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Text Two

*atyāhāraḥ prayāsaś ca
prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ
jana-saṅgaś ca laulyaṁ ca
ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati*

One's devotional service is spoiled when he becomes too entangled in the following six activities: (1) eating more than necessary or collecting more funds than required; (2) overendeavoring for mundane things that are very difficult to obtain; (3) talking unnecessarily about mundane subject matters; (4) 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) associating with worldly-minded persons who are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; and (6) being greedy for mundane achievements.

I. General

Human life is meant for plain living and high thinking. Since all conditioned living beings are under the control of the Lord's third energy, this material world is designed so that one is obliged to work. The Supreme Personality of Godhead has three primary energies, or potencies. The first is called *antarāṅga-śakti*, or the internal potency. The second is called *taṣastha-śakti*, or the marginal potency. The third is called *bahirāṅga-śakti*, or the external potency. The living entities constitute the marginal potency, and they are situated between the internal and external Potencies. Being subordinate as eternal servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the *jīvātmās*, or atomic living entities, must remain under the control of either the internal or external potency. When they are under the control of the internal potency, they display their natural, constitutional activity—namely, constant engagement in the devotional service of the Lord. This is stated in Bhagavad-gītā (9.13):

*mahātmānas tu mām pārtha
daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ
bhajanty ananya-manaso
jñātvā bhūtādīm avyayam*

"O son of Pṛthā, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible."

The word *mahātmā* refers to those who are broadminded, not cripple-minded. Cripple-minded persons, always engaged in satisfying their senses, sometimes expand their

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activities in order to do good for others through some "ism" like nationalism, humanitarianism or altruism. They may reject personal sense gratification for the sense gratification of others, like the members of their family, community or society—either national or international. Actually all this is extended sense gratification, from personal to communal to social. This may all be very good from the material point of view, but such activities have no spiritual value. The basis of such activity is sense gratification, either personal or extended. Only when a person gratifies the senses of the Supreme Lord can he be called a *mahātmā*, or broadminded person.

In the above-quoted verse from *Bhagavad-gītā*, the words *daivīm prakṛtim* refer to the control of the internal potency, or pleasure potency, of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This pleasure potency is manifested as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, or Her expansion Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune. When the individual jīva souls are under the control of the internal energy, their only engagement is the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu. This is the position of a *mahātmā*. If one is not a *mahātmā*, he is a *durātmā*, or a cripple-minded person. Such mentally crippled *durātmās* are put under the control of the Lord's external potency, *mahāmāyā*.

Indeed, all living entities within this material world are under the control of *mahāmāyā*, whose business is to subject them to the influence of threefold miseries: *adhidaivika-kleśa* (sufferings caused by the demigods, such as droughts, earthquakes and storms), *adhibhautika-kleśa* (sufferings caused by other living entities like insects or enemies), and *adhyātmika-kleśa* (sufferings caused by one's own body and mind, such as mental and physical infirmities). *Daiva-bhūtātma-hetavaḥ*: the conditioned souls, subjected to these three miseries by the control of the external energy, suffer various difficulties.

The main problem confronting the conditioned souls is the repetition of birth, old age, disease and death. In the material world one has to work for the maintenance of the body and soul, but how can one perform such work in a way that is favorable for the execution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

A. Mahātmā or Durātmā

1. The three primary energies of the Lord

1. *antaraṅga-śakti*, the internal potency
2. *taṭastha-śakti*, the marginal potency
3. *bahiraṅga-śakti*, the external potency

2. Mahātmā

- ॐ Not deluded
- ॐ Great souls
- ॐ Under the protection of the divine nature

- ॐ Fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible
- ॐ Take shelter of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī
- ॐ Their only engagement is the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa
- ॐ Broadminded

3. Durātma

- ॐ Cripple-minded
- ॐ Always engaged in satisfying their senses
- ॐ Sometimes expand their activities in order to do good for others through some “ism” like nationalism, humanitarianism or altruism
- ॐ May reject personal sense gratification for the sense gratification of others, like the members of their family, community or society—either national or international (extended sense gratification, from personal to communal to social)
- ॐ If one is not a *mahātmā*, he is a *durātmā*
- ॐ Such mentally crippled *durātmās* are put under the control of the Lord’s external potency, *mahāmāyā*.

B. The threefold miseries

1. *Adhidāivika-kleśa* (sufferings caused by the demigods, i.e. earthquakes, droughts)
2. *Adhibhautika-kleśa* (sufferings caused by other living entities)
3. *Adhītmika-kleśa* (sufferings caused by one’s own body and mind)

C. The meaning of *vinaśyati*

Ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati. Vinaśyati means is lost. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is lost. How? By these six processes. What are the six processes? *Atyāhāra*. *Atyāhāra* means to eat more than you require, and *atyāhāra* means to accumulate wealth more than what you require. [Bg Lect 4.19-22, 8/8/6]

D. From *Bhaktiyāloka*

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

*atyāhāraḥ prayāsaś ca
prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ
jana-saṅgaś ca laulyaṁ 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)

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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) laulyaṁ, 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. [*Bhaktiyāloka* 1]

II. *Atyāhāra*

Everyone requires possessions such as food grains, clothing, money and other things necessary for the maintenance of the body, but one should not collect more than necessary for his actual basic needs. If this natural principle is followed, there will be no difficulty in maintaining the body.

According to nature's arrangement, living entities lower on the evolutionary scale do not eat or collect more than necessary. Consequently in the animal kingdom there is generally no economic problem or scarcity of necessities. If a bag of rice is placed in a public place, birds will come to eat a few grains and go away. A human being, however, will take away the whole bag. He will eat all his stomach can hold and then try to keep the rest in storage. According to scriptures, this collecting of more than necessary (*atyāhāra*) is prohibited. Now the entire world is suffering because of it.

... As stated above (*dharmasya hy āpavargyasya nārtho 'rthāyopakalṣate* [SB 1.2.9]), religion is meant for attaining emancipation, not for getting bread. Sometimes human society manufactures a system of so-called religion aimed at material advancement, but that is far from the purpose of true dharma. Religion entails understanding the laws of God because the proper execution of these laws ultimately leads one out of material entanglement. That is the true purpose of religion. Unfortunately people accept religion for material prosperity because of atyāhāra, or an excessive desire for such prosperity. True religion, however, instructs people to be satisfied with the bare necessities of life while cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Even though we require economic development, true religion allows it only for supplying the bare necessities of material existence. *Jivasya tattva jijñāsā*: the real purpose of life is to inquire about the Absolute Truth. If our endeavor

(prayāsa) is not to inquire about the Absolute Truth, we will simply increase our endeavor to satisfy our artificial needs. A spiritual aspirant should avoid mundane endeavor.

... Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura writes in his *Anuvṛtti* commentary that too much endeavor to acquire knowledge on the part of mental speculators or dry philosophers falls within the category of *atyāhāra* (collecting more than needed). According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the endeavor of philosophical speculators to write volumes of books on dry philosophy devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is entirely futile. The work of *karmīs* who write volumes of books on economic development also falls within the category of *atyāhāra*. Similarly, those who have no desire for Kṛṣṇa consciousness and who are simply interested in possessing more and more material things—either in the shape of scientific knowledge or monetary gain—are all included under the control of *atyāhāra*.

Karmīs labor to accumulate more and more money for future generations only because they do not know their future position. Interested only in getting more and more money for their sons and grandsons, such foolish persons do not even know what their position is going to be in the next life. There are many incidents that illustrate this point. Once a great *karmī* accumulated a vast fortune for his sons and grandsons, but later, according to his karma, he took his birth in a cobbler's house located near the building which in his previous life he had constructed for his children. It so happened that when this very cobbler came to his former house, his former sons and grandsons beat him with shoes. Unless the *karmīs* and *jñānīs* become interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they will simply continue to waste their life in fruitless activities.

Modern warfare waged between capitalists and communists is due to their avoiding the advice of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī regarding *atyāhāra*. Modern capitalists accumulate more wealth than necessary, and the communists, envious of their prosperity, want to nationalize all wealth and property. Unfortunately the communists do not know how to solve the problem of wealth and its distribution. Consequently when the wealth of the capitalists falls into the hands of the communists, no solution results. Opposed to these two philosophies, the Kṛṣṇa conscious ideology states that all wealth belongs to Kṛṣṇa. Thus unless all wealth comes under the administration of Kṛṣṇa, there can be no solution to the economic problem of mankind. Nothing can be solved by placing wealth in the hands of the communists or the capitalists. If a hundred-dollar bill is lying on the street, someone may pick it up and put it in his pocket. Such a man is not honest. Another man may see the money and decide to let it remain there, thinking that he should not touch another's property. Although this second man does not steal the money for his own purposes, he is unaware of its proper use. The third man who sees the hundred-dollar bill may pick it up, find the man who lost it and deliver it to him. This man does not steal the money to spend for himself, nor does he neglect it and let it lie in the street. By taking it and delivering it to the man who has lost it, this man is both honest and wise.

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Simply transferring wealth from capitalists to communists cannot solve the problem of modern politics, for it has been demonstrated that when a communist gets money, he uses it for his own sense gratification. The wealth of the world actually belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and every living entity, man and animal, has the birthright to use God's property for his maintenance. When one takes more than his maintenance requires—be he a capitalist or a communist—he is a thief, and as such he is liable to be punished by the laws of nature.

The wealth of the world should be used for the welfare of all living entities, for that is the plan of Mother Nature. Everyone has the right to live by utilizing the wealth of the Lord. When people learn the art of scientifically utilizing the Lord's property, they will no longer encroach upon one another's rights. Then an ideal society can be formed. The basic principle for such a spiritual society is stated in the first mantra of Śrī Īsopaniṣad [Mantra 1]:

*īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ
yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat
tena tyaktena bhujñithā
mā gṛdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam*

"Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong."

Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees know very well that this material world is designed by the complete arrangement of the Lord to fulfill all the necessities of life for all living beings, without their having to encroach upon the life or rights of one another. This complete arrangement affords the proper quota of wealth for everyone according to his real needs, and thus everyone may live peacefully according to the principle of plain living and high thinking. Unfortunately, materialists who have neither faith in the plan of God nor any aspiration for higher spiritual development misuse their God-given intelligence only to augment their material possessions. They devise many systems—such as capitalism and materialistic communism—to advance their material position. They are not interested in the laws of God or in a higher goal. Always anxious to fulfill their unlimited desires for sense gratification, they are conspicuous by their ability to exploit their fellow living beings.

A. Definition

1. Overeating or over collecting

ॐ The first impediment is *atyāhāra*, overeating or accumulating more wealth than we need. When we give free rein to the senses in an effort to enjoy to the highest degree, we become degraded. A devotee should therefore eat only enough to maintain his body and soul together; he should not allow his

tongue unrestricted license to eat anything and everything it likes. The *Bhagavad-gītā* and the great *ācāryas*, or spiritual masters, have prescribed certain foods for human beings, and one who eats these foods eats in the mode of goodness. These foods include grains, fruits, vegetables, milk products, and sugar—and nothing more. A devotee does not eat extravagantly; he simply eats what he offers to the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. He is interested in *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* (food offered to the Lord) and not in satisfying his tongue. Therefore he does not desire anything extraordinary to eat. [NBS 5]

- ॐ So *atyāhāra*. *Atyāhāra* means to acquire more than we need. Because we have to maintain this body and soul together, then we must earn something or acquire something to keep my health and body fit. That is all right. But we should not try unnecessarily for accumulating more. Suppose if I am satisfied by some grains and vegetables and fruits and milk, if my health is properly kept, why should I eat more than that simply for satisfying the palate, my tongue? Oh, no. We should not do that. *Yadṛcchā-lābha-santuṣṭaḥ*. So *atyāhāra*, *atyāhāra*, to accept more than what we need, that is against Kṛṣṇa consciousness. [Bg Lect 4.19-22, 8/8/66]
- ॐ There are six kind of activities which will increase your transcendental importance of life, and there are six kinds of activities which will destroy your whatever little devotion you have got. These, in the *Upadeśāmṛta* you will find, how you can increase and how you can finish. So about finishing, if you are actually advancing in spiritual life, if that is your aim, then these six things should be avoided. As it is said, *prayāsaḥ*. The first thing is *atyāhāra*, eating too much than necessity, *atyāhāra*, or collecting more than you require. For maintenance of your body you have to secure some monetary benefit—but not more than what you require. People are not satisfied. At the present moment everyone is trying to get more and more and more and more and more. There is no satiation. This kind of endeavor is forbidden. It will not help you. But people are mad after money. If he is getting, say, five hundred rupees, he says, “No, why five hundred? Five thousand.” And if he gets five thousand, then he says, “Why five thousand? Five lakhs.” And if he gets five lakhs, then he says, “Why five lakhs? Five crores.” This is there. The whole world is going on. They are never satisfied. You go to any rich man: “Sir, you have now enough money. Please come to our meeting in the morning, seven-thirty.” “No, I have no time.” He’s earning money. [SB Lect 7.6.4, 12/5/75]
- ॐ Our devotional life can be finished, means may be baffled... Those who are in devotional life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they is [sic] fortunate. This fortune can

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be ruined by six things. Be careful. What is that? *Atyāhāra*. *Atyāhāra* means eating more than necessity or collecting more than necessity. *Āhāra*. *Āhāra* means collecting. We require to collect some money, but we should not collect more than necessity. That we shouldn't. Because if I get more money, then immediately *māyā* will pa... "Why don't you spend for me?" Yes. So don't collect more than ... What you require, you collect. Or similarly, *āhāra* means eating. Don't eat more than necessity. Actually, we have to come to the point of nil, eating, sleeping, mating and defending. And that is not possible because we have got this body. But minimum. So *atyāhārah prayāsaḥ*, and too much unnecessary spoiling energy. [SB Lect 2.3.7, 6/12/72]

2. Includes over collection of mundane knowledge

ॐ Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura writes in his *Anuvṛtti* commentary that too much endeavor to acquire knowledge on the part of mental speculators or dry philosophers falls within the category of *atyāhāra* (collecting more than needed). According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the endeavor of philosophical speculators to write volumes of books on dry philosophy devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is entirely futile. The work of *karmīs* who write volumes of books on economic development also falls within the category of *atyāhāra*. Similarly, those who have no desire for Kṛṣṇa consciousness and who are simply interested in possessing more and more material things—either in the shape of scientific knowledge or monetary gain—are all included under the control of *atyāhāra*. [NOI 2]

3. False religion

ॐ As stated above (*dharmasya hy āpavargyasya nārtho 'rthāyopakalṣate*), religion is meant for attaining emancipation, not for getting bread. Sometimes human society manufactures a system of so-called religion aimed at material advancement, but that is far from the purpose of true *dharma*. Religion entails understanding the laws of God because the proper execution of these laws ultimately leads one out of material entanglement. That is the true purpose of religion. Unfortunately people accept religion for material prosperity because of *atyāhāra*, or an excessive desire for such prosperity. True religion, however, instructs people to be satisfied with the bare necessities of life while cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Even though we require economic development, true religion allows it only for supplying the bare necessities of material existence. *Jivasya tattva jijñāsā*: the real purpose of life is to inquire about the Absolute Truth. If our endeavor (*prayāsa*) is not to inquire about the Absolute Truth, we will simply increase our endeavor to

satisfy our artificial needs. A spiritual aspirant should avoid mundane endeavor. [NOI 2]

4. The enjoying propensity

ॐ 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*, 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. (Bhakti-yāloka 1)

5. Dictionary

ॐ *Atyāhāra* is a combination of *ati*, or too much, and *āhāra*, or eating or collecting. (Bhakti-yāloka 1)

ॐ *ati*— 1. very, too, exceedingly; 2. over, beyond, over-step

ॐ *āhāra*— 1. taking, fetching, bringing near; 2. to be fetched or brought near; 3. Artificial, tedious, external

6. Warfare

ॐ Modern warfare waged between capitalists and communists is due to their avoiding the advice of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī regarding *atyāhāra*. Modern capitalists accumulate more wealth than necessary, and the communists, envious of their prosperity, want to nationalize all wealth and property. Unfortunately the communists do not know how to solve the problem of wealth and its distribution. Consequently when the wealth of the capitalists falls into the hands of the communists, no solution results. Opposed to these two philosophies, the Kṛṣṇa conscious ideology states that all wealth belongs to Kṛṣṇa. Thus unless all wealth comes under the administration of Kṛṣṇa,

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there can be no solution to the economic problem of mankind. Nothing can be solved by placing wealth in the hands of the communists or the capitalists. If a hundred-dollar bill is lying on the street, someone may pick it up and put it in his pocket. Such a man is not honest. Another man may see the money and decide to let it remain there, thinking that he should not touch another's property. Although this second man does not steal the money for his own purposes, he is unaware of its proper use. The third man who sees the hundred-dollar bill may pick it up, find the man who lost it and deliver it to him. This man does not steal the money to spend for himself, nor does he neglect it and let it lie in the street. By taking it and delivering it to the man who has lost it, this man is both honest and wise.

Simply transferring wealth from capitalists to communists cannot solve the problem of modern politics, for it has been demonstrated that when a communist gets money, he uses it for his own sense gratification. The wealth of the world actually belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and every living entity, man and animal, has the birthright to use God's property for his maintenance. When one takes more than his maintenance requires—be he a capitalist or a communist—he is a thief, and as such he is liable to be punished by the laws of nature. [NOI 2]

B. Notes from *Bhaktiyāloka*

1. Activity must be performed

ॐ Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed Arjuna in the Bhagavad-gītā (3.5-6):

*na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api
jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt
kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma
sarvaḥ prakṛti-jair guṇaiḥ*

*karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya
ya āste manasā smaran
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā
mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate*

"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. (Bhaktiyāloka 1)

2. Sense enjoyment is necessary.

ॐ Without enjoying the sense objects, a living entity cannot survive. As soon as the living entity gives up sense enjoyment, he leaves his body...

Again, the Lord says in the Gītā (6.16-17, 5.8-9):

*nāty-aśnatas 'tu yogo 'sti
na caikāntam anaśnataḥ
na cāti-svapna-śīlasya
jāgrato naiva cārjuna*

*yuktāhāra-vihārasya
yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu
yukta-svapnāvabodhasya
yogo bhavati duḥkha-hā*

*naiva kiñcit karomīti
yukto manyeta tattva-vit
paśyañ śṛṇvan spṛśaṅ jighraṅ
aśnan gacchan svāpan śvasan*

*pralapan viśṛjan gṛhṇann
unmiṣan nimiṣann api
indriyāṅindriyārtheṣu
vartanta iti dhāraṇan*

"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

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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. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

3. *Yukta vairāgya*

ॐ Therefore Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said in the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (2.255-256):

*anāsaktasya viṣayān
yathārham upayujjataḥ
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe
yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate*

*prāpañcikatayā buddhyā
hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo
vairāgyaṁ phalgu kathiyate*

"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. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

4. Balance

ॐ 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. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

C. *Atyāhāra* vs. *Jihvā-vegā* and *udaropashta vegā*

1. Not repetitive

ॐ If we understand the word *atyāhāra* in the second verse as overeating, the fault of repetition occurs in this condensed collection of essential instructions. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

2. *Jihvā-vegā*

ॐ In this regard, the urge of the tongue is the desire to taste foodstuffs. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

ॐ The injunction of the first verse is conditional, and the injunction of the second is constitutional. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

3. *Udara-vegā*

ॐ The urge of the stomach is the desire to overeat. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

ॐ The injunction of the first verse is conditional, and the injunction of the second is constitutional. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

4. *Atyāhāra*

ॐ 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. (Bhaktyāloka 1)

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D. A comparison (from *Bhaktiyāloka*)

ॐ All these instructions have two different types of applications—for the householders and for the renunciates.

