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DON'T BE DEPRESSED

*Excerpts from the teachings of
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Swami Prabhupada*

Material compassion, lamentation and tears are all signs of ignorance of the real self. Compassion for the eternal soul is self-realization. The word “Madhusudana” is significant in this verse. Lord Krishna killed the demon Madhu, and now Arjuna wanted Krishna to kill the demon of misunderstanding that had overtaken him in the discharge of his duty. No one knows where compassion should be applied. Compassion for the dress of a drowning man is senseless. A man fallen in the ocean of nescience cannot be saved simply by rescuing his outward dress — the gross material body. One who does not know this and laments for the outward dress is called a *śūdra*, or one who laments unnecessarily. Arjuna was a *kṣatriya*, and this conduct was not expected from him. Lord Krishna, however, can dissipate the lamentation of the ignorant man, and for this purpose the *Bhagavad-gītā* was sung by him. (Bg. 2.1, purport.)

A pure devotee is never disturbed in any circumstances. Nor is he envious of anyone. Nor does a devotee become his enemy's enemy; he thinks,



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

“This person is acting as my enemy due to my own past misdeeds. So it is better to suffer than to protest.” In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.14.8) it is stated: *tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīkṣamāṇo bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtāṁ vipākam*. Whenever a devotee is in distress or has fallen into difficulty, he thinks that it is the Lord's mercy upon him. He thinks, “Thanks to my past misdeeds I should suffer far, far greater than I am suffering now. So it is by

the mercy of the Supreme Lord that I am not getting all the punishment I am due. I am just getting a little, by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” Therefore he is always calm, quiet and patient, despite many distressful conditions. (Bg.12.13-14 purport.)

Endeavor executed with intelligence in Krishna consciousness is called *utsāha*, enthusiasm. The devotees find the correct means by which everything can be utilized in the service of the Lord (*nir-bandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe yuktaim vairāgyam ucyate*). The execution of devotional service is not a matter of idle meditation but practical action in the foreground of spiritual life.

These activities must be executed with patience. One should not be impatient in Krishna consciousness. Indeed, this Krishna consciousness movement was started single-handedly, and in the beginning there was no response, but because we continued to execute our devotional activities with patience, people gradually began to understand the importance of this movement, and now they are eagerly participating. One should not be impatient in discharging devotional service, but should take instructions from the spiritual master and execute them with patience, depending on the mercy of guru and Krishna. The successful execution of Krishna conscious activities requires both patience and confidence. A newly married girl naturally expects offspring from her husband, but she cannot expect to have them immediately after marriage. Of course, as soon as she is married she can attempt to get a child, but she must surrender to her husband, confident that her child will develop and be born in due time. Similarly, in devotional service surrender means that one has to become confident. The devotee thinks, *avaśya rakṣibe kṛṣṇa*: “Krishna will surely protect me and give me help for the successful execution of devotional service.” This is called confidence. (Nectar of Instruction, purport to text 3.)

The living entity, transmigrating through 8,400,000 species of life, is sometimes likened to a log which is gliding down a river. Sometimes, by chance, a log washes up on the shore and is thus saved from being forced to drift further downstream. There is a verse in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.38.5) which

encourages every conditioned soul in this way: “No one should be depressed by thinking that he will never be out of the clutches of matter, for there is every possibility of being rescued, exactly as it is possible for a log that is floating down a river to come to rest on the bank.” (Teachings of Lord Caitanya, chapter 11.)

Don’t think that because you are Krishna conscious you will be always successful. It doesn’t matter. Even if you are unsuccessful, you must know firmly that without Krishna’s desire, nothing can happen. If you are unsuccessful, then you should know it is Krishna’s desire. There is no question of being depressed because you are unsuccessful. A devotee is never depressed in any horrible condition of life. (Lecture in Bombay, 11 April 1974.)

Don’t be depressed. Try to please Krishna. Our only business is whether Krishna is satisfied or not. If he is then everything is all right. Try to satisfy Krishna. Then everything is auspicious. Instead of begging from Krishna, Krishna will beg you to tell him whatever you want. A devotee never wants anything, but Krishna is anxious, “You take whatever you like.” So if you simply please Krishna, he will canvass, “My dear devotee, whatever you want, you take. You can take from me.”

We have tried to improve our condition of life, even to the point of trying to become demigods. But don’t think that the demigods are free from danger. Indra was so many times perplexed. Even Brahma was perplexed. You cannot avoid dangerous positions within this material world, even if you are a person like Brahma. But if you become a devotee of Krishna, then everything is all right. So our business should not be to try to become very great persons in this material world. That will never be possible. You can get a big position in the higher planetary systems or the lower planetary system — whatever you desire — but you will never get safety or peace. (Lecture in Vrindavan, 7 April 1976.)

