



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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AVOIDING FAKE GURUS

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

Reporter: Don't you feel that people are suspicious because of their experience with fake gurus? If you went to a quack dentist and he broke your tooth, you might be suspicious about going to another dentist.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. Naturally, if you are cheated, you become suspicious. But this does not mean that if you are cheated once you will always be cheated. You should find someone genuine. But to come to Krishna consciousness you must be either very fortunate or well aware of this science. From the *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand that genuine seekers are very few: *manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu kaścīd yatati siddhaye* — out of many millions of people, there may be only one who is interested in spiritual life [Bg. 7.3]. Generally, people are interested in eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. So how can we expect to find many followers? It is not difficult to notice that people have lost their spiritual interest. And almost all those who are actually interested are being cheated by so-called spiritualists. You cannot judge a movement simply by the number of its followers. If one man is genuine, then the movement is successful. It is not a question of quantity, but quality.



Drawing by Anuradha Dasi

*His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

Reporter: How many people you think might have been taken in by fake gurus.

Srila Prabhupada: Practically everyone. There is no question of counting. Everyone.

Reporter: This would mean thousands of people, wouldn't it?

Srila Prabhupada: Millions. Millions have been cheated, because they want to be cheated. God is omniscient. He can understand your desires. He is within your heart, and if you want to be cheated, God sends you a cheater. ❀

— Excerpted from *Science of Self Realization*, chapter two. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Los Angeles.

KRISHNA IS ONLY PLEASED WITH LOVE *Adapted from Srila Lochan Das Thakur's* *Caitanya-maṅgala, Madhya 1.7-15*

After receiving initiation at Gaya from Srila Iswara Puri, Sri Gaurasundar, the son of Mother Sachi, returned to Nadiya with a happy heart. One day, Vishwambhar gave transcendental knowledge to some pure brahmin boys of Nabadwip who were his students. Lord Gaura Hari said:

paḍa eka satya vastu — kṛṣṇera caraṇa
sei vidyā — yāthe hari-bhaktira lakṣaṇa

You should study only the one truth — Krishna's feet. One who knows that truth has the ornament of devotion for the Lord. (Text 11)

tāhā vinu avidyā sakala śāstre kahe
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-bhakti vine keho saṅgī nahe

The *śāstras* describe that anything other than this is ignorance. Do not study anything other than devotion to Sri Sri Radha-Krishna! (12)

vidya-kula-dhana-made kṛṣṇa nāhi pāya
bhaktite se anāyāse pāi yadurāya

Persons intoxicated with pride in their learning, wealth, and birth do not attain Krishna. By devotional service one easily attains Krishna, the Lord of the Yadus. (13)

bhakti rase vaśa kṛṣṇa dekhaha vicāri
eta kahi śloka paḍe śāstra-anusāri

Krishna is conquered by the nectar of devotional service. To prove this I quote these words from the *śāstras*: (14)

vyādhasyācaraṇaṇi dhruvasya ca vayo vidyā gajendrasya kē
kubjāyāḥ kim u nāma rūpam adhikaṇi kiṇ tat sudāmnō
dhanam
vamśaḥ ko vidurasya yādavapater ugrasya kiṇ pauṇḍraṇi
bhaktiyā tasyati kevalaṇi na ca guṇair bhakti-priyo mā
havaḥ

Where was the hunter Dharma's piety, Dhruva's maturity, and Gajendra's knowledge? Where was Kubja's beauty? Where was Sudama's wealth? Where was Vidura's noble birth? Where was Ugrasena's chivalrous strength? Lord Madhava is pleased

only by devotional service and not by material qualifications. (Text 15, quoting Rupa Goswami's *Padyāvalī*, text 8). ❀

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SERVICE TO GURU

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

In *Guru-aṣṭaka* (verse 8) we sing:

yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi

By the mercy of the spiritual master one is benedicted by the mercy of Krishna. Without the grace of the spiritual master one cannot make any advancement.

If someone is fortunate and gets the mercy of *guru-pāda-padma*, then he very easily gets the mercy of



Nāma-tattva

EVEN DRUNKARDS **AND BRAHMIN KILLERS** *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* *quoted in Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.494*

hanan brāhmaṇam atyantam kāmato vā surāṇi piban
kṛṣṇa-kṛṣṇety aho-rātraṇi saṅkīrtya śucitām iyāt

Even a person who has murdered an exalted brahmin or voluntarily drunk liquor will become purified if day and night he chants: "Krishna! Krishna! Krishna! Krishna!" ❀

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Krishna. If guru is pleased, then Krishna is pleased. If guru is displeased, then where is your existence? You will have no existence at all. At any cost you should please guru. In *Bhāgavatam* 10.80.34, Krishna has said:

*nāham ijjā-prajātibhyāṁ tapasopāśamena vā
tuṣyeyāṁ sarva-bhūtātmā guru-śuśrūṣayā yathā*

I, the soul of all beings, am not as satisfied by ritual worship, brahminical initiation, penances, or self-discipline as I am by faithful service rendered to one's spiritual master.

This was spoken by Krishna to Sudama Vipra when Sudama came to visit him in Dwarka. "I am not pleased with the person who very strictly follows the rules and regulations, the principles of *dharma*, or who strictly follows the principles of *brahmacārī* or *gṛhasṭha* life, *vānaprastha*, or *yatī-vrata*, *sannyāsa*. But I am very pleased with that person who is always engaged, day and night, twenty-four hours, with a simple heart — not with a duplicitous heart — in the service of guru.