Householders	Renunciates
1. 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.	1. A renunciate will not collect at all.
2. 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 <i>atyāhāra</i> —there is no doubt.	2. If he is not satisfied by the alms he obtains everyday, then he is guilty of <i>atyāhāra</i> . 3. After getting nice foodstuffs, if he eats more than he needs, then he is guilty of <i>atyāhāra</i> .

E. How to overcome *Atyāhāra*

ॐ *Atyāhāra* can be overcome by understanding Kṛṣṇa (through His representative the spiritual master) is the enjoyer and owner of everything.

ॐ Austerity

ॐ Speaking Kṛṣṇa kathā and eating Kṛṣṇa prasāda

In the *bhakti-mārga*, the path of devotional service, one must strictly follow the regulative principles by first controlling the tongue (*sevonmukhe hi jihvādaḥ svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*). The tongue (*jihvā*) can be controlled if one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, does not speak of any subjects other than those concerning Kṛṣṇa and does not taste anything not offered to Kṛṣṇa. If one can control the tongue in this way, *brahmacarya* and other purifying processes will automatically follow. It will be explained in the next verse that the path of devotional service is completely perfect and is therefore superior to the path of fruitive activities and the path of knowledge. Quoting from the *Vedas*, Śrīla Vīrarāghava Ācārya explains that austerity involves observing fasts as fully as possible (*tapasānāśakena*). Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has also advised that *atyāhāra*, too much eating, is an impediment to advancement in spiritual life... [SB 6.1.13-14]

III. Prayāsa

Collecting and eating more than necessary also causes prayāsa, or unnecessary endeavor. By God's arrangement, anyone in any part of the world can live very peacefully if he has some land and a milk cow. There is no need for man to move from one place to another to earn a livelihood, for one can produce food grains locally and get milk from cows. That can solve all economic problems. Fortunately, man has been given higher intelligence for the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or the understanding of God, one's relationship with Him, and the ultimate goal of life, love of God. Unfortunately, so-called civilized man, not caring for God realization, utilizes his intelligence to get more than necessary and simply eat to satisfy the tongue. By God's arrangement there is sufficient scope for the production of milk and grains for human beings all over the world, but instead of using his higher intelligence to cultivate God consciousness, so-called intelligent men misuse their intelligence to produce many unnecessary and unwanted things. Thus factories, slaughterhouses, brothels and liquor shops are opened. If people are advised not to collect too many goods, eat too much or work unnecessarily to possess artificial amenities, they think they are being advised to return to a primitive way of life. Generally people do not like to accept plain living and high thinking. That is their unfortunate position.

Human life is meant for God realization, and the human being is given higher intelligence for this purpose. Those who believe that this higher intelligence is meant to attain a higher state should follow the instructions of the Vedic literatures. By taking such instructions from higher authorities, one can actually become situated in perfect knowledge and give real meaning to life.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.9) Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī describes the proper human dharma in this way:

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

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

The first step in human civilization consists of occupational engagements performed according to the scriptural injunctions. The higher intelligence of a human being should be trained to understand basic dharma. In human society there are various religious conceptions characterized as Hindu, Christian, Hebrew, Mohammedan, Buddhist and so on, for without religion, human society is no better than animal society.

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A. Definition

1. Over-endeavor

ॐ Over endeavoring for mundane things which are difficult to achieve. [NOI 2]

ॐ The next impediment Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī mentions is *prayāsa*, endeavoring very hard for material things. A devotee should not be very enthusiastic about attaining any material goal. He should not be like persons who engage in fruitive activities, who work very hard day and night to attain material rewards. All such persons have some ambition—to become a very big businessman, to become a great industrialist, to become a great poet or philosopher. But they do not know that even if their ambition is fulfilled, the result is temporary. As soon as the body is finished, all material achievements are also finished. No one takes with him anything he has achieved materially in this world. The only thing he can carry with him is his asset of devotional service; that alone is never vanquished. [NBS 5]

ॐ *Praṇaśyati* means “It is lost.” “The spiritual path is lost by the second six principles.” And what are these? ... *Prayāsa* means to labor very hard to achieve a thing. Life should be conducted in such a way that our necessities of life may come not with great effort, easily, easily. We should not encumber ourself, our life, living policy, in an encumbered way. Then our spiritual progress will be hampered. The modern society has practically encumbered the whole human activities, and therefore they have no time for spiritual culture. You see? But the conception of Vedic civilization was that people used to be satisfied on agricultural produce and for three months working during rainy season. So they get some agriculture produce and they used to eat the whole year. So nine months they were free to advance in spiritual culture and only three months they used to work for accumulating their foodstuff. You see? So *atyāhārah prayāsaś ca prajalpa*. [Lecture 3/28/66]

ॐ By six kinds of activities, you will lose your holding in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. What is that? ... *Prayāsa* means do something with extraordinary endeavor. So, of course, we have to do sometime, but it is the general principle. We shall accept... Suppose you are constructing a temple. If it is..., suppose two millions of dollars required, or, say, five millions of dollars. If we cannot do that, we shall not attempt. That is *prayāsa*, unnecessarily endeavor. Which is within your control, you should act. *Atyāhārah prayāsaḥ*. [Lecture 1/3/74]

ॐ And just the opposite number is *atyāhāra*, eating too much or.... *Prayāsa* means endeavoring too much for getting something. Our life should be very simple. We shall act so simply that we shall have to save time for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So we should not attempt anything which is very difficult to execute. [Lecture 1/27/76]

2. Taking unnecessary risk

ॐ Similarly there are six things which should be avoided. What are those? *Atyāhārah prayāsaś ca prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ, laulyam jana-saṅgaś ca ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati*.

Atyāhāra, too much eating or too much, I mean to say, keeping bank balance or money, or collecting more than the necessities. *Atyāhāra*. Generally, too much eating is prohibited. We have to eat simply just to keep the body and soul nicely to execute Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Atyāhāraḥ prayāsaś ca*. *Prayāsa* means taking some risky work which will require too much endeavor. We should avoid that.... There are six kinds of “don’t do this,” and six kinds of “do this.” So that will be nice. Yes? [Lecture 11/29/68]

3. Useless endeavor

ॐ 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. [Bhaktiyāloka 2]

4. Dictionary

ॐ Effort, exertion, endeavor

B. Notes from Bhaktiyāloka

1. Endeavor, useless labor

ॐ 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. [Bhaktiyāloka 2]

2. In inherent state (as a pure devotee) there is no need for *prayāsa*. In the conditioned state there is a little need.

ॐ 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. [Bhaktiyāloka 2]

3. Extra *prayāsa* is dangerous.

ॐ Except this little *prayāsa*, all other kinds of *prayāsa* are unfavorable for devotional service. [Bhaktiyāloka 2]

Comment [JH1]: One should live simply, accepting what comes easily and use the remainder of his time in Kṛṣṇa consciousness

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C. *Prayāsa* that is detrimental to devotional service

ॐ *Prayāsa* is of two kinds—*jñāna-prayāsa* and *karma-prayāsa*... *Jñāna-prayāsa, karma-prayāsa, yoga-prayāsa, mukti-prayāsa*, as well as over-endeavoring 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. [Bhakti-yāloka 2]

Comment [JH2]: SP simplifies by saying "mundane things which are difficult to achieve." Why? Likely because all these things are mundane.

1. *Jñāna-prayāsa*

ॐ In *jñāna-prayāsa* the feeling of oneness, or *kevalādvaita*, arises. This is also known as *sāyujya*, merging, or *brahma-nirvāṇa*, absorption in the Supreme. *Jñāna-prayāsa* is hostile to spiritual life... *Jñāna-prayāsa* and its resultant *prayāsa* for the liberation of merging with the Lord are extremely contrary to devotional principles. [Bhakti-yāloka 2]

a. *Jñāna-prayāsa* ends in *sāyujya mukti*

ॐ In *jñāna-prayāsa* the feeling of oneness, or *kevalādvaita*, arises. This is also known as *sāyujya*, merging, or *brahma-nirvāṇa*, absorption in the Supreme. *Jñāna-prayāsa* is hostile to spiritual life. [Bhakti-yāloka 2]

(1) References

*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." [Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.2.3)]

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsya namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*

*śreyaḥ-śṛtiṁ bhaktim udasya te vibho
kliṣyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave
teṣām asau kleśala eva śiṣyate
nānyad yathā sthūla-tuṣāvaghātinām*

*pureha bhūman bahavo 'pi yoginas
tvad-arpitēhā nija-karma-labdhave
vibudhya bhaktyaiva kathopanītayā
prapedire 'ṅjo 'cyuta te gatim parām*

*tathāpi bhūman mahimāguṇasya te
viboddhum arhaty amalāntar-ātmabhiḥ
avikriyāt svānubhavād arūpato
hy ananya-bodhyātmatayā na cānyathā*

*guṇātmanas te 'pi guṇān vimātuṁ
hitāvatīṁsasya ka īsire 'sya
kālena yair vā vimitāḥ su-kalpair
bhū-pāṁśavaḥ khe mihikā dyu-bhāsaḥ*

Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge and with their body, words and mind offer all respects to descriptions of Your personality and activities, dedicating their lives to these narrations, which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds. My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the best path for self-realization. If someone gives up that path and engages in the cultivation of speculative knowledge, he will simply undergo a troublesome process and will not achieve his desired result. As a person who beats an empty husk of wheat cannot get grain, one who simply speculates cannot achieve self-realization. His only gain is trouble. O almighty Lord, in the past many *yogīs* in this world achieved the platform of devotional service by offering all their endeavors unto You and faithfully carrying out their prescribed duties. Through such devotional service, perfected by the processes of hearing and chanting about You, they came to understand You, O infallible one, and could easily surrender to You and achieve Your supreme abode. Nondevotees, however, cannot realize You in Your full personal feature. Nevertheless, it may be possible for them to realize Your expansion as the impersonal Supreme by cultivating direct perception of the Self within the heart. But they can do this only by purifying their mind and senses of all conceptions of material distinctions and all attachment to material sense objects. Only in this way will Your impersonal feature manifest itself to them. In time, learned philosophers or scientists might be able to count all the atoms of the earth, the particles of snow, or perhaps even the shining molecules radiating from the sun, the stars and other luminaries. But among these learned men, who could possibly count the unlimited transcendental qualities possessed by You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who have descended onto the surface of the earth for the benefit of all living entities? SB 10.14.3-7

b. Impersonalism is demonic; transcendental knowledge is spontaneous

ॐ The philosophy of monism does not originate in the Absolute Truth; it is only a demonic 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-sloki* [the four main *Bhāgavatam* verses] is *acintya bheda-bheda*, 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

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living entity cannot remain in his constitutional form without being subordinate to the Lord, therefore servitorship of the Lord is his constitutional duty. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

c. Devotional service is spontaneous (requires no endeavor)

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

d. But still there must be some endeavor (*sadhana*)

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

e. *Jñāna prayāsa* should be given up in the association of devotees

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

Comment [JH3]: *Jñāna prayāsa* here refers to impersonal conclusions, not knowledge of the absolute truth.

(1) References

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
mayy āveśya mano ye mām
nitya-yuktā upāsate
śraddhayā parayopetās
te me yuktatamā matāḥ

ye tv akṣaram anirdeśyam
avyaktam paryupāsate
sarvatra-gam acintyam ca
kūṭa-stham acalam dhruvam

sanniyamyendriya-grāmam
sarvatra sama-buddhayaḥ
te prāpnuvanti mām eva
sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ

kleśo 'dhikataras teśām
avyaktāsakta-cetasām
avyaktā hi gatiḥ duḥkham
dehavadbhir avāpyate

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Those who fix their minds on My personal form and are always engaged in worshiping 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. (Bg. 12.2-5)

2. *Karma-prayāsa*

a. Work without relation to Kṛṣṇa is also useless.

ॐ In karma-prayāsa there is also no benefit. [Bhaktiyāloka 2]

(1) References

*sa vai puṁsām paro dharmo
yato bhaktir adhokṣaje
ahaituky apratihātā
yayātmā suprasīdati*

*vāsudeve bhagavati
bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyaṁ
jñānaṁ ca yad ahaitukam*

*dharmāḥ svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsām
viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratim
śrama eva hi kevalam*

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

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

The supreme occupation [dharma] for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self. By rendering devotional

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service unto the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world. 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. 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. [SB 1.2.6-10]

3. *Aṣṭāṅga-yoga-prayāsa*

ॐ If *aṣṭāṅga-yoga-prayāsa* aims at mystic powers and liberation, then it is also extremely contrary to devotional principles. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

4. *Niyamāgraha*

ॐ 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*. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

5. Hard endeavor to visit holy places without desire to awaken Kṛṣṇa prema

ॐ 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* [Bhaktyāloka 2]

6. *Prayāsa for pratiṣṭha*

ॐ 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
sarvānartha bhuvaś ca te
kuryuḥ pratiṣṭhāviṣṭhāyā
yatnam aśparśane 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. [Bhaktyaloka 2]

D. *Prayāsa* that is favorable to devotional service

1. *Activities within varṇāśrama and devotional service*

ॐ 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. [Bhakyāloka 2]

a. *Svaniṣṭha* devotees

ॐ Devotees addicted to their own line of devotion, bring karma and its results within the realm of devotional service

b. *Pariniṣṭhita* devotees

ॐ Devotees fully addicted to devotional service, perform pious activities that are not contrary to devotional principles only to attract people

c. *Nirapekṣa* devotees

Devotees who accept activities favorable for devotional service without caring for popular approval

2. *Visiting holy places*

ॐ 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* [Bhakyāloka 2]

3. *Maintaining vows*

ॐ Following the vows of devotional service is not useless *prayāsa*, they are all accepted as part of the process of devotional service. [Bhakyāloka 2]

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4. Prayāsa for Vaiṣṇava seva

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

5. Deity worship

ॐ The *prayāsa* for temple worship is a spontaneous manifestation of the heart's emotions. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

6. Sankīrtana

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

E. Prayāsa for renunciates

ॐ 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.

*vāsudeve bhagavati
bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janaty āśu vairāgyaṁ
jñānaṁ ca yad ahaitukam*

"By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world." [SB 1.2.7]

F. Other notes

1. If there is atyāhāra, prayāsa must be there

ॐ For such *atyāhāra* one must endeavor very much. This is called *prayāsa*. (SB 4.26.13)

G. A comparison (from *Bhaktyāloka*)

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 2]

Householders	Renunciates
1. Making varṇāśrama favorable to devotional service, the householder should pass his life engaged in	1. And the renunciate should not save at all.

devotional service free from prayāsa.	
2. They should earn and save only to easily maintain the family members.	2. He should maintain his body by daily begging alms and thus engage in devotional service.
3. If they always remember that worshiping Hari is the only purpose of life, then they will never fall into illusion.	3. They should not stay in any enterprise. By entering into enterprise, he is at fault.
4. In happiness and distress, in good fortune and bad, in waking and sleep- in every condition-worshiping Hari will quickly be perfected.	4. The more he worships the Lord with humility and simplicity, the more he will understand Kṛṣṇa, by His mercy.

*tat te 'nukampām su-samikṣamāno
 bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam
 hṛd-vāg-vapurahir vidadhan namas te
 jiveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim. (SB 10.14.8)

*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. (SB 10.14.29)

H. How to overcome prayāsa

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. [Bhktyaloka 2]

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IV. *Prajalpa*

Another impediment is prajalpa, unnecessary talking. When we mix with a few friends, we immediately begin unnecessary talking, sounding just like croaking toads. If we must talk, we should talk about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Those outside of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are interested in reading heaps of newspapers, magazines and novels, solving crossword puzzles and doing many other nonsensical things. In this fashion people simply waste their valuable time and energy. In the Western countries old men, retired from active life, play cards, fish, watch television and debate about useless socio-political schemes. All these and other frivolous activities are included in the prajalpa category. Intelligent persons interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should never take part in such activities.

A. Definition

1. Unnecessary talking, newspapers, magazines, novels, crossword puzzles, card games, TV, fishing, politics

ॐ Another impediment is prajalpa, unnecessary talking. When we mix with a few friends, we immediately begin unnecessary talking, sounding just like croaking toads. If we must talk, we should talk about the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Those outside of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are interested in reading heaps of newspapers, magazines and novels, solving crossword puzzles and doing many other nonsensical things. In this fashion people simply waste their valuable time and energy. In the Western countries old men, retired from active life, play cards, fish, watch television and debate about useless socio-political schemes. All these and other frivolous activities are included in the prajalpa category. Intelligent persons interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should never take part in such activities. (NOI 2)

2. Talking with one another

ॐ Talking with one another is called jalpana or prajalpa. [Bhaktyāloka 3]

B. *Prajalpa that impedes bhakti (Godless Prajalpa)*

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 3]

1. Useless talks

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 3]

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

*mac-cittā mad-gata-prāṇā
bodhayantaḥ parasparam
kathayantaś ca mām nityam
tuṣṭyanti 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." Bhagavad-gītā (10.8-9)

*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." Gītā (9.14)

a. Newspapers, Novels, Magazines

ॐ 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. [Bhaktiyāloka 3]

2. Arguments

a. Logic is a hindrance unless it is based on the Vedas

ॐ 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

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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*. [Bhaktiyāloka 3]

b. Arguments to establish Vedic truths aren't *prajalpa*

ॐ 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'
kāhāṅ mukti pāba, kāhāṅ 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 countertheories to atheistic philosophy, not considering or engaging in spiritual matters." [Bhaktiyāloka 3]

c. Arise from pride and envy

ॐ 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. [Bhaktiyāloka 3]

3. Gossip

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 3]

ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 3]

a. *Gṛhasthas* should only talk about others in as much as necessary, and not more. Renunciates have no business talking about others

ॐ 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 ones 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 mahājānas 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 prajāpī. Therefore such activities should be

Comment [JH4]: The point seems to be speak about others in a beneficial way and not out of envy.

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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 markāṭa-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." [Bhaktyaloka 3]

4. Debate

ॐ Debate arises only from a desire for conquest. It is extremely abominable. [Bhaktyaloka 3]

5. Fault finding others

ॐ Fault-finding arises only from imposing one's own bad habits on others. This should be given up in all respects. [Bhaktyaloka 3]

ॐ 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 śreyāmsi sarvāṇi
puṁso mahad-atikramah*

Comment [JH5]: But Mahāprabhu is a sannyasi here.

