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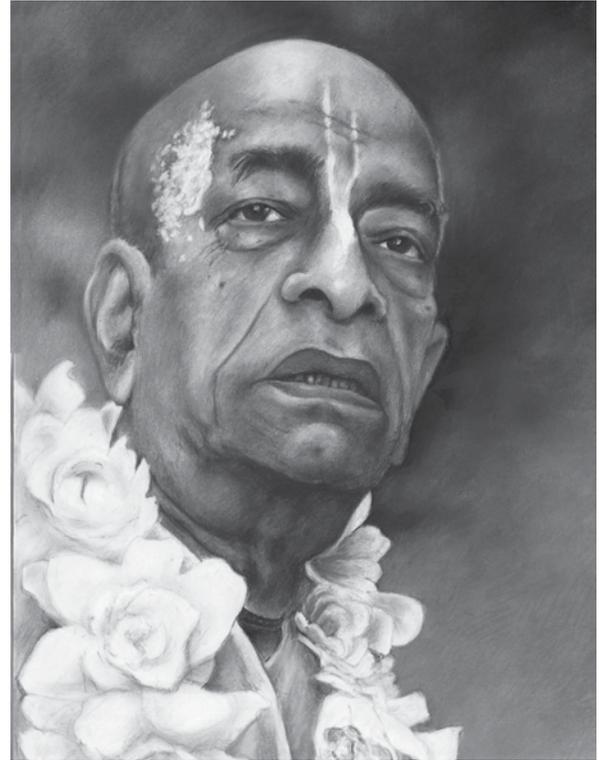


QUALIFIED DISCIPLE AND GURU *His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

Similarly, a disciple's qualifications must be observed by the spiritual master before he is accepted as a disciple. In our Krishna consciousness movement, the requirement is that one must be prepared to give up the four pillars of sinful life — illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication and gambling. In Western countries especially, we first observe whether a potential disciple is prepared to follow the regulative principles. Then he is given the name of a *vaiṣṇava* servant and initiated to chant the *hare kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra* at least sixteen rounds daily. In this way the disciple renders devotional service under the guidance of the spiritual master or his representative for at least six months to a year. He is then recommended for a second initiation, during which a sacred thread is offered and the disciple is accepted as a bona fide brahmin. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur introduced the system of giving the sacred thread to a bona fide *vaiṣṇava*, and we are following in his footsteps. The qualifications of a bona fide disciple are described in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.10.6) as follows:

*amānya-matsaro dakṣo nirmamo dṛḍha-sauhṛdah
asatvaro 'rtha-jijñāsūr anasūyūr amogha-vāk*

The disciple must have the following qualifications. He must give up interest in the material bodily conception. He must give up material lust, anger, greed, illusion,



*His Divine Grace A. C.
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madness and envy. He should be interested only in understanding the science of God, and he should be ready to consider all points in this matter. He should no longer think, "I am this body," or, "This thing belongs to me." One must love the spiritual master with unflinching faith, and one must be very steady and fixed. The bona fide disciple should be inquisitive to understand

transcendental subject matter. He must not search out faults among good qualities, and he should no longer be interested in material topics. His only interest should be Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

As far as the mutual testing of the spiritual master and disciple is concerned, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur explains that a bona fide disciple must be very inquisitive to understand the transcendental subject matter. As stated in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.3.21):

tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam

“One who is inquisitive to understand the highest goal and benefit of life must approach a bona fide spiritual master and surrender unto him.” A serious disciple must be alert when selecting a bona fide spiritual master. He must be sure that the spiritual master can deliver all the transcendental necessities. The spiritual master must observe how inquisitive the disciple is and how eager he is to understand the transcendental subject matter. The spiritual master should study the disciple’s inquisitiveness for no less than six months or a year. A spiritual master should not be very anxious to accept a disciple because of his material opulences. Sometimes a big businessman or landlord may approach a spiritual master for initiation. Those who are materially interested are called *viṣayīs* (*karmīs*), which indicates that they are very fond of sense gratification. Such *viṣayīs* sometimes approach a famous guru and ask to become a disciple just as a matter of fashion. Sometimes *viṣayīs* pose as disciples of a reputed spiritual master just to cover their activities and advertise themselves as advanced in spiritual knowledge. In other words, they want to attain material success. A spiritual master must be very careful in this regard. Such business is going on all over the world. The spiritual master does not accept a materially opulent disciple just to advertise the fact that he has such a big disciple. He knows that by associating with such *viṣayī* disciples he may fall down. One who accepts a *viṣayī* disciple is not a bona fide spiritual master. Even if he is, his position may be damaged due to association with an unscrupulous *viṣayī*. If a so-called spiritual master accepts a disciple for his personal benefit or for material gain, the relationship between the spiritual master and the disciple turns into a material affair, and the spiritual master becomes like a *smārta-guru*. There are many caste Goswamis who professionally create some disciples who do not care for them or their instructions. Such spiritual masters are satisfied simply to get some

material benefits from their disciples. Such a relationship is condemned by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, who calls such spiritual masters and disciples a society of cheaters and cheated. They are also called *bāulas* or *prakṛta-sahajiyās*. Their aim is to make the connection between the spiritual master and the disciple into a very cheap thing. They are not serious in wanting to understand spiritual life. ❀

— Purport to *Cc. madhya* 24.330.

