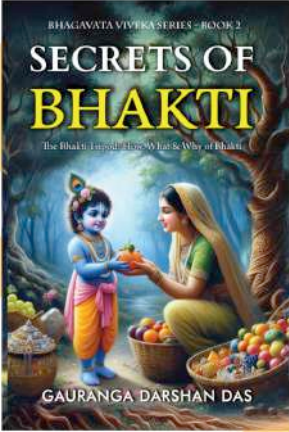
A person with a duplicitous heart is only interested in fulfilling one's desires. He or she is ready to go to any extent to fulfill their own desires.

For one who cheats, how can such a person ever please and serve Krishna?

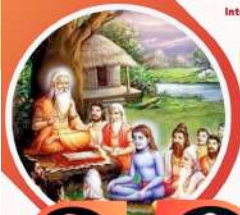
It is said, you can wake up a sleeping person, but you cannot wake up a person who is making a show of sleeping!!!

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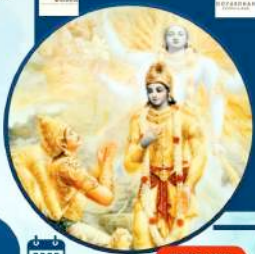


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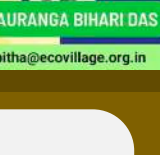
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NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam
CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta
BG: Bhagavad-gītā
BS: Brahmā-saṁhitā
1.1.1: Canto 1, Chapter 1, Verse 1
1.1.1 P: From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to SB 1.1.1

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PUBLISHED BY

Bhaktivedānta Vidyāpīṭha, ISKCON Govardhan Eco Village (GEV), Galtare, Hamrapur (P.O), Wada (Taluka), Palghar (District), Maharashtra, India, 421303.

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