Comment [JH6]: Sadhu-ninda should be avoided at all costs

"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." [Bhaktyaloka 3]

6. Speaking falsehoods

ॐ Speaking falsehoods is another form of useless talk. [Bhaktyaloka 3]

7. Worldly talk

ॐ 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 adhokṣajaḥ
tad eva satyaṁ tad u haiva maṅgalaṁ
tad eva puṇyaṁ bhagavad-guṇodayam*

*tad eva ramaṁ ruciraṁ navaṁ navaṁ
tad eva śaśvan manaso mahotsavam
tad eva śokārṇava-śoṣaṇaṁ nṛṇāṁ
yad uttamaḥśloka-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." [Bhaktyaloka 3]

- a. Grhasthas vs. Renunciates
- b. Politics, economics

ॐ The next impediment to devotional service is *prajalpa*, talking of mundane subject matter. Many people unnecessarily talk of the daily happenings in the newspapers and pass the time without any profit. A devotee, however, does not indulge in unnecessary talks of politics or economics. [Nārada Bhakti Sutra 5]

ॐ *Atyāhāraḥ prayāsaḥ, prajalpaḥ*, talking all nonsense, sitting together and on the newspaper, "Oh, such politician said like this, such social worker..." All nonsense. Practically you try to avoid all this newspaper reading or talking of nonsense subject matter. That is called *prajalpa*. [Lecture 4/10/74]

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C. *Prajalpa* (*Jalpana*) favorable to devotional service

- ॐ 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*. [Bhaktyāloka 3]
- ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 3]
- ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 3]

1. One should strictly follow the *mahājanas*

- ॐ 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. [Bhaktyāloka 3]

2. Devotional service begins with the tongue

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

“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.” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.234)

- ॐ In the *bhakti-mārga*, the path of devotional service, one must strictly follow the regulative principles by first controlling the tongue (*sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*). The tongue (*jihvā*) can be controlled if one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, does not speak of any subjects other than those concerning Kṛṣṇa and does not taste anything not offered to Kṛṣṇa. If one can control the tongue in this way, *brahmacarya* and other purifying processes will automatically follow. It will be explained in the next verse that the path of devotional service is completely perfect and is therefore superior to the path of fruitive activities and the path of knowledge. (SB 6.1.13-14)

3. Offering prayers
4. Reciting scripture
5. Chanting

*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. [BG 9.14]

D. Prajalpa versus vāco vegam

1. *Vāco vegam* is only a conditional urge. It is not there if *prajalpa* is given up.

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. [Bhaktiāloka 3]

E. Conclusion

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*... 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 praśaṁsati nīndati
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." [Bhaktiāloka 3]

V. *Niyamāgraha*

Accepting some of the scriptural rules and regulations for immediate benefit, as utilitarians advocate, is called *niyama-āgraha*, and neglecting the rules and regulations of the *śāstras*, which are meant for spiritual development, is called *niyama-agraha*. The word

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āgraha means "eagerness to accept," and agraha means "failure to accept." By the addition of either of these two words to the word niyama ("rules and regulations"), the word niyamāgraha is formed. Thus niyamāgraha has a twofold meaning that is understood according to the particular combination of words. Those interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not be eager to accept rules and regulations for economic advancement, yet they should very faithfully accept scriptural rules and regulations for the advancement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They should strictly follow the regulative principles by avoiding illicit sex, meat-eating, gambling and intoxication.

A. Definition

ॐ *Niyama āgraha*: accepting the rules for immediate benefit

ॐ *Niyama agraha*: neglecting the rules

B. From Bhaktyaloka

1. Niyamas are of two kinds

Niyamas, or rules, are of two kinds—*vidhis*, or prescriptions, and *niṣedhas*, or prohibitions. Whatever is enjoined as one's duty is a prescribed rule. Whatever is enjoined as restricted is a prohibited rule. Both kinds of rules are auspicious for the living entities. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

ॐ *Vidhi*: prescription, duty

ॐ *Niṣedha*: prohibition, restriction

2. Advancement is gradual

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. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

3. One must follow the rules appropriate for him/herself

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 in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.21.2-7) Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke these instructions to Uddhava:

*sve sve 'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā
sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ*

*viṣṇuḥ tu doṣaḥ syād
ubhayor eṣa niścayaḥ*

*deśa-kālādi-bhāvānām
vastūnām mama sattama
guṇa-doṣau vidhīyete
niyamārthaḥ 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."
[Bhaktyaloka 4]

C. Niyamas further divided

Prescribed and prohibited rules are further divided into two categories—conditional and constitutional. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

Comment [JH7]: What is the difference between the two?

1. In constitutional state

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. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

ॐ *Viddhi* = *prema*

ॐ *Niṣedha* = *envy*

2. Conditioned state

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*.

a. Karma

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. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

<i>Viddhi</i>	<i>Niṣedha</i>
1. <i>Varṇāśrama</i> rules	1. Sin
2. <i>saṁskaras</i>	2. Bad habits
3. Regulative prayers	

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b. Jñāna

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. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

<i>Viddhi</i>	<i>Niṣedha</i>
1. <i>Sannyāsa</i>	1. Fruitive activities
2. Renunciation	2. Forbidden activities
3. Detachment	3. Attachment to sense enjoyment
4. Discussing matter and spirit	

c. Bhakti

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. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

<i>Viddhi</i>	<i>Niṣedha</i>
1. Indifference to material activities	1. Acts opposed to the Lord
2. Performance of acts favorable to devotion	2. <i>Jñāna</i>
3. The do's and don'ts of <i>jñāna</i>	3. Attachment to sense gratification
4. The cultivation of devotional service with the help of <i>jñāna</i>	4. Renunciation
	5. Conclusions opposed to devotional service
	6. Giving up action

Comment [JH8]: Isn't this a contrast to what was just said?

Comment [JH9]: Why?

D. Progression from *karma* to *jñāna* to *bhakti*

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-śravaṇāḍau 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 *çravaëaà kërtanaà viñëoü* 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-yuktaśya
yogino vai mad-ātmanaḥ
na jñānaṁ na ca vairāgyaṁ
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 *kr̥ṣṇa-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*. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

1. Śraddhā is the only rule for *bhakti*

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 *āśakti*, or attachment; and from *āśakti* 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

Comment [JH10]: This suggests some philosophical understanding.

Comment [JH11]: Difference between *prema* and sentimental feelings.

Comment [JH12]: What is faith?

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*mat-puṇya-gāthā-śravaṇābhidhānaiḥ
tathā tathā paśyati vastu sūkṣmaṁ
cakṣur yathaiivāñjana-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 ruciḥ tataḥ

athāsaktis tato bhāvas
tataḥ premābhhyudañcati
sādhakānām ayaṁ premaḥ
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." [Bhaktyaloka 4]

2. Passing through the stages of *bhakti*

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. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

3. The one principal rule

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.
[Bhaktyaloka 4]

4. Householders, renunciates and the symptoms of śraddhā

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:

*kṛtyāny etāni tu prāyo
gṛhinām 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:

*avaśyaṁ tāni sarvāṇi
teṣāṁ 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 sādhanā. Then their rules are only slightly different. At that stage they attain ultimate surrender due

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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 vānapekṣakaḥ
sa-liṅgān āśramāms tyaktvā
cared avidhi-gocaraḥ*

"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-caraṇābjayoḥ
bhaktiḥ svataḥ pravarteta
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 prāyaḥ
kīrtanaṁ smaraṇaṁ prabhoḥ
kurvatām parama-prītyā
kṛtyam anyan na rocate*

*vihiteṣv eva nityeṣu
pravartante svayaṁ hi te
ityādy ekāntinām bhāti
māhātmyaṁ likhitaṁ 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:

*tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu-
smṛtyoḥ krameṇa rasanā-manasī niyojya
tiṣṭhan vraje tad-anurāgi janānugāmī
kālaṁ nayed akhilam ity upadeśa-sāram*

The essence of all advice is that one should utilize one's full time-twenty-four hours a day-in nicely chanting and remembering the Lord's divine name, transcendental form, qualities and eternal pastimes, thereby gradually engaging one's tongue and mind. In this way one should reside in Vraja [Goloka Vṛndāvana dhāma] and serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of devotees. One should follow in the footsteps of the Lord's beloved devotees, who are deeply attached to His devotional service.

These are the glories of the pure devotees; that is, their glories are not diminished by neglecting other's prescribed rules. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

5. Pure devotees can choose which rules at a lower stage to follow

The purport is that exalted devotees follow whatever rules of the lower stages they like. The jñānīs follow the varṇāśrama-dharma of the karmīs by their own will, not by rule or obligation. Similarly the devotees, out of their sweet will, also follow the rules of the karmīs 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. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

E. Applying the rules and regulations

1. The purpose behind all the rules and regulations

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

Kṛṣṇa is the origin of Lord Viṣṇu. He should always be remembered and never forgotten at any time. All the rules and prohibitions mentioned in the śāstras should be the servants of these two principles.

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2. According to time, place and circumstance (from *Madhya* 23.105)

“He who is temperate in his habits of eating, sleeping, working and recreation can mitigate all material pains by practicing the *yoga* system.” To broadcast the cult of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one has to learn the possibility of renunciation in terms of country, time and candidate. A candidate for Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western countries should be taught about the renunciation of material existence, but one would teach candidates from a country like India in a different way. The teacher (*ācārya*) has to consider time, candidate and country. He must avoid the principle of *niyamāgraha*—that is, he should not try to perform the impossible. What is possible in one country may not be possible in another. The *ācārya*’s duty is to accept the essence of devotional service. There may be a little change here and there as far as *yukta-vairāgya* (proper renunciation) is concerned. Dry renunciation is forbidden by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and we have also learned this from our spiritual master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Gosvāmī Mahārāja. The essence of devotional service must be taken into consideration, and not the outward paraphernalia.

Sanātana Gosvāmī wrote his Vaiṣṇava *smṛti*, *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, which was specifically meant for India. In those days, India was more or less following the principle of *smārta-vidhi*. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī had to keep pace with this, and his *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* was compiled with this in mind. According to *smārta-brāhmaṇas*, a person not born in a *brāhmaṇa* family could not be elevated to the position of a *brāhmaṇa*. Sanātana Gosvāmī, however, says in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (2.12) that anyone can be elevated to the position of a *brāhmaṇa* by the process of initiation.