RECEIVING THE HOLY NAME Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

There are two *bhagavāns*. One is guru, who is *āśraya-vigraha-bhagavān*, the Lord as the abode of service, and the other is Krishna, who is *viṣaya-vigraha-bhagavān*, the object of service. *Sevaka-bhagavān* and *sevya-bhagavān* — servitor *bhagavān* and *bhagavān* to be served. The chief activity of the *āśraya-vigraha-ācārya* is to do *hari-kīrtana*. Unless Srila Gurudeva, who is the *āśraya-vigraha-bhagavān-ācārya*, does *kīrtana*, nobody can understand Krishna, who is *īśa-tattva*, the *viṣaya-vigraha*, the supreme object of service. Nobody can understand the name, form, qualities, associates, or *līlā* of the *viṣaya-vigraha-bhagavān* unless the *āśraya-vigraha*, the *guru-ācārya*, imparts such knowledge. When Srila Gurudeva does *kīrtana*, speaking about the name, form, qualities, associates, or *līlā* of Krishna, these things appear in the form of sound, *śabda-brahma*. Then one can understand the *śāstra-avatāra*, scriptures — specifically the *bhāgavata-grantha-avatāra Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* — as well as the *īśa-avatāra*, Supreme Lord, as well as one’s *svarūpa*, spiritual form. *Śrī-nāma* and *śrī-mantra*, *gāyatrī*, have descended here in the form of *śabda-avatāra*, the descent of transcendental sound. If the *ācārya-avatāra*, the *āśraya-vigraha-ācārya*, Gurudeva, doesn’t do *kīrtana* in the ear of the *śiṣya* then that *mantra* or the *śiṣya*’s recitation of the *Bhāgavata* will never be effective. The mantra is given in *śāstra*, so one may say, “Mantra is there; I will take it up. Why should I accept a guru?” But unless that mantra comes from the lips of a bona fide guru who is *ācārya-avatāra*, it will never be effective — there will be no potency. Therefore one must accept a bona fide guru, receive mantra, and hear from him. Otherwise this *tattva-jñāna* cannot be received. *Śrī-nāma*, *śrī-mantra*, and *grantha-bhāgavata* are all *viṣaya-vigraha*, the object of service. Only through the *kīrtana* of the *āśraya-vigraha* will all of



The Enchanter of Cupid

these *viṣaya-vigrahas* appear. Otherwise, they will never appear in this world. One cannot understand *śrī-nāma*, *śrī-mantra*, and *grantha-bhāgavata* just by doing *pūjā*, worship. One must hear from the *ācārya-avatāra*.

Therefore, Mahāprabhu says (*Śikṣāṣṭaka* 3):

*tṛṇād api sunīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor but is always prepared to give all respects to others, can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord.

Kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ—do *hari-kīrtana*, accepting a bona fide guru, especially a guru coming in the *gauḍīya-ācārya-paramparā*. Under his guidance do *kīrtana*:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

This is known as *kīrtanākhyā bhakti*. Srila Jiva Goswami describes this in *Bhakti-sandarbhā* 173: *yadyapy anyā bhaktiḥ kalau kartavyā, tadā kīrtanākhyā bhakti-sāmyogenaiva*. Although in Kali-yuga eight other types of *bhakti* are there, still they must be performed along with *kīrtanākhyā*

bhakti, the process of hearing and chanting the name and glories of the Lord. Otherwise one cannot understand *siddhānta*. ❀

—*The Process of Inquiry*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, Orissa. 1998. Pages 65-66.

PRAYERS TO THE ORNAMENT OF VRAJA *Śrī-Kṛṣṇāṣṭakam* 1

by *Adi-Shankaracarya*

*bhaje vrajaika-maṇḍanam, samasta-pāpa-khaṇḍanam
svabhakta-citta-ranjanam, sadaiva nanda-nandanam
supiccha guccha mastakam, sunādaveṇu-hastakam
anaṅga-raṅga sāgaram, namāmi kṛṣṇa-nāgarām*

I offer my respectful obeisances to the transcendental lover Krishna, the exclusive ornament of Vrajabhumi, who cuts to pieces all sinful reactions. He is the eternal son of Nanda who brings pleasure to the hearts of his devotees. Holding a transcendently sweet flute in his hands, his head adorned with an extremely beautiful bunch of peacock feathers, this transcendental Cupid is an ocean of variegated blissful pastimes.

*manoja-garva-mocanam, viśālalola locanam
vidhūta-gopa-socanam, namāmi padma-locanam
karāravinda bhūdharām, smitāvaloka sundaram
mahendra-māna-dāranām, namāmi kṛṣṇa-vāraṇām*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Krishna, whose broad eyes and wholesome lips resemble a fully bloomed lotus, thereby vanquishing the pride of Cupid. He drives away the sorrows of the cowherd residents of Vrindavan. By lifting Govardhan Hill on his little finger, he defeated the pride of Indra. By his enticing gaze and carefree actions he appears just like a maddened elephant.