This is our teaching. All previous gurus, sadhus, *mahājānas*, have taught us by observing this in their own lives. Sriman Mahaprabhu, who is Krishna himself, came as a devotee, sadhu, *ācārya*, to teach us practically by his own example.

Two Types

There are two types of service to guru, *paricaryā-rūpa sevā* and *prasaṅga-rūpa sevā*. To hear *hari-kathā* from the lips of *guru-vaiṣṇava-sādhu* is *prasaṅga-rūpa sevā*. Hearing, *śravaṇam*, is a service, a *sevā*. It is a *sevā* that begins with the ear. Srila Jagadananda Pandit says in *Prema Vivarta*, chapter 6, that by hearing *hari-kathā*, *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, from guru — *sādhu-saṅge nija tattva abagata hana* — then the *jīva* can understand, "Who am I?" "I am *kṛṣṇa-dāsa*, Krishna's eternal servant. I am not a member of this material family. I am one of the members of Krishna's family." *Sādhu-guru* is one of the members of Krishna's immediate family. The guru's family means Krishna's family. "I belong to my guru's *parivāra*, family. Therefore my duty is to serve the *śrī-aṅga*, the transcendental body of guru." That is *paricaryā-rūpa sevā*. Of the two types of service, *prasaṅga-rūpa sevā* and *paricaryā-rūpa sevā*, *paricaryā-rūpa sevā* is superior.

Sriman Mahaprabhu manifested *paricaryā-rūpa sevā* during his pastimes. Govinda was the personal servant

of Sriman Mahaprabhu. When Mahaprabhu was in Jagannath Puri *dhāma*, he stayed in Kasi Misra's house in a small room known as Gambhira. That place is now known as Radha Kanta Math. Govinda was Mahaprabhu's personal servant. Govinda was the disciple of Ishwara Puri, which means that Govinda was the godbrother of Sriman Mahaprabhu. However, Ishwara Puri ordered Govinda to go and serve Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Govinda was serving Mahaprabhu all day long.

Once, to practically teach us, Mahaprabhu manifested a very wonderful *līlā*. Daily, after his midday meal, Mahaprabhu would take some rest and Govinda would massage his legs. When Mahaprabhu would fall asleep, Govinda would get up and take his meal. This was a daily activity.

Once after taking his *prasāda*, Mahaprabhu lay down at the threshold of the narrow doorway. Govinda's *sevā* was to massage Mahaprabhu's legs and help him to sleep. Govinda requested, "Please, just turn over so that I may go to the other side of the room and do my service." Mahaprabhu said, "I am very tired, Govinda. I cannot turn over on my side. You do what ever you like. I cannot move.



The enchanting form of Shyamasundar Krishna

I am very tired.” This is a very wonderful *līlā*. Govinda thought, “What can I do? Shall I neglect my service today? Then what is the use of this life?” This *sevā*, *paricaryā-rūpa sevā*, is the best type of *sevā*.

Pure Intelligence

One who is a real *sevaka*, a real servant, is not a hypocrite. If one is outwardly posing as a servant but inside is something else, then he is a great hypocrite. If one thinks that by serving and flattering he will get some material gain, then this is great hypocrisy. A real *sevaka* is a servant who wants nothing for himself. One who is serving for the pleasure of guru gets the mercy of Krishna. Krishna has said in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10):

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te*

To those who are constantly devoted to serving me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to me.

He who is doing *prīti-pūrvakam*, *bhajana* with love, who is constantly attached to Krishna, constantly engaged in the loving service of guru, he gets the mercy. Krishna gives him



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pure intelligence. Govinda got that intelligence. He spread his cloth over the transcendental body of Mahaprabhu, crossed over his body and went to the other side of the room to massage his legs. While he was massaging, Mahaprabhu fell asleep. Still, Govinda continued massaging.

After one hour Mahaprabhu got up and asked Govinda, “Have you taken your food?”

“No.”

“Why have you not taken your food?”

“How can I take? I am on this side of the room. How can I go to the other side?”

“How did you come to this side? Why didn’t you leave the same way you came?”

“Why shall I go? By coming to this side I think I committed some wrong. Still I had to do it because this is my *sevā*. I should not be prevented from doing my *sevā*. This service is for your pleasure, not for my pleasure or happiness. I can do anything for your pleasure. Why shall I take food to fill my belly for my own happiness? I cannot do that.” This story is a practical example how *paricaryā-rūpa sevā* is a superior type of *sevā* to *prasaṅga-rūpa sevā*.

The Fruit of Love

Paricaryā-rūpa sevā is *vapu-sevā*, serving the body of guru, and *prasaṅga-rūpa sevā* is *vāṇi-sevā*, serving the guru’s instructions. Mahaprabhu has exhibited this. The chief result of *guru-sevā* is developing love at the lotus feet of Krishna, *kṛṣṇa-prīti-vidhān*, to give pleasure to Krishna. All other marginal results are *ānuṣaṅgika-sevā*, automatically obtained by service. For example, the chief purpose of planting a mango tree is to get the juicy mango fruit. But *ānuṣaṅgika*, automatically, you also get very cool shade. The mango grows up, develops branches, and gives cool shade. Although shade was not the purpose of planting the mango tree, it is automatically received. Similarly, the chief result of *guru-sevā* is *kṛṣṇa-pāda-padme-prīti*—to develop love at the lotus feet of Krishna. All other results are secondary or marginal fruits, *taṭasthā-phala*. ❀

—From *Worship of Sri Guru*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, Orissa. 2000. Pages 94-97.