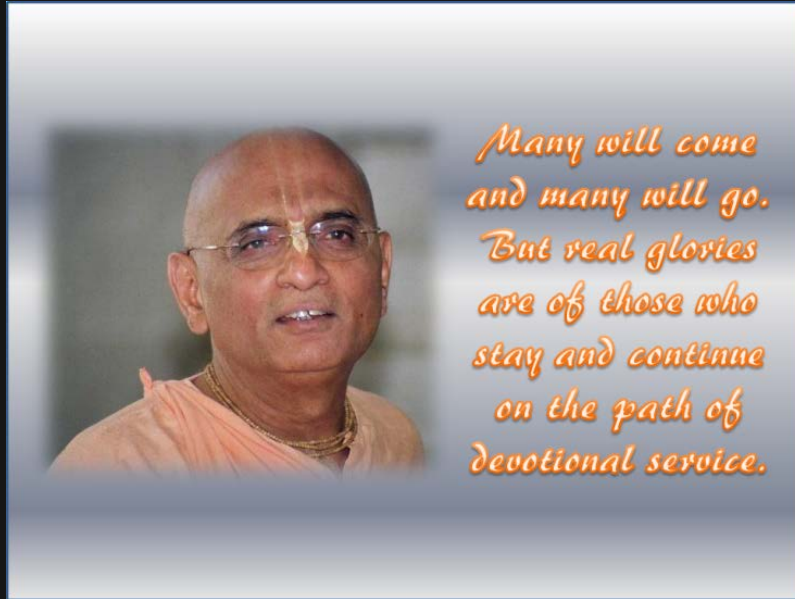


How to Recognize a Devotee?

By HH Bhakti Charu Swami



It's very difficult to recognize a devotee. A devotee cannot be recognized from materialistic point of view. We cannot judge a devotee by his appearance, by his wealth, by his fame, because all these are external, material considerations. In order to recognize a devotee we have to go within the heart and we have to recognize the love that he has for Krishna. That is the only consideration, the only recognizable factor in a devotee: how much love he has for Krishna. Sometimes in ISKCON we fail to recognize very exalted devotees. Even in a Vaishnava community we see that we fail to recognize very exalted devotees, because we tend to judge people. We judge even the devotees from materialistic point of view – how big a position he has. We try to judge him according to position, we try to judge him according to his material assets, wealth. Therefore Srila Prabhupada used to say, "Don't try to see a devotee with your eyes. The only way you can recognize a devotee, the only way you can see a devotee is through your ears. Try to see a devotee through your ears and if at all you have to see a devotee through your eyes, then try to see how attached he is to Krishna. How selflessly he is rendering his service to Krishna that is the main consideration for a devotee. How much he is doing for Krishna."