*yathā kāñcanatām yāti
kāmsyaṁ rasa-vidhānataḥ
tathā dīkṣā-vidhānena
dvijatvaṁ jāyate nṛṇāṁ*

There is a difference between the *smārta* process and the *gosvāmī* process. According to the *smārta* process, one cannot be accepted as a *brāhmaṇa* unless he is born in a *brāhmaṇa* family. According to the *gosvāmī* process, the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* and the *Nārada-pañcarātra*, anyone can be a *brāhmaṇa* if he is properly initiated by a bona fide spiritual master. This is also the verdict of Śukadeva Gosvāmī in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.4.18):

*kirāta-hūñādhra-pulinda-pulkaśā
ābhīra-śumbhā yavanāḥ khasādayaḥ
ye ’nye ca pāpā yad-apāśrayāśrayāḥ
śudhyanti tasmai prabhaviṣṇave namaḥ*

A Vaiṣṇava is immediately purified, provided he follows the rules and regulations of his bona fide spiritual master. It is not necessary that the rules and regulations followed in India be exactly the same as those in Europe, America and other Western countries. Simply imitating without effect is called *niyamāgraha*. Not following the regulative principles but instead living extravagantly is also called *niyamāgraha*. The word *niyama* means “regulative principles,” and *āgraha* means “eagerness.” The word *agraha* means “not to accept.” We should not follow regulative principles without an effect, nor should we fail to accept the regulative principles.

What is required is a special technique according to country, time and candidate. Without the sanction of the spiritual master, we should not try to imitate. This principle is recommended here: *śuśka-vairāgya-jñāna saba niṣedhila*. This is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's liberal demonstration of the *bhakti* cult. We should not introduce anything whimsically, without the sanction of the bona fide spiritual master.

A. **Conclusion**

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. [Bhaktyaloka 4]

VI. *Jana saṅga*

Jana-saṅga refers to associating with persons not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One should strictly avoid such association. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura has therefore advised us to live only in the association of Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees (*bhakta-sane vāsa*). One should always engage in the service of the Lord in the association of the Lord's devotees. Association with those engaged in a similar line of business is very conducive to advancement in that business. Consequently materialistic persons form various associations and clubs to enhance their endeavors. For example, in the business world we find such institutions as the stock exchange and chamber of commerce. Similarly, we have established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to give people an opportunity to associate with those who have not forgotten Kṛṣṇa. This spiritual association offered by our ISKCON movement is increasing day by day. Many people from different parts of the world are joining this Society to awaken their dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

One should also avoid association with *Māyāvādīs*, who simply blaspheme *Vaiṣṇavas* (devotees). *Bhukti-kāmīs*, who are interested in material happiness, *mukti-kāmīs*, who desire liberation by merging in the existence of the formless Absolute (Brahman), and *siddhi-kāmīs*, who desire the perfection of mystic yoga practice, are classified as *atyāhāris*. To associate with such persons is not at all desirable.

A. Definition

1. Worldly-minded association

Jana-saṅga refers to associating with persons not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One should strictly avoid such association. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Thākura has therefore advised us to live only in the association of Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees (*bhakta-sane vāsa*). One should always engage in the service of the Lord in the association of the Lord's devotees. Association with those engaged in a similar line of business is very conducive to advancement in that business. Consequently materialistic persons form various

Comment [JH13]: Points for discussion:

- 1.4 regs are principles. These are pillars of religious life b/c avoid 4 sins
2. What about devotees who hold themselves back in the name of being humble?
3. Or those who think they are more advanced than they are?

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associations and clubs to enhance their endeavors. For example, in the business world we find such institutions as the stock exchange and chamber of commerce. Similarly, we have established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to give people an opportunity to associate with those who have not forgotten Kṛṣṇa. This spiritual association offered by our ISKCON movement is increasing day by day. Many people from different parts of the world are joining this Society to awaken their dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (NOI 2)

2. Mayavadis, pseudo spiritualists, and others like them

One should also avoid association with *Māyāvādīs*, who simply blaspheme *Vaiṣṇavas* (devotees). *Bhukti-kāmīs*, who are interested in material happiness, *mukti-kāmīs*, who desire liberation by merging in the existence of the formless Absolute (Brahman), and *siddhi-kāmīs*, who desire the perfection of mystic yoga practice, are classified as *atyāhāris*. To associate with such persons is not at all desirable. (NOI 2)

B. From Bhaktyāloka

1. *Jana* refers to men and women

The word *jana* means 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." Generally the practicing devotees are superior to *karmīs* and *jñānīs* in all respects. (Bhaktyāloka 5)

2. Devotees are naturally pure and have faith that has developed over many lifetimes

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.28) it is said:

*yeṣāṁ tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ
janānāṁ puṇya-karmaṇāṁ
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 *karmīs* 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. (Bhaktyāloka 5)

Comment [JH14]: Three points:

1. *Jana* refers to men and women
2. Devotees should associate with those who are more advanced
3. Practicing devotees are superior to *karmīs* and *jñānīs*

Comment [JH15]: This suggests that it's not always the case. In what cases wouldn't it be?

Comment [JH16]: A further qualifier. So what about devotees whose practice has weakened or waned? And those devotees who commit sin?

Comment [JH17]: But sometimes devotees do commit sin.

3. Association with devotees is important.

By associating with devotees, everything is achieved. The glories of sādhu-saṅga is mentioned in the Ādi Purāṇa as follows:

*ye me bhakta-janāḥ pārtha
na me bhaktāś ca te janāḥ
mad-bhaktānām ca ye bhaktāś
te me bhakta-tamā matāḥ*

Lord Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna, "Those who are My direct devotees are actually not My devotees, but those who are the devotees of My servant are factually 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:

*naiṣām matis tāvad urukramāṅghriṁ
spṛśaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthaḥ
mahīyasām pāda-rajo-'bhiṣekaṁ
niṣkiñcanānām 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." (Bhaktyaloka 5)

4. Without the association of devotees Bhaktidevi does not manifest

The scriptures often state that without the association of the Lord's devotees, Bhaktidevi does not manifest in the heart. It is most necessary for sādhakas to associate with devotees. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

5. Therefore in this sense jana saṅga refers to those without devotion

The scriptures often state that without the association of the Lord's devotees, Bhaktidevi does not manifest in the heart. It is most necessary for sādhakas to associate with devotees. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

6. *Jana saṅga* refers to those who are devoid of devotion

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 said:

saṅga tyāgo vidureṇa bhagavad vimukhair janaiḥ

"One who desires to attain devotion to Kṛṣṇa should carefully give up the association of worldly people." (Bhaktyaloka 5)

1. The six loving exchanges should not be practiced with such people. This is considered association.

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 is not considered association. When the same activities are done with affection for someone, then that is considered association with that person. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

C. Seven types of worldly people

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

1. Māyāvādīs and Atheists

- a. **Māyāvādīs**

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):

Comment [JH18]:

- 1) Do not accept the eternal name, form, qualities, and pastimes of the Supreme Lord.
- 2) Consider the living entity as a product of māyā;
- 3) In their opinion the living entity has no eternal existence.
- 4) Do not consider devotional service eternal; rather, they consider it a temporary method to cultivate knowledge.
- 5) Conclusions are opposed to the principles of devotional service.

*buddhi bhraṣṭa haila tomāra gopālera saṅge
māyāvāda śunibāre upajila raṅge
vaiṣṇava hañā yebā śārīraka-bhāṣya śune
sevya-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." (Bhaktyaloka 5)

(1) The Liberation of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya
*veda nā māniyā bauddha haya ta' nāstika
vedāśraya nāstikya-vāda bauddhake adhika*

"The Buddhists do not recognize the authority of the Vedas; therefore they are considered agnostics. However, those who have taken shelter of the Vedic scriptures yet preach agnosticism in accordance with the Māyāvāda philosophy are certainly more dangerous than the Buddhists.

PURPORT: Although the Buddhists are directly opposed to Vaiṣṇava philosophy, it can easily be understood that the Śāṅkarites are more dangerous because they accept the authority of the Vedas yet act contrary to Vedic instruction. *Vedāśraya nāstikya-vāda* means "agnosticism under the shelter of Vedic culture" and refers to the monistic philosophy of the Māyāvādīs. Lord Buddha abandoned the authority of the Vedic literature and therefore rejected the ritualistic ceremonies and sacrifices recommended in the Vedas. His *nirvāṇa* philosophy means stopping all material activities. Lord Buddha did not recognize the presence of transcendental forms and spiritual activities beyond the material world. He simply described voidism beyond this material existence. The Māyāvādī philosophers offer lip service to Vedic authority but try to escape the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. They concoct some idea of a transcendental position and call themselves Nārāyaṇa, or God. However, God's position is completely different from their concoction. Such Māyāvādī philosophers consider themselves above the influence of *karma-kāṇḍa* (fruitive activities and their reactions). For them, the spiritual world is equated with the Buddhist voidism. There is very little difference between impersonalism and voidism. Voidism can be directly understood, but the impersonalism enunciated by Māyāvādī philosophers is not very easily understandable. Of course, Māyāvādī philosophers accept a spiritual existence, but they do not know about the spiritual world and spiritual beings. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.32):

*ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninas
tvayy asta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ*

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

*āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ
patanty adho 'nāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*

The intelligence of the Māyāvādīs is not purified; therefore even though they practice austerities for self-realization, they cannot remain within the impersonal *brahmajyoti*. Consequently, they fall down again into this material world.