*kadamba-sīma-kunḍalam, sucāru-gaṇḍa-maṇḍalam
vrajāṅgaṅgaika-vallabham, namāmi kṛṣṇa durlabham
yaśodayā samodayā, sagopayā sanandayā
yutam sukhaika-dāyakam, namāmi gopa-nāyakam*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Krishna, the hero of all the cowherd residents of Vrindavan. His beautiful cheeks are the ornaments of the *kadamba* earrings that decorate his ears. Although extremely difficult to obtain, he is exclusively dear to the inhabitants of Vrajabhumi, and he is the source of constant bliss for devotees like Yasoda, Nanda Maharaja, and all the cowherd men and women.

*sadaiva pāda-paṅkajam, madīyamānase nijam
dadhāna-mukta-mālakam, namāmi nanda-bālakam
samasta-doṣa-śoṣaṇam, samasta-loka-poṣaṇam
samasta-gopa-mānasam, namāmi nanda-lālasam*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Krishna, whose freely falling locks of hair make him the delight of Nanda Maharaja. I pray that the royal swan of my mind always stays tangled at the stems of his lotus feet. He is the maintainer and provider of this world, and he vanquishes the evils within the hearts of everyone.

*bhuvo-bharāvatarakaṇi, bhavābhi-karṇa-dhārakaṇi
yaśomatī-kiśorakaṇi, namāmi citta-corakam
dṛganta-kānta-bhaṅgināṇi, sadā-sadālisāṅgināṇi
dine-dine navāṇi-navāṇi, namāmi nanda-sambhavam*

To the transcendental thief Krishna — the son of Nanda who steals everyone's heart — I offer my respectful obeisances. This darling of Mother Yasoda is the captain of the boat which ferries us all across the vast ocean of birth and death. He incarnates to relieve the earth of its unnecessary burden. With beautiful sidelong glances and a host of bumblebees following him constantly, he appears newer and newer to his devotees every day.

*guṇākaraṇi sukhākaraṇi, kṛpākaraṇi kṛpāparaṇi
sura-dviśamni-kandanāṇi, namāmi gopa-nandanam
navīna-gopa-nāgarāṇi, navīna-keli-lampāṭāṇi
namāmi megha-sundaraṇi, taḍḍit-prabhāla-satpāṭam*

To Krishna, whose beauty resembles a fresh monsoon cloud and who is the dear-most asset of the cowherd residents of Vrindavan, I offer my respectful obeisances. Although not in need of anyone's mercy,



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he freely showers his mercy upon everyone. He is the treasure house of good qualities and unlimited bliss. He removes the obstacles on the path of his devotees. Wearing yellow garments that resemble lightning, he appears newer and newer at every moment and takes great delight in enjoying novel pastimes with his devotees.

*samasta-gopa-nandanāṇi, hṛdāmbujaika-modanāṇi
namāmi kuṅja-madhyagāṇi, prasanna-bhānu-śobhanam
nikāma-kāmadāyakaṇi, dṛganta-cārusāyakaṇi
rasāla-veṇu-gāyakaṇi, namāmi-kuṅja-nāyakaṇi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Krishna, the exclusive hero of the *gopīs* standing amidst the divine bowers of Vraja. His sun-like resplendent face is the only happiness for the lotus-like hearts of the residents of Vrajabhumi. Although free from all material desires, he fulfills the desires of each and every living entity. He is the dear-most object of love for all the cowherd residents of Vrindavan, and he plays rapturous tunes on his divine flute. His sidelong glances are like infallible arrows for the hearts of his devotees.

*vidagdha-gopikā-mano, mano jñā-talpa-śāyinaṇi
namāmi kuṅja-kānane, pravṛddha-vahni-pāyinaṇi
kiśora-kānti-rañjitaṇi, dṛgañjanaṇi su-śobhitaṇi
gajendra-mokṣa-kāriṇāṇi, namāmi śri-vihāriṇam*

To Krishna, who enjoys variegated pastimes with Srimati Radharani and who simultaneously rests on the clarified minds of the expert *gopīs*, I offer my respectful obeisances. He swallowed the forest fire in Vrajabhumi in order to protect his near and dear ones. He is the cause of salvation of the elephant Gajendra, and his effulgent youthful figure illuminates all directions.

*yadā-tadā yathā-tathā, tathaiiva kṛṣṇa satkathā
mayā sadaiva gīyatām, tathā kṛpā-vidhīyatām
pramāṇikāṣṭakaṇi-dvayaṇi, japaty-adhītya yaḥ pumān
bhavet-sa nanda-nandane, bhavet bhavet subhaktimān*

Oh Krishna, in all times, places, and circumstances let me always be immersed in hearing and reciting your pastimes. Please let me obtain your causeless mercy in this way. Whosoever sings and understands the two authorized *Kṛṣṇaṣṭakam* prayers will be possessed of exclusive *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* in all his future births. ॐ

Kṛṣṇaṣṭakam 2 will be presented in an upcoming issue of Bindu.

— Translated by Bhakta Harshad Marathe from the Sanskrit at: www.stutimandal.com