I can understand that you have become very much enthusiastic by shifting to Australia, and this enthusiasm is very much desirable by Krishna. Do not ever become depressed. Go on spreading this enthusiastic quality throughout that part of the world and this will be a very, very great service. I have seen myself that there is very good potential in



Gita Press, Unknown artist

Krishna is always there for his devotees

Australia and New Zealand and other places in that part of the world, so just apply your experience and advanced knowledge and enthusiasm and this will please me very much. Thank you for helping me in this way. (Letter to Madhudvisa, 26 May 1972.)

Do not be depressed. All along my godbrothers gave me only depression, repression, and compression, but I continued strong in my duty. So never mind if there is some discouragement. Continue with your work in full enthusiastic Krishna-conscious attitude of service. (Letter to Gurudas, 29 August 1972.)

If this preaching work is attempted sincerely, then Krishna will provide men to help us. Krishna does not like to see his men suffer or become frustrated and depressed on his behalf, no. If we remain always faithful to him, working very hard despite all difficulties, then very quickly you will meet Krishna face-to-face. You may know it for certain. (Letter to Gurudasa and Yamuna, 19 December 1972.)

Do not be disturbed. There is no cause for anxiety. You are doing your best to serve Krishna. That is very much appreciated, so do not lose enthusiasm out of frustration. That will spoil everything.

Krishna Consciousness means we should always be satisfied and happy. Not that we try to do some impossible work, become overburdened, and then because we are unhappy by so much trouble we lose enthusiasm altogether and give up all hope. No. Too much endeavor should be avoided. By all means we must preserve our spiritual status. That is the point. Not that we are mad after big buildings, many devotees, life-members, and this and that. No. These are only ways to engage the devotees so they may apply the principles of devotional living to some kind of work for practical realization of these principles. It is not the result of the work we want. If we only sincerely preach to one person a day, that is sufficient. Never mind big, big programs. So my request to you is that you do not be bothered by these things.... Krishna does not like to see his sincere devotee suffer or become frustrated or depressed. He will not stand by idly in such a case. Krishna has some plan for you. Always think in that way, and very soon he will provide everything to your heart's desire. (Letter to Tejjias, 19 December 1972.) ❀

DEPARTURE OF VAISHNAVAS

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

We are extremely grief-stricken to hear that _____ has left this world to go to his eternal abode. Everything happens by the will of the Lord. The Lord picks up first those who are closest to him. We have no objection to that. We are suffering due to our own misfortune and lack of qualifications. By remembering his attachment for devotional service, we can also gradually enter his destination. It is necessary to write about him in great detail in such magazines as the Gaudiya, and we are planning to provide a memorial spread. There should also be a fitting memorial for him in the form of a service. ❀

—From a letter dated 28 July 1935.

DESPONDENCY

*Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode
Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta 3.3*

Despondency is most detrimental to the execution of bhakti. It is of four kinds: 1) Yielding to grief and other emotions; 2) Yielding to bad habits; 3) Yielding to intoxication; 4) Yielding to superstition.

In this material world today there are thousands of causes for the living entities to become overwhelmed by sorrow, lamentation, anger, fear, greed and bewilderment. However, a *vaidhi-bhakta* should not yield to these when they arise. They weaken the mind and obstruct the cultivation of *bhakti*. ❀

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ONLY KRISHNA IS OMNISCIENT Jiva Goswami's Paramātmā Sandarbha 1.38

kṣetrajñānī cāpi mān vidhīty atra mān svayaṁ bhagavantam eva sarveṣv api samaṣṭi-vyaṣṭi-rūpeṣu kṣetreṣu. na tu pūrva-kṣetrajñā-vat nija-nija-kṣetra eva kṣetrajñānī ca vidhīti

In *Bhagavad-gītā* 13.3, the Supreme Lord's declaration, *kṣetrajñānī cāpi mān vidhīti* ("You should understand that I am also the knower in all bodies.") means that the Supreme Personality of Godhead knows what is happening in each and every body and in the entire universe as a whole.



Unknown artist

Radha's calf runs to its mother

In this way he is not like the individual spirit souls who each know only what is happening within their own limited sphere of perception. ❀

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FIRE OF SEPARATION Śrīla Rūpa Goswami's Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 3.3.116

aghasya jaṭharānalāt phaṇi-hradasya ca kṣvedato davasya kavalād api tvam avitātra yeṣāṁ abhūḥ itas tritayato'py atiprakāṭa-ghora-dhāṭi-dharāt kathān na viraha-jvarād avasitān sakhīn adya naḥ

[The cowherd boys address Krishna:] You protected us, your friends, from the digestive fire of the demon Agha's stomach, from the fierce poison of the serpent Kaliya, and even from the consuming destruction of the forest fire. Then how come you don't protect us now from the burning pain of separation from you, which is an even greater and more terrible assault than these three were? ❀

— Translated by David L. Haberman. *The Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu of Rūpa Gosvāmin*. Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, 2003.



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