The Māyāvādīs' conception of spiritual existence is almost identical to the negation of material existence. The Māyāvādīs believe that there is nothing positive in spiritual life. As a result, they cannot understand devotional service or the worship of the Supreme Person, *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*. The Māyāvādī philosophers consider Deity worship in devotional service to be *pratibimba-vāda*, or the worship of a form that is the reflection of a false material form. Thus the Lord's transcendental form, which is eternally blissful and full of knowledge, is unknown to Māyāvādī philosophers. Although the term "Bhagavān" is explicitly described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, they cannot understand it. *Brahmeti paramātmēti bhagavān iti śabdyate*: "The Absolute Truth is called Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān." (Bhāg. 1.2.11) The Māyāvādīs try to understand Brahman only, or, at the most, Paramātmā. However, they are unable to understand Bhagavān. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, says: *māyayāpahṛta-jñānāḥ*. Because of the Māyāvādī philosophers' temperament, real knowledge is taken from them. Because they cannot receive the mercy of the Lord, they will always be bewildered by His transcendental form. Impersonal philosophy destroys the three phases of knowledge-*jñāna*, *jñeya* and *jñātā*. As soon as one speaks of knowledge, there must be a person who is the knower, the knowledge itself and the object of knowledge. Māyāvāda philosophy combines these three categories; therefore the Māyāvādīs cannot understand how the spiritual potencies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead act. Because of their poor fund of knowledge, they cannot understand the distinction in the spiritual world between knowledge, the knower and the object of knowledge. Because of this, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu considers the Māyāvādī philosophers more dangerous than the Buddhists.

*jīvera nistāra lāgi' sūtra kaila vyāsa
māyāvādi-bhāṣya śunile haya sarva-nāśa*

"Śrīla Vyāsadeva presented Vedānta philosophy for the deliverance of conditioned souls, but if one hears the commentary of Śaṅkarācārya, everything is spoiled.

PURPORT: Factually, the devotional service of the Lord is described in the *Vedānta-sūtra*, but the Māyāvādī philosophers, the Śaṅkarites, prepared a commentary known as *Śārīraka-bhāṣya*, in which the transcendental form of the Lord is denied. The Māyāvādī philosophers think that the living entity is identical with the Supreme Soul, Brahman. Their commentaries on the *Vedānta-sūtra* are completely opposed to the principle of devotional service. Caitanya Mahāprabhu therefore warns us to avoid these commentaries. If one

indulges in hearing the Śaṅkarite *Śārīraka-bhāṣya*, he will certainly be bereft of all real knowledge.

The ambitious Māyāvādī philosophers desire to merge into the existence of the Lord, and this may be accepted as *sāyujya-mukti*. However, this form of *mukti* means denying one's individual existence. In other words, it is a kind of spiritual suicide. This is absolutely opposed to the philosophy of bhakti-yoga. Bhakti-yoga offers immortality to the individual conditioned soul. If one follows the Māyāvādī philosophy, he misses his opportunity to become immortal after giving up the material body. The immortality of the individual person is the highest perfectional stage a living entity can attain. (CC 2.6.168-169)

(2)

*puruṣottame prabhu-pāṣe bhagavān ācārya
parama vaiṣṇava teṅho suṇḍita ārya*

At Jagannātha Purī, in the association of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, lived Bhagavān Ācārya, who was certainly a gentleman, a learned scholar and a great devotee.

*sakhya-bhāvākrānta-citta, goṇa-avatāra
svarūṇa-gosāñi-saha sakhya-vyavahāra*

He was fully absorbed in thoughts of fraternal relationships with God. He was an incarnation of a cowherd boy, and thus his dealings with Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī were very friendly.

*ekānta-bhāve āśriyāchena caitanya-caraṇa
madhye madhye prabhura teṅho karena nimantraṇa*

He sought the shelter of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet with full surrender. Sometimes he would invite the Lord to dine at his home.

*ghare bhāta kari' karena vividha vyañjana
ekale gosāñi lañā karāna bhojana*

Bhagavān Ācārya prepared varieties of rice and vegetables at home and brought the Lord there alone to eat.

*tāñra pitā 'viṣayī' baḍa śatānanda-khāñna
'viṣaya-vimukha' ācārya—'vairāgya-pradhāna'*

Bhagavān Ācārya's father, whose name was Śatānanda Khān, was an expert statesman, whereas Bhagavān Ācārya was not at all interested in the management of the state. Indeed, he was almost in the renounced order of life.

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

*'gopāla-bhaṭṭācārya' nāma tānra choṭa-bhāi
kāśīte vedānta paḍi' gelā tānra ṭhāñi*

Bhagavān Ācārya's brother, whose name was Gopāla Bhaṭṭācārya, had studied Vedānta philosophy at Benares and had then returned to Bhagavān Ācārya's home.

*ācārya tāhāre prabhu-pade milāilā
antaryāmī prabhu citte sukha nā pāilā*

Bhagavān Ācārya took his brother to meet Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, but the Lord, knowing that Gopāla Bhaṭṭācārya was a Māyāvādī philosopher, could not get much happiness from meeting him.

*ācārya-sambandhe bāhye kare prītyābhāsa
kṛṣṇa-bhakti vinā prabhura nā haya ullāsa*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu derives no happiness from meeting one who is not a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Thus because Gopāla Bhaṭṭācārya was a Māyāvādī scholar, the Lord felt no jubilation in meeting him. Nevertheless, because Gopāla Bhaṭṭācārya was related to Bhagavān Ācārya, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu feigned pleasure in seeing him.

*svarūpa gosāñire ācārya kahe āra dīne
'vedānta paḍiyā gopāla āisāche ekhāne*

Bhagavān Ācārya said to Svarūpa Dāmodara, “Gopāla, my younger brother, has returned to my home, having concluded his study of Vedānta philosophy.”

*sabe meli' āisa, śuni 'bhāṣya' ihāra sthāne'
prema-krodha kari' svarūpa balaya vacane*

Bhagavān Ācārya requested Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī to hear from Gopāla the commentary upon Vedānta. Svarūpa Dāmodara, however, somewhat angry because of love, spoke as follows.

*“buddhi bhraṣṭa haila tomāra gopālera sañge
māyāvāda śunibāre upajila rañge*

“You have lost your intelligence in the association of Gopāla, and therefore you are eager to hear the Māyāvāda philosophy.

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

“When a Vaiṣṇava listens to the Śārīraka-bhāṣya, the Māyāvāda commentary upon the Vedānta-sūtra, 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.

*mahā-bhāgavata yei, kṛṣṇa prāṇa-dhana yāra
māyāvāda-śravaṇe citta avaśya phire tānra“*

“The Māyāvāda philosophy presents such a jugglery of words that even a highly elevated devotee who has accepted Kṛṣṇa as his life and soul changes his decision when he reads the Māyāvāda commentary on the Vedānta-sūtra.”

*ācārya kahe,—‘āmā sabāra kṛṣṇa-niṣṭha-citte
āmā sabāra mana bhāṣya nāre phirāite’*

In spite of Svarūpa Dāmodara’s protest, Bhagavān Ācārya continued, “We are all fixed at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa with our hearts and souls. Therefore the Śārīraka-bhāṣya cannot change our minds.”

*svarūpa kahe, “tathāpi māyāvāda-śravaṇe
'cit, brahma, māyā, mithyā'—ei-mātra śune*

Svarūpa Dāmodara replied, “Nevertheless, when we hear the Māyāvāda philosophy, we hear that Brahman is knowledge and that the universe of māyā is false, but we gain no spiritual understanding.

*jīvajñāna-kalpita īśvare, sakala-i ajñāna
yāhāra śravaṇe bhaktera phāṭe mana prāṇa“*

“The Māyāvādī philosopher tries to establish that the living entity is only imaginary and that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is under the influence of māyā. Hearing this kind of commentary breaks the heart and life of a devotee.”

PURPORT: Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī wanted to impress upon Bhagavān Ācārya that even though someone firmly fixed in devotion to Kṛṣṇa’s service might not be deviated by hearing the Māyāvāda bhāṣya, that bhāṣya is nevertheless full of impersonal words and ideas—such as Brahman—which represent knowledge but which are impersonal. The Māyāvādīs say that the world created by māyā is false and that actually there is no living entity but only one spiritual effulgence. They further say that God is imaginary, that people think of God only because of ignorance, and that when the Supreme Absolute Truth is

Comment [JH19]: Qualifier

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

befooled by the external energy, *māyā*, He becomes a *jīva*, or living entity. Upon hearing all these nonsensical ideas from the nondevotee, a devotee is greatly afflicted, as if his heart and soul were broken.

*lajjā-bhaya pāñā ācārya mauna ha-ilā
āra dina goṣālere deśe pāṭhailā*

Thus Bhagavān Ācārya, greatly ashamed and fearful, remained silent. The next day, he asked Gopāla Bhaṭṭācārya to return to his own district.

*eka-dina ācārya prabhure kailā nimantraṇa
ghare bhāta kari' kare vividha vyañjana*

One day Bhagavān Ācārya invited Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to dine at his home. Thus he was preparing rice and various types of vegetables. (CC 3.2.84-101)

b. Atheists

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

2. Sense enjoyers

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 Gosvāmi has said:

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

"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." (Bhaktyaloka 5)

(1) It depends on one's consciousness

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

Comment [JH20]:

- 1) Always busy associating with sense enjoyment are filled with blasphemy, envy, and violence.
- 2) Quarrel, argument, and hankering for sense enjoyment is their life.
- 3) The more they enjoy, the more their thirst for sense enjoyment increases.
- 4) The sense enjoyers do not get time to speak or hear topics of Kṛṣṇa.
- 5) Whether they engage in pious activities or sinful activities, the sense enjoyers always remain far from knowledge of the self.

Comment [JH21]:

PURPORT: Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura suggests that people who are materialistically inclined and *sahajiyās*, or so-called *Vaiṣṇavas* who take everything very casually, are both *viṣayī* materialists. Eating food offered by them causes contamination, and as a result of such contamination, even a serious devotee becomes like a materialistic man. There are six kinds of association—giving charity, accepting charity, accepting food, offering food, talking confidentially and inquiring confidentially. One should very carefully avoid associating with both the *sahajiyās*, who are sometimes known as *Vaiṣṇavas*, and the non-*Vaiṣṇavas*, or *avaṣṇavas*. Their association changes the transcendental devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa into sense gratification, and when sense gratification enters the mind of a devotee, he is contaminated. The materialistic person who aspires after sense gratification cannot properly think of Kṛṣṇa.

Comment [JH22]: Where do we draw the line? Does this include fallen devotees?

3. Those fond of sense enjoyers

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

(1) Two types of sense enjoyers

There are two types of sense enjoyers—those who are extremely attached to sense enjoyment and devotees who are attached to sense enjoyment. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

(a) Those who are extremely attached

Associating with those who are extremely attached should be totally rejected. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

(b) Devotees who are attached to sense enjoyment

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

(i) *Those who have included the Lord as a part of their sense enjoyment*

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

(ii) *Those who have kept the Lord in the center of their 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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

4. Opposite sex

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

a. When marriage isn't bad association

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

b. When marriage is harmful

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 Rāmānujācārya. Śrīmad Rāmānujācārya sent his wife to her parent's home after she offended his guru's wife. He then took *sannyāsa*, in this connection. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

c. Outside of marriage

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 moho
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." (Bhaktyaloka 5)

d. Renunciates

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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

5. Womanizers

6. The hypocritically devout

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."

Comment [JH23]: See next comment

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."

Comment [JH24]: Here it seems BVT is basically saying to avoid assoc. w/ anyone but a pure devotee. SP translates as unreserved or unalloyed (unmixed, pure), whereas BVT translates as hypocrisy. Hypocrisy being having an ulterior motive. Our saying one thing and doing another. So if there's any tinge of desire separated from K, that makes us a hypocrite.

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

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

sarva tyaji' calilā jagannātha-daraśane
rāmadāsa yadi prathama prabhure mililā
mahāprabhu adhika tāñre kṛpā nā karilā
antare mumukṣu teñho, 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. Since Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the omniscient Supreme Personality of Godhead, He can understand the heart of everyone, and thus He knew all these things."

Comment [JH25]: Here is an example of hypocrisy

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

kāma, krodha chaya jane lañā phire nānā sthāne
viśaya bhuñjāya nānā mate.
haiyā māyāra dasa kari nānā abhilāṣa
tomāra smaraṇa gela dūre
artha-lābha-ei āśe kaṇṭha-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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

Comment [JH26]: Heavy!!!

7. Ill-behaved foolish outcasts

The worship of Kṛṣṇa is not enhanced by associating with ill-behaved, foolish outcasts. 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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

a. But they can become good association

But if those persons become faithful in devotional service by associating with a Vaiṣṇava and they gradually get a taste for worshiping 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:

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

*kṣīpraṁ bhavati dharmātmā
śāśvac-chāntiṁ nigacchati
kaunteya pratijānihi
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:

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

*tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ
śraddhāhur dṛḍha-niścayaḥ
juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān
duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan*

*proktena bhakti-yogena
bhajato māsakṛṇ muneḥ
kāmā hṛdayyā naśyanti
sarve mayi hṛdi sthite*

Comment [JH27]: Put here impure association is good?!

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

"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. 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." (Bhaktyaloka 5)

D. Conclusion

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:

*varam huta-vaha-jvālā-
pañjarāntar-vyavasthitih
na śauri-cintā-vimukha-
jana-saṁvāsa-vaiśasam*

"It is better to accept the miseries of being engaged 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. (Bhaktyaloka 5)

VII. *Laulya*

Desires to expand the mind by perfecting mystic yoga, merging in the existence of Brahman, or attaining whimsical material prosperity are all included within the category of greed (*laulya*). All attempts to acquire such material benefits or so-called spiritual advancement are impediments on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

A. Restlessness

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. (Bhaktyaloka 6)

1. Of the mind

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:

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

"As a strong wind sweeps away a boat on the water, 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
tayoṛ na vaśam āgacchet
tau hy asya paripanthinau*

"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. (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

2. 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):

Comment [JH28]:

☞ The mind (*citta*) has the propensity to follow the senses

☞ If there is restless intelligence then there is a restless mind.

☞ "When the mind's restlessness is sense gratification and this restlessness is the main obstacle in the practice of devotional service, then sense activities should be dovetailed in the service of the Lord and attachment to sense gratification should be transformed into attachment for the Lord. Then the mind becomes fixed by taking shelter of that attachment."

☞ When objects of sense gratification are associated with the Lord in a devotional mood then the mind becomes fixed on the Lord.

☞ "Among the objects of the senses, aversion should be applied on any that are unfavorable for devotional service 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."

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

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

"Those who are on this 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:

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
prajahāti yadā kāmān
sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ
sthita-prajñas tadocyate

duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ
sukheṣu vigata-sprhaḥ
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. (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

a. Two types intelligence

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 param manaḥ
manasas tu parā buddhir
yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ*

"The working senses are superior to dull matter; mind is higher than the senses; intelligence is still higher than the mind; and he [the soul] is even higher than the intelligence." (*Bhakti-yāloka* 6)

3. How to avoid restlessness

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-prajñā, 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 nigrāha*, 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
param 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."

Comment [JH29]:

1. mundane: discriminates between good and bad under the direction of the mind
2. spiritual: discriminates under the dictation of the soul

Comment [JH30]: By spiritualizing the senses restlessness is vanquished

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

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 dāna-dharmeṇa
śreyobhir itarair api*

*sarvaṁ mad-bhakti-yogena
mad-bhaktō 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."

Considering all this, the practicing devotee should give up *laulya* in the form of restlessness and attain fixed intelligence in devotional service. (*Bhakti-yāloka* 6)

B. Greed

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 sāmyati

"It is true that by practicing restraint of the senses by the yoga system one can get relief from the disturbances of desire and lust, 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 buddher* "Absorbing the intelligence in Me constitutes mental equilibrium." (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 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. (Bhaktiyāloka 6)

C. Desire

Another meaning of laulya 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-sṛṅhā yāvat
piśācī hṛdī vartate
tāvad bhakti-sukhasyātra
katham abhyudayo bhavet*

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

"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." (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

1. Material

There are two types of material enjoyments-worldly and heavenly. (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

a. Worldly

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. (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

b. Heavenly

Going to heaven and drinking nectar there, as well as sense gratification free of old age are all heavenly enjoyments. (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

c. Engaging Material Desires

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 dharmāikāntasya
kāmo lābhāya hi smṛtaḥ*

*kāmasya nendriya-prītir
lābho jīveta yāvata
jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā
nārtho yaś ceha 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."

Comment [JH31]:

1. Wealth
2. Women
3. Children
4. Opulence
5. Kingdom
6. Victory
7. Good food
8. Good sleep
9. Association with women for sense gratification
10. Good birth
11. Other pleasures

Comment [JH32]:

1. Go to heaven and drink nectar
2. Sense gratification free from old age

Comment [JH33]: Important!

Comment [JH34]: What does this mean?

Another name of dharma, or occupational service, is *yukta-vairāgya*. (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

2. For liberation

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, the statement of Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya is appropriate. From *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 6.267-269):

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

*'sāyujya' sunite bhaktera haya gṛṇā-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 *laulya*. (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

3. Desires to expand mind by mystic yoga

Desires to expand the mind by perfecting mystic yoga, merging in the existence of Brahman, or attaining whimsical material prosperity are all included within the category of greed (*laulya*). All attempts to acquire such material benefits or so-called spiritual advancement are impediments on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (*Bhaktiyāloka* 6)

Comment [JH35]: What type of liberation is favorable?

Why?

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 2

4. Desires for merging in the Brahman

Desires to expand the mind by perfecting mystic yoga, merging in the existence of Brahman, or attaining whimsical material prosperity are all included within the category of greed (*laulya*). All attempts to acquire such material benefits or so-called spiritual advancement are impediments on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (*Bhakti-yāloka* 6)

5. Desires for whimsical material prosperity

Desires to expand the mind by perfecting mystic yoga, merging in the existence of Brahman, or attaining whimsical material prosperity are all included within the category of greed (*laulya*). All attempts to acquire such material benefits or so-called spiritual advancement are impediments on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (*Bhakti-yāloka* 6)

D. One must be greedy for obtaining Kṛṣṇa consciousness

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
krīyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalam
janma-koti-sukṛtair na labhyate*

“Pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be had even by pious activity in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be attained only by paying one price—that is, intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay.” (*CC Madhya Līlā* 8.70)

So this is *matsara*. The *matsaratā*, enviousness, that is the nature of this material world. Therefore Kṛṣṇa consciousness, *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā-matiḥ*, it is very, very rare. Rūpa Gosvāmī said, “This rare thing, if you can purchase, do it immediately wherever available.” *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā-matiḥ krīyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate*: “If it is available, if you can purchase it, you do it.” “So purchase it? I can try, but what price I have to pay?” *Tatra laulyam ekalam mulyam*: “The price is simply you must be very, very eager to have it. That’s all.” “Oh, that I can do. It is not very difficult. I am so much eager after money, after woman, and so I shall transfer.” So Kṛṣṇa..., Rūpa Gosvāmī says, “No, no. It is not so easy.” (Lecture 11/22/76)

VIII. Conclusion

When human society gives up these elementary faults enumerated by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (*atyāhāra*, etc.), all enmity will cease between men and animals, capitalists and communists, and so forth. In addition, all problems of economic or political maladjustment and instability will be solved. This pure consciousness is awakened by the proper spiritual education and practice offered scientifically by the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement offers a spiritual community that can bring about a peaceful condition in the world. Every intelligent man should purify his consciousness and

rid himself of the above-mentioned six hindrances to devotional service by taking wholehearted shelter of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. (NOI 2)